

COGS, CAKES & SWORDSTICKS

COLLECTED EDITION

Cracking Adventures in the Empire of Steam



LYNNE HARDY

Tea! Cake!! Adventure!!!

Cogs, Cakes & Swordsticks is a game of steampunk pulp adventure, designed to be played in the comfort of your favourite tea shop with your friends, and requiring nothing more than your imagination, a pen, napkins and a sugar cube (should a six-sided die not be readily forthcoming)*.

This brand spanning new edition combines both the core rulebook and the game's first supplement, plus a little something extra.

Inside you will find:

- A nice, simple introductory guide to get you playing as quickly as possible (including a short adventure with its own pregenerated characters)
- More details on the setting and rules, including how to create characters of your own and how to run a full game of *Cogs, Cakes & Swordsticks* (with another, bigger adventure set against the backdrop of the British Museum)
- A closer look at Her Majesty's fantastical flying city HMFSC Atlantis, a marvel of the modern age and the new jewel of the British Empire, which hovers above the Atlantic Ocean like a proud, floating galleon. Well, a gigantic, metal galleon that doesn't actually go anywhere, but I'm sure you get the general idea
- A feature-length mystery set aboard The Cog (as Atlantis is known to her inhabitants)
- And, for the first time, a selection of historical trailblazers ready for use in your own adventures

So grab the cake of your choice and a piping hot cup of tea, settle down and allow us to welcome you to the Empire of Steam – an age of marvellous gizmos and mad inventors, Babbage Engines and flying steamships, dashing heroes and femme fatales, and the odd fiendish villain for good measure. In short: a time of exploration, intrigue and high adventure! We're glad you could join us.

*Although sugar cubes aren't actually cube shaped these days. What ever is the world coming to?

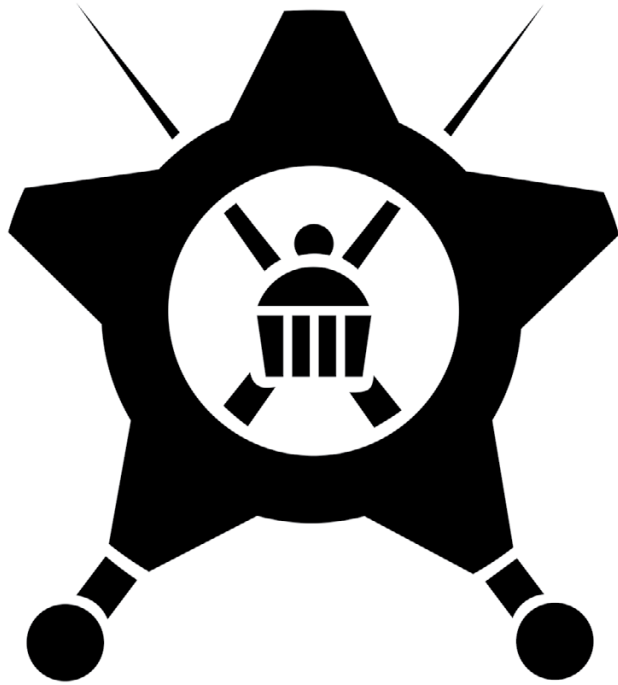


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ENTERTAINMENT

COGS, CAKES & SWORDSTICKS

COLLECTED EDITION

Cracking Adventures in the Empire of Steam



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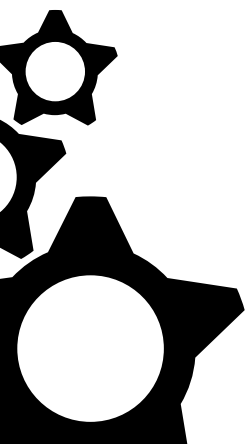
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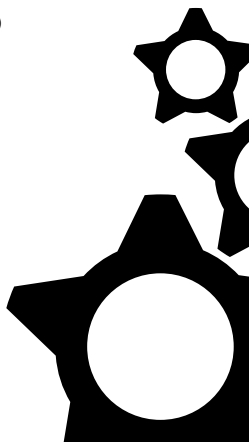


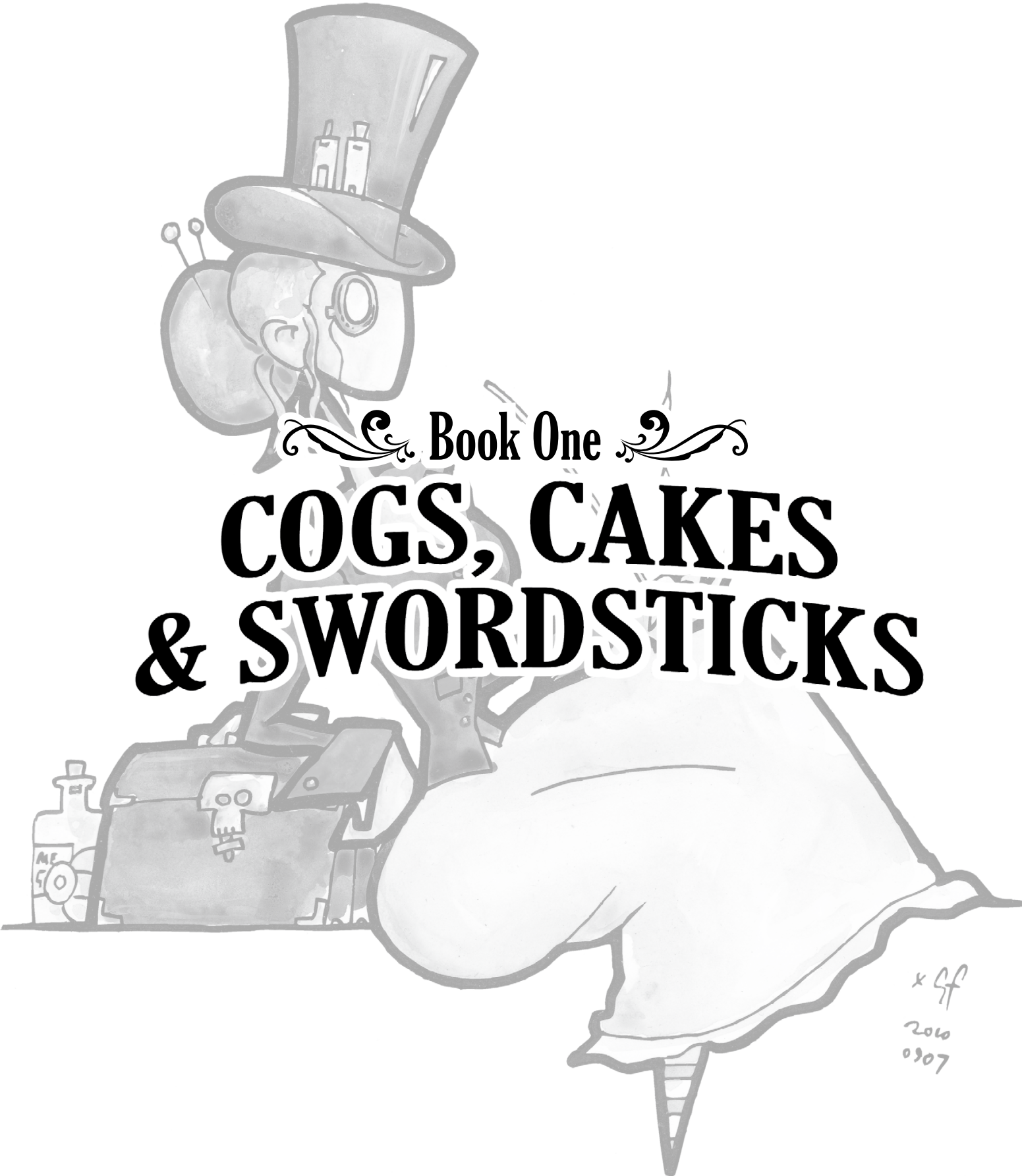
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Book One

COGS, CAKES & SWORDSTICKS

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Chapter 1

The Game's Afoot!

ACT 1: THE PROLOGUE

Cogs, Cakes & Swordsticks (CC&S) is a steampunk pulp adventure game. It was originally conceived to be played in a tea shop with your friends and the minimum of fuss and nonsense. Not that you need a tea shop, of course (anywhere comfortable will do), but we do advise against fuss and nonsense wherever possible.

But what is steampunk? In all honesty, it means different things to different people. Many people had their first encounter with steampunk through William Gibson's novel "The Difference Engine", yet others with R. Talsorian's "Castle Falkenstein" roleplaying game. The underlying themes behind it are much older, though, and can be found most famously in the works of Jules Verne and H. G. Wells (amongst others): the so-called "scientific romances". These tended to be sweeping adventure stories or commentaries on society with science acting very much as a supporting character or means to an end. Steampunk is effectively a much newer sub-genre of these tales, usually set in the Victorian or Edwardian era and having

at its core steam-powered equivalents of modern technological devices (making it, effectively, an alternative history).

In steampunk, as mentioned above, the age of steam never made way for the age of electronics. The ideal of beauty in design is still very much alive: not only should an item be functional, but it should be attractive as well. Progress and etiquette march hand in hand towards the steam-shrouded future.

And what about pulp adventure? The name "pulp" derives from the cheap paper these fiction magazines were printed on, the first of which appeared in around 1896. They contained stories (often by famous authors) covering a wide range of genres, from crime thrillers and mysteries, through romance, sport and fantasy to science fiction. Often they were a little racy, but they were always larger than life. Notable characters that appeared in the pulps (often in serialised versions of proper novels) include Buck Rogers, Conan the Barbarian, Doc Savage and John Carter of Mars. And of course, the most famous modern proponent of the genre would have to be Indiana Jones.

CC&S is not intended to be a darkly realistic, gritty game focussed on all of the inequalities and injustices of the actual historical period it is set in. Steampunk in *CC&S* is defined by the *ideals* of Victorian science and popular fiction: rugged heroes, beautiful femmes fatales, bluff engineers, devious villains and lots and lots of magnificent steam-powered technology. History is its inspiration, not its master.

To play *CC&S* you will need napkins (or good, old-fashioned paper), pens or pencils, one six-sided die (or a sugar cube with dots on, should a die not be forthcoming) and your imagination. And preferably tea and cake. Lots of tea and cake. You can never have enough tea and cake. You are Victorian, after all.

AND WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME, MAY ONE ASK?

A roleplaying game or RPG is somewhere between a murder mystery game and improvisational theatre. One person is effectively in charge, and they are known as the Games Master or GM. They direct the flow of the game, interpret the rules and arbitrate disputes; it is their responsibility to plot and scheme on behalf of the other players, without ever forcing the direction of the story, and to ensure that everyone has a good time.



The other players take on the roles of the protagonists in the game: the adventurers (or characters). They need to create these characters, then flesh them out during play. The GM may have come up with an idea for a story, but it is the players who bring it to life by their characters' interactions (which is where the improvisation part comes in).

There is no single "correct" way to play a roleplaying game, but there are potentially a few wrong ones. There are also many different styles of game and many different types of players. The idea of *CC&S* is to have fun telling epic tales of derring-do with your friends. Sometimes that's not as easy as it sounds, so before we get down to the nitty-gritty of how the game works, let's have a look at some of the ways to make it fun.

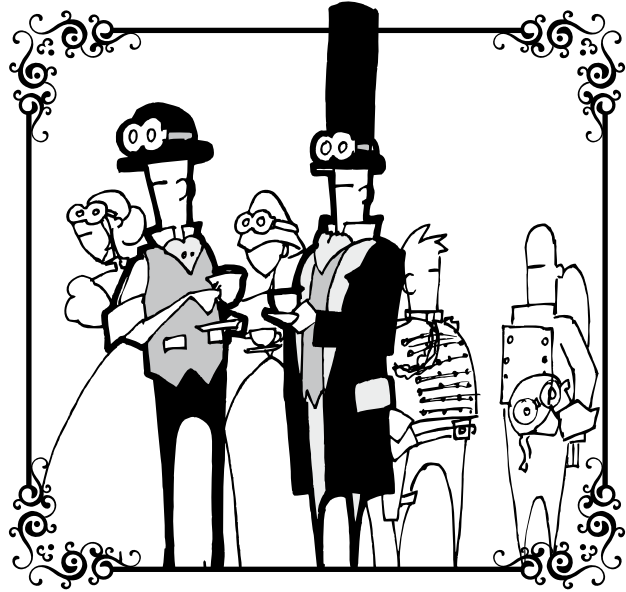
A great deal of the responsibility for whether a game stands or falls lies squarely with the GM, which is why it's such a responsible role to take on. As a general rule, if you're not happy as the GM with the setting or rules of a game then you won't perform to the best of your ability, so choose wisely. It takes a lot of effort to run great games, so they have to be something you will enjoy putting that effort in to. If you're miserable and unhappy with what you're doing, then it's going to be virtually impossible for the players to enjoy themselves, either.

It's also essential for the GM to be aware of their players' likes and dislikes. Think carefully: do the players prefer thoughtful investigative stories, or tales of all out dashing about hitting things? Do they like horror or sky pirates, social machinations or exploring new worlds? Bear all of this in mind when developing stories so that you can tailor them to their preferences. Most importantly, don't force them into situations you know they won't enjoy just because it looks good on paper, and take care that the themes covered don't upset or offend anyone. It could be the best idea ever for a scenario, but if it flies in the face of everything you know they'll enjoy, it will fall flat on said face come game time.

In all likelihood, as a GM you'll find yourself with a mixed group that likes a little bit of everything. In that case, woohoo! It makes life so much easier *and* it allows you to keep things fresh by jumping about genres and themes. Even if you have a group that has fairly limited tastes, it doesn't hurt every now and again to introduce a new element to keep them on their toes (as long as it isn't too far removed from their usual preferences or something they'll absolutely hate).

A key piece of advice is not to get too precious about the stories you dream up. A roleplaying game is not the same as a novel: it is a living, organic thing that grows in the playing. You can plant the seed, water it and nurture it, but what it becomes in the end is only partially in your hands. Annoying as it can be, players often come up with far more entertaining ways of solving the problems you've created than you will have thought of. (We don't *really* mean annoying, y'know; it's more along the lines of "Oh fluff, why didn't I think of that? That's brilliant!".)

Be prepared to roll with the punches, to quote popular parlance. This is, of course, another reason why as GM you must be confident and well-versed in the game you're running; if the players throw something unexpected at you, you



need to be able to deal with it quickly and effectively so that it doesn't disrupt the flow of the game. There's nothing worse than everything stopping for ten minutes while someone goes to look something up. Make a decision, deliver it with panache and stick with it. If it turns out later that you were wrong, apologise (after all, you're only human, no matter what your players might think). If in doubt, err in the players' favour; remember that this is also their adventure and the whole point is that they'll succeed in the end.

Another important job that the GM has to carry out is making sure that everyone is involved in creating the story. If you have a player who likes to quietly ponder what's going on, make sure that you include something that will draw them into the game, be it a puzzle that only they can solve, or a piece of knowledge that only they might know. We don't mean that you need to force them into being a chatterbox - just give them a way into the plot. Badgering people into doing what they aren't comfortable with will ruin the game for all concerned. Not everyone wants to be the centre of attention, but they do like to know that their opinions are valued.

You also need to make sure that no one person monopolises the game. We don't mean the occasional scenario which centres around a particular character rather than the team as a whole, because they can be highly entertaining. We mean the player who shouts everyone down, tries to get involved in encounters their character isn't even present at and generally attempts to railroad everything to their advantage. These players can be hard to deal with because, in some cases, they may not even realise they're doing it.

Simply overenthusiastic roleplayers are usually quite easy to deal with: diplomatically make sure that you get the opinions of everyone during the game, then have a quiet word with the "offender" after it. Assuming you're playing with reasonable people (and sometimes that can be quite an assumption), the enthusiast will usually be a bit embarrassed that they were hogging the limelight and will tone it down next time. If it's not pure over-enthusiasm, attempt to deal with it in the same way, but be prepared to stand firm in the decisions you make.



If you allow a player to browbeat you into giving in to their selfish demands, you will quickly lose control of the game. In extreme circumstances, there may be no option but to ask obnoxious players not to come back again, but hopefully it will never go that far.

As for you, players, please keep in mind that the GM has gone to a lot of trouble to create a story for your enjoyment. It's just as hard to be a responsible, collaborative player as it is to be a flexible, accommodating GM. If there's something you don't understand about a scenario, ask; GMs like being given the opportunity to explain their plots. If there's something you'd like to see in a game, mention it. Even the best GMs can find it tricky to come up with entertaining stories week in, week out and a fresh perspective can often kick start the old creative juices.

Think carefully about the sort of game you want to be part of and the type of character you want to play. Make sure you give your character a reason to be actively adventuring, or at least build potential reasons into their background for the GM to use as a springboard. If you're struggling, never be afraid of chatting to your fellow players about what characters they're developing and if they could give you a hand in getting a fix on yours. Talk to the GM, too. Is there a particular type of character missing from the developing party that would be useful and fun to play?

During a game, listen to what the other players are doing and, if they seem to be stuck and you can see a solution to a problem, politely suggest how their characters might solve it (but try to avoid having your character barge in, all guns blazing, to solve the problem for them). Again, *ask* if you can't think where to go next. Things may not always go your way, because a hero's journey is a long one, beset with numerous difficulties before their ultimate triumph.

In the end, it's all down to give and take between the players and the GM to create an exciting, vibrant story, one that

everyone has an investment in. And as long as everyone is enjoying themselves, you can safely say that you're doing it right.

CC&S comes with its own set of rules which were specifically designed to be fast to learn and quick to implement. It can take a lot of confidence to run rules-light systems if you're not used to them, say, in the way that live roleplayers tend to be. Some people like detailed rules that closely model real world situations, as it gives them a sense of grounding and a good safety net in case of arguments. Other groups may have their own favourite set of published rules, or an in-house set they have developed over years of co-operative play. Whatever the case, if the rules included here aren't to your taste, please feel free to use the rules your group likes best and treat this tome as a steampunk sourcebook with our blessing.

The same goes for the setting. If you like the rules but not the background, meddle with it until you're happy. For example, we've not included elements like gothic horror, but if that's what your group likes, make sure you have some of that in there for them; certainly, when we've run gothic horror scenarios at conventions it's worked very well indeed. After all, this is your game and you know best what you enjoy.

ACT 2: HITTING THE GROUND RUNNING

This particular section is designed to give you a very quick introduction to the world of *Cogs, Cakes & Swordsticks* – a “Pick Up and Play” guide, if you will, that gives you everything you need to get playing your first game within a few minutes. To help with that, we've trimmed the rules down to the barest minimum, as well as providing characters and a story for you to play through. If, however, you'd like to get right down to the nitty-gritty from the off, please skip ahead to *Chapter 2* where the full rules for creating characters and running games can be found. Further details of the setting and another scenario can be found in the chapters following that.

Still with us? Excellent! So, if you have your cup of tea and slice of cake ready, let us begin...

THE EMPIRE OF STEAM

Thanks to Charles Babbage successfully inventing the mechanical equivalent of the computer in the late 1830s, Her Majesty Queen Victoria's Empire has gone from strength to strength, and is the envy of the world. In order to oversee the growing number of Babbage Engines, Sir Robert Peel set up the Ministry of Computational Sciences in 1843. The entire network was finally linked together by telegraphic cables in 1869.

The Great Exhibition in London in 1851 brought yet more technology into the limelight, when Henri Giffard demonstrated his first dirigibles. This rapidly led to the advent of air travel (at least, for those who could afford it). Another marvel of the modern age is Her Majesty's Flying Steam City Atlantis, the brainchild of engineering genius Robert Stephenson and his unarguably even more talented friend, Isambard Kingdom Brunel. It took over ten years to build the floating city, which opened for business in 1875.

But Great Britain is not the only country focused on technological advancement. Across the Atlantic Ocean, the publication of Jules Verne's "From The Earth To The Moon" in 1865 has triggered a bitter "space race" between America and Canada, with both countries determined to be the first to reach the lunar surface.

ALLOW US TO PRESENT: THE RULES

In this section we introduce the basic rules of the game, including details of a character's skills and how to make use of them.

VITAL STATISTICS

In *CC&S*, each character has three defining Attributes:

- Cogs** Mental and/or technical abilities and skills, such as engineering, medicine or flying.
- Cakes** Social skills and personality (basically, how other people see you and how you interact with them).
- Swordsticks** Physical skills, such as sporting or fighting abilities.

Each Attribute has a descriptive name that gives you an idea of what it allows the character to do. For example, Mr. Pettifer's Cogs Attribute (see over) is "Signed and Delivered", which covers his knowledge of the parcel delivery business (briefly summarised in brackets after the Attribute's name). There's also a number after the Attribute description (either a +2 or a +3), which we'll talk about in the next section.

ROLLING THE DICE

What do the numbers next to the Attributes actually mean? Well, they represent how good the character is at that particular set of skills. In order to attempt to use those skills during the game, the player states what their character is going to do, and which Attribute they are going to use to do it. Provided the GM agrees, he or she then sets a difficulty level for the attempt, based on the circumstances (please see the table below for the various difficulty ratings).

The player then rolls their six-sided die and adds their Attribute number to it. As long as it equals or beats the

difficulty set by the GM, then the player succeeds. If the character doesn't have a relevant Attribute, they can still attempt to roll, with only a +1 bonus if it's a simple, unskilled action, or no modifier (or maybe even a penalty, if the GM is feeling especially strict) for a complex, skilled action.

But what about when it comes to things like fisticuffs or chases, where the character is acting directly against somebody else? These are known as opposed actions and instead of the GM assigning a difficulty level, the characters involved roll their dice, remembering to add the relevant Attribute modifier. The GM rolls on behalf of the person they're opposing. Now compare rolls: whoever achieved the highest result wins. So if a character has the highest result, they catch up to the person they're chasing, or best the foe they're fighting; if not, then their opponent gets away or it's the character's turn to receive a good thrashing.

But what happens when a person loses an action roll during a fight? That character becomes injured, and loses +1 from each of their Attributes (so +3 becomes +2, and +2 becomes +1). If they're injured again, they lose another +1 (as above). They can keep taking injuries until their highest Attribute is reduced to 0; then they fall unconscious.

To bring a character back from the brink, they will require some sort of medical attention. A successful first-aid roll (or similar medically-related roll) will restore +1 to every Attribute. Damage in *CC&S* is mostly handled in the grand tradition of pulp adventure, and in this introductory scenario, really shouldn't result in any permanently disabling injury or death. But do encourage the players to give you lots of lovely gory details of their wounds; after all, the ladies do love a man with interesting scars...

So, there we go: these are the only details you need to play through the scenario below. The Attribute descriptions may seem rather broad at first, but as long as you can convince the GM that an action you wish to take could be covered by a particular Attribute, everything will be fine. Don't be too upset if the GM says no, though: their word is final (although hopefully they'll explain why they've said no, or make alternative suggestions).



DIFFICULTY RATINGS

<i>Difficulty</i>	<i>Target to Meet or Beat</i>
Very Easy	2
Easy	3
Medium	4
Tricky	5
Extremely Tricky	6
Dramatically Tricky	7
Epically Difficult	8
Practically Impossible	9

ACT 3: TIME FLIES BY

(Wherein our heroes must deliver a precious cargo. How hard could that possibly be?)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

A selection of pregenerated characters ready for use in this scenario.

MR. WILLIAM PETTIFER, COURIER

Cogs	Signed, Sealed and Delivered (delivery operations & security) +2
Cakes	Honest, Open Face (inspires confidence & confidences) +3
Swordsticks	Never Saw That One Coming (avoids fighting where possible, but handy with his fists when pressed) +2
Background	Every delivery service needs a man they can rely on: for the Bedfordshire Gentleman's Parcel & Post, that man is Mr. William Pettifer, Esq. Small in stature, "Little Billy" is occasionally mistaken for a jockey, much to his amusement. A cheerful fellow, he is widely travelled, both in Britain and Europe. His reputation is well-deserved; virtually nothing can keep him from delivering those important parcels for the company's well-to-do clients.

MR. SEPTIMUS JENKINS, HIRED SECURITY

Cogs	Rogue's Gallery (good memory for names & faces) +2
Cakes	Tug of the Forelock (polite and deferential to all he meets) +2
Swordsticks	Big and Beefy (gigantic size, former boxer) +3
Background	Mr. Jenkins was once a heavyweight boxing champion before he moved into providing security and protection for paying clients. Born in deepest Africa, he came to England as a babe in arms, and although he's travelled the length and breadth of Europe with his job, he's never seen his homeland. Jenkins often works with Mr. Pettifer when he's transporting valuable packages, as the big man's bulk usually deters would-be troublemakers from doing anything foolish. Don't let his friendly manner and polite attitude fool you, though: when he starts swinging his fists, your only hope is to get well out of his way!

MISS ARABELLA BANKS, COURIER'S APPRENTICE

Cogs	Quick on the Uptake (observant & quick to learn) +2
Cakes	Nose to the Grindstone (hard-working, serious & practical) +3
Swordsticks	Twinkle Toes (athletic and fast on her feet) +2
Background	Young Miss Banks frequently confuses people – they almost invariably assume she's far older than her tender years as a result of her terribly serious manner. The daughter of Mr. Thomas Banks, founder of the Bedfordshire Gentleman's Parcel & Post, Bella is a bit of a mystery to her widowed father. He's very proud of her dedication and practical nature, but can't help wishing she was a bit more lady-like (no doubt growing up without a mother had a profound effect on the little girl). Still, he has absolute faith that she will make an excellent company manager, once properly trained (which is why he's given her over to his best operative).

SCENE 1: ALL ABOARD!

If you're planning on playing through the following scenario as a one of the characters provided above, we humbly ask that you stop reading now so that the adventure will be a (hopefully) pleasant surprise for you. Only the GM needs to read the rest of this adventure for the moment.

The year is 1880, and Mr. William Pettifer and his associates have been summoned to the Bedford offices of their employers, the Bedfordshire Gentleman's Parcel & Post. When they arrive, the reception clerk hands over the details of their latest assignment: they are to take a valuable package from Bedford to London on the Midland Railway, and to deliver it to the client (the Honourable Miss Constance Smethurst) outside the first class passenger lounge at St. Pancras Station.

Second class tickets have been provided and the train leaves in one hour. The station is only a few streets away from the BGP&P's offices, and it should take no more than fifteen minutes to walk there. Fortunately it doesn't appear to be raining today, so it won't be necessary to take a cab (unless the characters really want to).

The parcel is approximately eight inches (twenty centimetres) long, two inches (five centimetres) wide and four inches (ten centimetres) deep. It is wrapped neatly in brown paper tied up with string, and sealed with red sealing wax embossed with the company's crest. Miss Smethurst's name is neatly printed on a label attached to the upper surface of the parcel. It is surprisingly heavy for its size. If the characters wish to question the clerk about who brought the parcel in, she will be a little surprised at their forwardness, but can tell them that it was a very smart gentleman by the name of Mr. P. Hollander.

WHAT'S ACTUALLY GOING ON

Mr. P. Hollander is a very smart man, in some ways more than others: he's only one of the best cat-burglars in the country! And no, that's not actually his real name (we did say he was smart). Last night, whilst attending a society party at the Duke of Bedford's home of Woburn Abbey (about sixteen miles south-west of Bedford), Mr. Hollander pocketed a very valuable gold statuette, which he is sending to his accomplice in London via the highly respectable BGP&P, in an attempt to sneak it right under the noses of Her Majesty's Police Force.

Interestingly, it was the wife of an earlier Duke of Bedford who introduced the sacred ritual of afternoon tea to British society...

The characters can, of course, attempt to open the parcel to see what's inside, but they're going to have the devil of a job getting it rewrapped and resealed so that no-one notices what they've been up to.

SCENE 2: YOU DON'T SEE THAT EVERY DAY

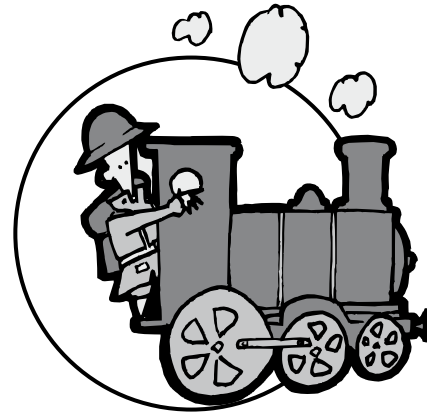
The second class compartment on the train is perfectly comfortable. This isn't the express train to St. Pancras, though, so approximately half way through the journey, the train moves off onto the slow line to allow the express train through. Only this time, it isn't an express train at all, but a band of daring pirates!

The first sign that something is wrong is that the "express train" isn't pulling any carriages and has lots of people in dark clothing and masks hanging on to or sitting in the coal wagon attached to the engine. The pirates' plan is to leap on to the characters' train, hold up the passengers, and then rejoin their own train at the point where the slow line rejoins the main line (having brought the two trains safely to a halt), before making off with their ill-gotten gains.

The characters should all have an opportunity to spot the pirate's train as it's whistling past them, with the GM setting a difficulty level for the task (if you're feeling mean, may we suggest that you make it Extremely Tricky?). If they don't notice anything unusual, then they're going to get a bit of a surprise when the "ticket inspector" comes by in a minute or two. Of course, how they react is entirely up to them, but knowing most players, it could well end in fisticuffs.

SCENE 3: DELIVERY

Once the train is underway again, and providing everyone has survived more or less in one piece, they can proceed on to London for their rendezvous with Miss Smethurst. You could,



STEAM TRAIN PIRATES

- Cogs* Stand and Deliver (thievery & appraisal skills) +2
- Cakes* Dashing Rogue (charming but immoral) +2
- Swordsticks* Swash and Buckle (fencing skills) +3

RAILWAY POLICE SERGEANT

- Cogs* The Thin Blue Line (policing & investigative skills) +3
- Cakes* Knows His Place (very deferential to social superiors) +2
- Swordsticks* Strong-arm Tactics (intimidation & fisticuffs) +2

if you want to, have the train stop at the next station down the line for everyone to be questioned about the robbery by Her Majesty's Railway Police, or you could worry about that once they get to St. Pancras.

Once at St. Pancras, how Miss Smethurst reacts towards the characters will depend on whether or not they have the parcel. In fact, she may not even be there; she may have been scared off by any policemen who are hanging around (depending on whether or not the characters have already spoken to the police about the train heist). If she is there and the characters don't have the parcel, she will be very angry and impossible

THE HONOURABLE

MISS CONSTANCE SMETHURST

Cogs Not Just a Pretty Face
(acting & deception skills) +3

Cakes Butter Wouldn't Melt
(a very cool customer; prim & proper) +2

Swordsticks Jolly Hockey Sticks
(former field hockey player) +2

Background "Conny" is aptly named: the daughter of a disgraced European minor noble, she reinvented herself in order to fit in with English high society and maintain the standard of living she had come to expect from her pampered childhood. A superb actress and smart cookie, she is one of the brains behind the so-called "Toffs" gang.

DETECTIVE RUPERT CHAMPION

Cogs Long Arm of the Law
(investigative skills) +3

Cakes Puzzled Frown
(always polite, but often distant & detached) +2

Swordsticks Cambridge Blue
(all-round sportsman) +2

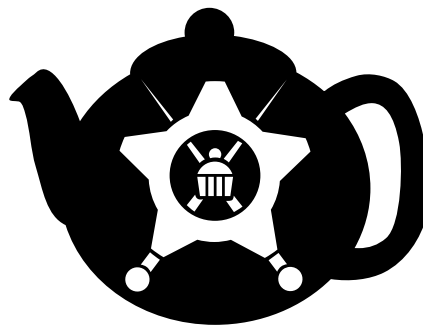
Background Detective Champion surprised everyone when he first announced he was joining Her Majesty's Metropolitan Police; everyone had expected the quiet young man to follow in his father's footsteps and join the diplomatic corps. His active mind is constantly attempting to figure things out, frequently leaving him looking slightly distracted and a bit vague. Never one to give up on a case, it is predicted that Champion will go far, provided he improves his social skills.

to placate. She will only leave after giving the characters a piece of her mind, and promising to write a very strongly worded letter back to Head Office (the fact that the loss of the parcel was beyond the characters' control doesn't matter to her in the slightest, and she does have her cover to maintain).

If they do have the parcel, Miss Smethurst will be all charm and smiles. However, as soon as the characters hand over the parcel, the police pounce! They suspected all along that "The Toffs" (as the police refer to this particular gang

of upper-class burglars) would try to hand over the statuette today and have been lying in wait to catch them red-handed. Unfortunately, the police also think that the characters are knowingly involved, so they're going to have some explaining to do before they can go home to Bedford.

And when the characters do return to head office, there's another assignment waiting for Mr. Pettifer, one that will take him to the Jewel of Her Majesty's Technological Empire: the flying city of Atlantis...



Chapter 2

The Rules of the Game

In *Chapter 1* we introduced you to the basic rules and setting behind *CC&S*. Now, with your permission, let us look at those rules again, this time with all the bells and whistles.

ACT 1: CHARACTER CREATION

In the previous chapter, we provided three characters for you to play the game with; now it's time to create a *CC&S* character from scratch. The aim is to keep this process as simple as possible - it really shouldn't take very long at all, so the GM will want to make sure that they have a story ready to run for when you're all finished (for a further sample scenario, "Devices and Designs", please see **p.35**).

Unlike many games, we haven't created a character sheet for you. In keeping with the idea that you should be able to play *CC&S* in a tea shop, all you'll need to create your character is a disposable (or washable) paper napkin and a pen or pencil. If you're not lucky enough to be in a teashop, then a piece of paper will also suffice.

When you create your character, the first thing you need to do is think of a profession; this will not only give you a job description, but a framework for deciding what Attributes your character will have.

In *CC&S* every character has three defining Attributes: *Cogs*, *Cakes* and *Swordsticks*.

- Cogs** This Attribute covers any mental and technical abilities or skills the character has, such as engineering, medicine or flying.
- Cakes** This Attribute covers your personality and your ability to interact with other people and how other people regard you.
- Swordsticks** This Attribute covers any physical or fighting abilities or skills the character has (this is pulp adventure, don't-cha know - always room for a bit of the old physical!).

Try to give the Attributes interesting, descriptive names that also help to define your character and how the world sees them. Make a note of them on your napkin.

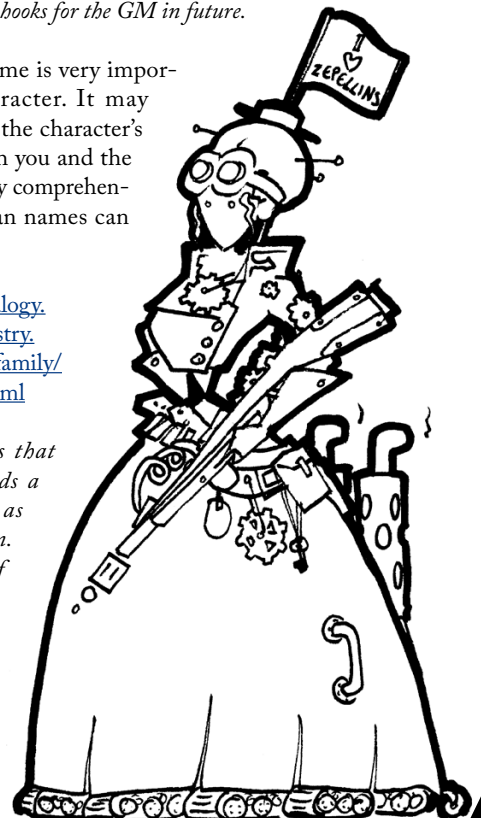
The Attribute that best defines the character is their primary Attribute; this will give you a +3 bonus on any dice rolls associated with that Attribute. The other two categories are their secondary Attributes, and they will give you a +2 bonus on dice rolls.

For example, Richard wants to create a character who is a circus strongman. That is his profession, but now Richard needs to think what Attributes he wants. He decides that his primary Attribute should be in the Swordsticks category and chooses "Amazing Strength!" For Cakes, he decides that, as a showman, "Crowd-pleaser" would be a relevant Attribute to have. Finally, for Cogs he thinks that "Not as Dumb as He Looks" adds nicely to his picture of the character, as well as potentially providing plot hooks for the GM in future.

Of course, a name is very important for your character. It may also help to define the character's personality for both you and the other players. A very comprehensive list of Victorian names can be found at:

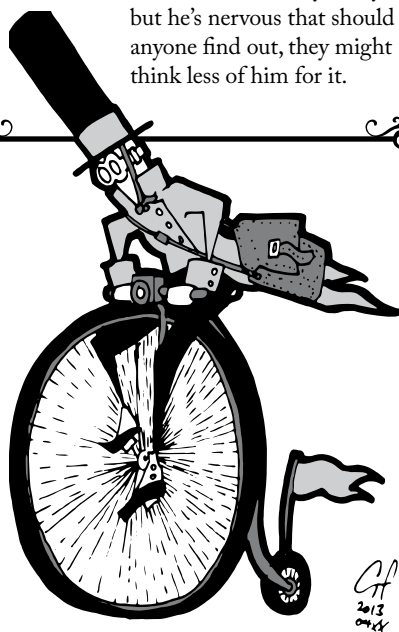
freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~poindexterfamily/OldNames.html

Richard decides that his strongman needs a flamboyant name as befits his occupation. He likes the sound of Roberto the Robust; not only is it theatrical, it helps add to the feeling of strength and size befitting a Circus performer of his stature.



**ROBERTO THE ROBUST,
CIRCUS STRONGMAN**

<i>Cogs</i>	Not as Dumb as He Looks (engineering & tinkering) +2
<i>Cakes</i>	Crowd-pleaser (charming showman) +2
<i>Swordsticks</i>	Amazing Strength! (can perform amazing feats of physical strength) +3
<i>Foible</i>	Afraid of mice (and trying to keep it a secret)
<i>Background</i>	Raised in a travelling circus, from an early age Roberto displayed amazing feats of strength that soon gave rise to his very own act. Natural charm and showmanship made him a great favourite with the crowds; in fact, it has become a custom for the other circus folk to rub his shiny bald pate for good luck. Not only does he have brawn, he possesses brains – something that many fail to appreciate until they have become better acquainted with the resource- ful giant. He's not quite sure where the fear of mice came from (some childhood trauma, no doubt; aren't they always?), but he's nervous that should anyone find out, they might think less of him for it.



You might have a name in mind before you decide on a profession and Attributes. It really doesn't matter what order you do the character creation in; sometimes a name might suggest the character, sometimes the character's occupation gives rise to a name. Do whatever feels right for the character you have in mind.

If you're stuck, think about some of these questions:

- Does your character like getting their hands dirty or do they prefer books? If books, then the character probably has an academic profession, like a teacher or a scientist. If they like to get their hands dirty, they're more likely to be an inventor or tinkerer.
- Do they like exploring or discovering? If discovering, then potentially we're back to inventing or science. If exploring, that suggests someone who likes getting out there and finding new things (alright, yes, that's discovery as well, but it's the out in the fresh air sort, rather than the stuck in a laboratory sort).
- Are they wealthy and educated, poor and struggling to survive, or somewhere in the middle? The character's social status could have a big effect on the type of profession they might have, although you don't want to handicap your character's ability to join in the game by lumbering them with too much social baggage.
- Are they a performer or an artist? An actor or actress, a painter, a sculptor, a writer, an opera singer, a magician or a music hall comedian?
- Are they famous or infamous? Believe it or not, it is actually possible to be both. Handle with care though, as this might make other characters reluctant to be associated with you.
- Is there a particular type of character missing from the party make-up? Would you mind playing that type of character?
- What sort of character most appeals to you when you watch a film or read a book? How could that character be tweaked to fit into a steampunk setting?

If you've tried everything we've suggested both here and in *Chapter 1* and you still aren't sure what you want your character to be, there are some sample characters in *Chapter 5* that you could use, either to pick up and play or as a source of inspiration.

FOIBLES

A Foible is a personality quirk that could potentially get the character into trouble, hint at something in their past, or just be there for some extra colour and to give the GM potential plot hooks for future stories. It can also be used during game play, if necessary, to drive the plot forward or take the characters off in unexpected directions.

To round out his character, Richard decides to give Roberto a Foible. He doesn't want it to be too dramatic or to make his life overly complicated, but he does fancy something for a little extra depth. He decides that despite his size and strength, Roberto is actually afraid of mice, something he tries to keep secret for fear of being laughed at.

If you want to give your character a back story, now is the time to do so. But if you want to see what springs to mind whilst you play, then it's time to get started on the game itself. Arty types might want to draw a picture of their character, or you could always use the trick from *QAGS (Quick Ass Game System)*, by Hex Games) of telling everyone who would play your character in a movie (or even find a suitable daguerreotype of that actor).

ACT 2: USING ATTRIBUTES

During character creation, each player will have decided what their character's primary Attribute is. As mentioned above, this gives them a +3 to any dice rolls covered by that Attribute. The other Attributes are secondary, giving a +2 bonus to dice rolls in those areas.

SOME SAMPLE ATTRIBUTES

Sometimes it can be a little tricky coming up with an Attribute name, particularly if you've not played many roleplaying games or have no firm handle on who the character is and what they can do just yet. Here is a selection of sample Attributes that you can use or that may act as inspiration (as well as giving you an idea of the sorts of abilities that would be covered by a particular Attribute). A further list of the different Attributes mentioned throughout the rules can be found in *Book Three, Chapter 2*.

COGS

Bit of a Bodger – this Cogs Attribute would cover all sorts of tinkering and repair skills, be they mechanical or practical, such as fixing machinery or mending a leaky tap. It wouldn't cover designing and building an amazing device from scratch, but you could certainly try and mend such a device or copy one that was already in existence. It's more of an improvisational Attribute than a planning one.

Dab of Paint – this Cogs Attribute would cover painting skills. Now depending on the character, that could mean a fully fledged painter and decorator, or it could mean an artist who specialises in watercolours or oils. In this case, they would also have basic drawing skills in order to make preliminary sketches (which could have all sorts of other useful game applications).

Man/Woman of Science – this Cogs Attribute covers scientific skills, including observation, running experiments, handling chemicals and recording results. It would also cover scientific knowledge, such as the uses of certain chemicals, how the body works and what on earth physics is all about. It's important to know that up until the 20th Century, what we consider to be the three sciences were all studied together as Natural Science, so a Victorian scientist would be well-versed in all of the major disciplines.

CAKES

Divine Diva – this Cakes Attribute describes someone who is witty, charming and captivating but

also prone to temper tantrums when they don't get their own way. The character may well be adored by the public at large until they throw a wobbler and blot their copy book. Those who have already suffered at the hands of the Diva may well be loathe to deal with them again.

Tongue-Tied – this Cakes Attribute describes someone who is shy. They may be shy in all situations, or they may only be bashful in the company of strangers or large crowds (being quite chatty with small numbers of their social peers and close friends). It could also apply to anyone who is afraid to stand up in front of an audience (and is excellent for avoiding the divulgence of important information during interrogations).

Wind Blown – this Cakes Attribute describes someone who is terribly indecisive; whoever shouts loudest and longest will no doubt sway this character into doing whatever they want. However, such indecision can actually be rather a useful weapon of bamboozlement and delay, given the right circumstances (say if they want to waste time, or distract or annoy people by their constant inability to make a decision).

SWORDSTICKS

Parry, Riposte – this Swordsticks Attribute covers the art of fighting with swords. The player could specify a particular type of sword-fighting if they wanted to, or it could be left as a general ability to wield a sword in combat or competition.

Bagged A Biggun – this Swordsticks Attribute would be suitable for a big game hunter as it covers how to wield and maintain large calibre firearms. There is nothing to stop the character from naming their chosen weapon (e.g. "Big Bertha, Scourge of Rhinoceroses Everywhere"), or being proficient with a variety of bloomin' big guns.

Greased Lightning – this Swordsticks Attribute describes someone who is very quick on their feet. Possibly not an attacking Attribute, but very good for getting away from difficult situations should all else fail.

For all other general, every day skills, the characters have a +1 bonus to their dice rolls, just like an average run-of-the-mill person. However, for extremely specialised skills (for example surgery, engineering, organising massive formal balls or fencing), then the characters have no bonus; they are subject purely to the whim of the dice.

Players should be encouraged to be inventive with their Attribute uses, and if they can explain exactly how a particular Attribute could cover a seemingly unrelated act, then the GM should feel free to run with it. However, if the GM disagrees with the alternative Attribute use, their word is final.

Professor Mainwaring needs to gain access to a building in which he believes his young friend Prudence Wilberforce is being held against her will. Sadly, the door is barred and his Swordsticks Attribute "A Damn Good Thrashing!" (fighting with fists & walking sticks) is not entirely appropriate. His player decides to try using the Professor's Cakes Attribute "Foreman of Works" (man management skills & authoritative air) to organise some random street persons to break the door down for him. The GM thinks that this is a reasonable use of the Attribute and lets the player roll with a bonus of +2...

If players are really struggling and it's important for the plot, the GM could always allow them to use their character's Foible as a dice modifier, although we'd recommend no more than a +1 bonus for that. Again, if the Foible is not appropriate for the situation, the GM should feel free to veto its use.

Archibald Dumas has been hoodwinked into a game of cards and the stakes are high (one of Professor Mainwaring's odd inventions, no less!). Now the Professor will not be pleased if Archibald loses his creation to a card-sharp, but Archibald doesn't have any relevant skills in gambling. Instead, his player persuades the GM that his Foible "Won't be Beat" should give him a +1 bonus to any rolls concerning the card game. After all, he hates losing and he'll keep at it until he wins...

There will be cases where Attributes could apparently fall under multiple areas. Most people would assume that firing a gun would automatically be covered by a Swordsticks Attribute, but it could also be considered to be a Cogs Attribute, seeing as a gun is a technical piece of equipment.

Richard decided that "Not as Dumb as He Looks" should be a Cogs Attribute because he sees the character as an amateur inventor and all-round resourceful chap, but it could just as easily have fitted in to the Cakes category because people often misjudge the strongman based purely on his looks (a mistake they seldom make twice).

It really doesn't matter which category an Attribute ends up in as long as the player can justify it to the GM and the GM agrees. It's always possible that having an Attribute in a different category reflects not only some character quirk, but also a fundamentally different way of applying that Attribute in adventures. Creativity and consent are the keys to entertaining and appropriate use of Attributes.

DICE

Wherever possible, the GM should help the story to flow without resorting to dice rolls. However, there are some occasions where rolling the dice probably should not be avoided. Then there are the occasions when rolling dice can be used as a device for building dramatic tension during a game (although be careful not to overdo this as the players will soon become wise to it).

Difficulty	Target to Meet or Beat
Very Easy	2
Easy	3
Medium	4
Tricky	5
Extremely Tricky	6
Dramatically Tricky	7
Epically Difficult	8
Practically Impossible	9



The exact point in time at which you should roll a die is a very personal decision and potentially fraught with difficulty. Roll too much, and you risk lowering the game to nothing more than a number-crunching exercise; roll too little, and you could be accused of steamrolling the plot to suit yourself.

Here are some points to keep in mind when deciding whether or not you should roll:

- If the action is not really critical, or the outcome (good or bad) won't derail the overall story, do you really need to stop to roll the dice? The answer is probably not, so let the players roleplay through it.
- If the action is desperately critical to the way the story needs to go, do you really want to rely on the random roll of a dice to determine whether the character succeeds or fails? That could well depend on how confident you are as a GM of being able to rescue the situation if the dice roll doesn't go as expected.
- Is there a chance that any decision you make could be seen as favouring a given character or player in the face of all the odds? We all like to think that we're impartial as GMs and work only in the service of the story, but as players most of us have experienced the horrible spectacle of a GM overtly favouring their partner (or someone they're hoping will become their partner) to the exclusion of all others.
- Are you confident that the players will accept your decision if you don't roll the dice? If you have a difficult player who frequently questions your decisions, then openly rolling should help to avoid confrontations.
- Are the players stuck? Sometimes letting them roll against an Attribute can help you gee them along without making them feel as if you're just handing them all of the information on a plate. (Foibles are really useful for this as well.)
- Is it going to crank up the tension if you call for a roll? Sometimes even the most mundane activity can take on a whole new meaning when performed under pressure...

When the need does arise, the GM calls for a relevant die roll and sets a difficulty level for that task (see table). For the most part, everyday, mundane activities will fall into the Very Easy, Easy or Medium categories; anything that requires a bit more skill and concentration will be Tricky or higher. The player rolls one six-sided die (d6) and adds their Attribute bonus to it. They then compare the result to the difficulty level to see if they have equalled or beaten it. If the difficulty level was a 2 (Very Easy), then they must achieve a 2 or more to succeed.

As the GM and players will notice, this means that someone with a +3 Attribute could automatically succeed at Very Easy or Easy tasks without rolling a die. Considering that +3 represents the character being an expert in that given Attribute, this is hardly surprising. However, if it's dramatically appropriate, the GM can still call for a die roll. An otherwise easy activity might be being attempted under non-conductive conditions, for example. Have you ever tried getting buttons fastened in a hurry?

Rolling a natural 1 (a result of 1 on the die before any bonuses are added) is bad news, and means that the character has failed because there was some other factor affecting their ability to carry out what would otherwise have been a mundane task. If the GM is being really nice, or it suits the story better, the character may have succeeded but not in quite the way they had intended.

Professor Mainwaring is an excellent engineer and has built many wonderful vehicular contraptions. However, his driving skills are notoriously awful. Still, his faithful driver Archibald has wandered off and the Professor needs to rush to the rescue of some damsels in distress in his trusty mole machine. The GM decides that this calls for a Tricky dice roll (difficulty 5). Not only is driving not a skill he possesses, Fate is not smiling on the Prof and his player rolls a natural 1. The GM knows that the machine will be

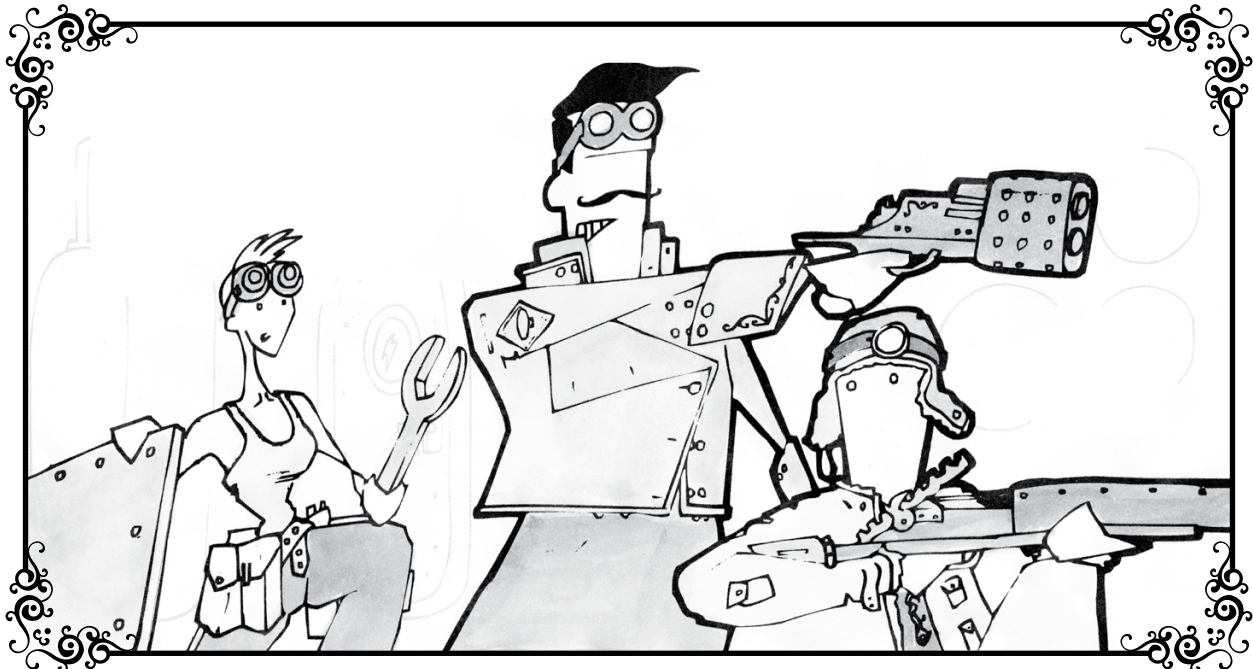
needed later in the game, so doesn't want to destroy it; they decide instead that the Prof crashes into a wall, causing extensive damage (but nothing that can't be fixed in time for its starring role). He succeeded in driving it, just not where he wanted. The ladies will have to wait a little longer for their knight in industrial-grade armour-plating.

It is also possible to achieve an Extremely Tricky task with the roll of a natural 6, without any skill in that given area. This represents sheer beginner's luck, or if you prefer, fortune favouring the bold. Under other circumstances, the GM might like to reward a natural 6 with some added benefit to the result of the character's actions. This is all at the discretion of the GM, who may also wish to seek suggestions from the other players as to dramatically satisfying effects, be they positive or negative.

Scarlet Masterson is facing down a rampaging T. rex. Fortunately, her primary Attribute is "Big Guns" (the ability to maintain and shoot large weaponry). Still, it will take nerves of steel to pull off this rather critical shot and the dice obviously agree, as her player rolls a natural 6. The GM is impressed by this, so the players are treated first to a bullet's-eye view, followed by a side shot of the T. rex crashing to the ground inches from Scarlet's daintily booted feet. Scarlet is impressed as well, making sure that she poses for a terribly tasteful daguerreotype (taken shortly before she backs out a few souvenir teeth and a claw that will make a really unusual hunting knife).

FIGHTING

There are times when a difficulty level is not appropriate. Primarily, this will be when two people are fighting each other (or carrying out any other directly opposed action). Under these circumstances, those concerned roll their dice and apply the relevant bonuses for the Attribute being used. Whoever



gets the highest result wins; a draw is a draw. It is up to the GM and the players to narrate the outcome of the action in line with the result.

However, if the players and the GM want an epic, blow by blow battle, say for example during a duel or fencing match, then dice rolls can be made for every stage of the combat (although we would still encourage colourful narration of everyone's actions). Some players prefer this style of fighting, others will want to move on quickly to other parts of the plot; there is no right or wrong way to run fights, only the one that suits each particular group's tastes.

Archibald is having a bit of a contretemps with a Man from the Ministry, who is attempting to wreck Archibald's mole machine (well, it's the Prof's, but Archibald tends to think of it as his, seeing as he's the only one who can drive it). Although it's not his primary, Archibald has "Fisticuffs" as his Swordsticks Attribute and he plans to put it to good use. Unbeknownst to Archibald, the Man from the Ministry has a gun. As this fight could be very dangerous and dramatic for one of the player characters, the GM decides to go for blow-by-blow action.

Never faint-hearted, Archibald attempts a rugby tackle. He rolls a 3, so gets 5 overall (+2 for his secondary fighting Attribute). The Man rolls a 2; his Swordsticks Attribute is "Sneaky Blihter" (his primary) and the GM decides that he can use this to make a feint that confuses the flying Frenchman. Therefore, the result is a tie. Archibald narrowly misses the Man, but the Man has to leave off his sabotage for the moment. The fight continues...

It may well be that players don't want to go for a no-holds-barred scrap; they may want to tackle their opponent more creatively, say restraining them, or knocking them unconscious. Under these circumstances, as long as the player states what they are trying to achieve before they make the roll, that is what happens if they succeed. Otherwise, damage will be dealt as usual. As always, GM discretion is required as to whether or not the action would be feasible under the circumstances.

Not satisfied with breaking things, the Men from the Ministry also decide to try and gas our plucky heroes. Prudence, normally a mild-mannered Librarian, is engaged in a tussle with one of the dastardly Ministry Men for a gas-mask. In order to use her Swordsticks Attribute of "How Dare You Talk to a Lady Like That!" (the ability to brawl with unexpected weaponry), Prudence's player describes how she intends to batter the nasty Man with the gas-mask until he leaves her alone or he's unconscious, whichever happens first. The GM is happy with this use of the Attribute and calls for a roll. Prudence's player rolls a 5, for a total of 7, and the poor Man rolls a 2, for a total of 5, with his "Strong-arm Tactics" primary Swordsticks Attribute. He thus suffers the ignominy of being beaten senseless by an irate bookworm, and Prudence saves herself from the effects of the knock-out gas, just in the nick of time.

DAMAGE

If a character is injured, either as a result of combat or some other dreadful mishap, they lose a level in all Attribute categories. This means that the primary Attribute drops to +2, the secondaries to +1, average Attributes to 0, etc. Further

injury reduces the levels again, until the primary Attribute hits 0. When this happens, the character is knocked unconscious and will require some sort of medical aid.

Archibald's fight with the Man from the Ministry did not end well; the craven coward shot him in the arm before Archibald was able to take him down with a well-hefted mallet. This knocks all of Archibald's Attributes down by 1 point. This makes his attempt to drive the mole machine out of the back of an airborne submarine all the more difficult...

DEATH

GMs should not write plots that deliberately seek to bump characters off; it's very poor form and is guaranteed to alienate players. Sometimes, however, death cannot be avoided, and there are many films and novels where a major protagonist dies part way through because it serves the purpose of the story. **CC&S** is a pulp game and people do have a habit of getting bumped off in them, too.

There will be times when, despite the GMs best attempts to avoid it, the dice and the story just say it's time for a character to call it a day and head off to the big engineering workshop in the sky. As a GM, trying to keep characters alive in the face of all the odds diminishes the story you are trying to tell, no matter how tempting it may be. As long as a death is dramatically satisfying, it can add greatly to the atmosphere of a game and players will respect that if it's handled sensitively and appropriately. Players, even in pulp games you can stretch coincidence too far and sometimes you just need to let it go. Be dignified about it and give your character the best possible send off you can. You can always develop a long lost relative to avenge their death at a later date!

Should the situation arise, the GM should always allow the player to narrate a gloriously heroic deathbed scene or act of remarkable self-sacrifice for full tear-jerking effect.

And remember, if you don't find the body, they ain't dead...

And sometimes even when you do find the body, they still ain't dead...

HEALING

Exactly how healing works is at the GM's discretion, although may we suggest using the system mentioned in **Chapter 1**: a successful first-aid or medical type roll restores +1 Attribute level to the recipient. Naturally, the character need not be unconscious to have an Attribute level restored by well-timed medical intervention. However, to completely restore a character to full health if they have been badly hurt should require rest and proper medical treatment; this could become part of the game, or could occur in the down-time between sessions.

Alternatively GMs might allow anyone with a medical skill to bring a character all the way back up to perfect, glowing health in time for the next scene if they roll well enough, with nothing more to show for the character's narrow escape than a strategically placed bandage or scar (for, as we have already noted, the ladies do love a man with a strategically placed bandage or scar).

Once the dust has settled, Prudence and Scarlet decide that someone really should have a look at Archibald's poor arm. Both have Attributes that could be relevant; Scarlet has "Off Piste" (a secondary Cogs Attribute that allows her to track and survive in hostile environments, which she argues would include basic first aid skills) and Prudence has "I'm Sure I Read That in a Book Somewhere" (the Cogs Attribute that allows her to recall practical/esoteric knowledge). This is Prudence's primary Attribute, so the ladies decide that Prudence should have the first shot at it (no pun intended). The GM decides that she needs to meet or beat a Tricky difficulty (5), which she does easily. His wound is now clean and neatly bandaged, removing his Attribute penalties, but the GM decrees that Archibald should favour his arm until it can be seen to by a proper doctor. There are no rules to cover this, but it adds to the roleplaying experience and could be useful in the story at a later point.

Whichever system is decided upon, the main point is to be consistent and stick with it. If everyone agrees a system isn't working for you, adapt it to one that does.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: CHANGING ATTRIBUTES

Should a character start to develop in unexpected ways during play (that is to say, should the player decide that they've picked the wrong Attribute to be their primary Attribute), then the player can swap their primary Attribute with one of their secondaries. This may well require the narration of an appropriate montage scene to explain exactly why the character is now suddenly much more proficient than they used to be. Players may also want to change their character's profession (and potentially their primary Attribute, if the two are closely tied), which would be managed in the same way.

Roberto has retired from Circus life after falling in with a spirited bunch of misfits and is now concentrating more on his inventions. Circus Strongman is no longer a fitting professional title, so he would like to change it to Amateur Inventor. The GM has no problems with this, but points out that Roberto's Attributes will need to be shuffled. Richard alters Roberto's primary Attribute to "Not as Dumb as He Looks" and downgrades "Amazing Strength" to a secondary Attribute. The GM decides that this really isn't too big a shift, so doesn't call for a montage sequence as it has effectively been dealt with during play.

In extreme cases, a change of profession may warrant a virtually complete change of Attributes, not just swapping primaries and secondaries. Any major changes like this should be managed in stages. Any completely new Attribute must first be taken as a secondary for at least one game session before it can be upgraded to a primary Attribute (and something else must be nominated as the primary if this is the Attribute being replaced). If the player wants to completely change all of their Attributes, they can only do so at a rate of one Attribute per session (or even one every two or three sessions, if the changes are particularly big). Such dramatic alterations definitely warrant some justification on the player's part and at least one montage scene.



After several more sessions, Richard decides that Roberto really needs to shuffle his Attributes a bit more to fit with how the character has developed. He wants to move "Not as Dumb as He Looks" into Cakes (because it could just as easily be a social Attribute) and add a new Cogs Attribute "Man with a Shed" as befits his now cemented status as a tinkerer and producer of gadgets. The GM will allow this, but the new Attribute starts off as a secondary at +2. The GM also requires a montage of Roberto building his new shed outside the miniature stripy Big Top he calls home and stocking it with interesting and unusual objects and machinery. During this time, "Not as Dumb as He Looks" remains as Roberto's primary Attribute. After the next game session, Richard can make "Man with a Shed" his new primary.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: REPUTATION & SPECIALISATION

Even if a character is happy with their abilities, there is always room for improvement. Reputation Points represent a character's growing fame (or infamy); new characters will have one Reputation Point because they are experts in their own field, but may be little known outside of it.

Every time a player rolls a natural 6, their character gains one Reputation Point. The GM may also wish to reward players for excellent characterisation, be it heroic or dastardly (as long as it is in-keeping with the character's usual behaviour or there is a very good reason for the deviation). As long as the GM is consistent with how they award Reputation Points, they will avoid charges of favouritism.

At the end of a session, there is an extra Reputation Point available; this is for the players to award to one of their

number as a reward for playing their character to the hilt during the game. Just who gets it should be decided by a group discussion. A player isn't allowed to nominate themselves for the Point and there must be a consensus on who is rewarded. In the event of a tie, the GM has the casting vote.

In the event of a failed ability attempt (including a natural 1), the player can spend a Reputation Point in exchange for another dice roll. They can only do this once per challenge; a player cannot keep spending Reputation Points on the same roll over and over again until they get the result they want. The re-roll is granted because the character realises just in the nick of time that they are about to do something really stupid that could ruin their reputation. If they fail again, they'll know what they did wrong, but fate was not on their side this time...

Archibald is currently at the controls of the Prof's mole machine, which is rapidly plummeting earthwards having recently burst out of the back of an airborne submarine (don't ask, it would take far too long to explain; let's just say it's all down to those pesky Men from the Ministry). Needless to say, the Prof, Prudence and Scarlet are getting rather perturbed at the sight of the rapidly approaching ground. The GM calls for an Epicly Difficult (difficulty 8) roll. Fortunately, Archibald's primary Attribute is "Pedal to the Metal" (drive/pilot any vehicle) and he's feeling rather confident. Unfortunately, the die is not in agreement and Archibald rolls a 3, for a total of 6. Knowing how critical it is that they survive this, Archibald decides to sacrifice a Reputation Point; after all, it would be terrible to die in such an embarrassing manner when he is the World's greatest driver. This time he gets a 5, for a total of 8 – bang on what he needs. Just in the nick of time, he manages to re-pitch the flaps on the machine so that they will hit the ground at exactly the right angle to execute the perfect digging sequence!

The maximum number of Reputation Points a character can have at any one time is 6. Once spent, they do not regenerate, but any left unspent at the end of a gaming session are carried forward to the next one.

If a player wishes, once they have acquired 6 Reputation Points, they can trade them in for a Specialisation Point. The Specialisation chosen must fit within its respective Attribute and reflect the way the character has been played so far, as it represents good old-fashioned, in the field, hands-on experience. Specialisation Points can be added to dice rolls that are covered by that particular specialisation but no others. The GM's decision is final as to what rolls they can and cannot be applied to. As the name suggests, the specialisation must be a relatively narrow field.

Roberto has "Man with a Shed" (tinkerer and gadget maker) as his primary Attribute. During the course of a story, he gains 6 Reputation Points and decides to trade them in for a Specialisation Point. As he seems to spend a lot of his time dealing with clockwork mechanisms of one sort or another, he decides that his Specialisation should be in clockwork. From now on, every time he deals with a clockwork mechanism, he can add an additional +1 to anything he rolls (although a natural 1 will still be an unfortunate failure).

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Below is an encounter that happened during a play-test session. One character is a generally respectable, though rather eccentric, gentleman called Obadiah Nimrod (played by Matthew). He is ably assisted by Albert Smith, a street urchin who Nimrod has taken under his wing (played by Richard). Albert has rushed off to find a sneaky way in to a Government building in the dead of night, without telling Nimrod. Unluckily for Albert, his young friend Daisy (a non-player character, or NPC) has dropped him in it, and Nimrod is hard on his heels to try and prevent Albert from getting into too much trouble.

GM: Albert knows this building, then?

Richard: No, he's never been here before. Not the sort of place an urchin would ever want to come to, normally.

GM: So he has no idea where the back door would be?

Richard: Er, no, not really.

GM: Right, I think that calls for a roll. What Attributes do you have?

Richard: My Cogs is "Knows a Trick or Two", which covers a variety of illegal scams and activities.

GM: That would cover breaking and entering, certainly. And it's your primary?

Richard: Yes, it is, so +3 to whatever I roll.

GM: Well, it's dark and you don't know the location, but you're pretty good at this sort of thing, so it's only going to be a Tricky roll.

Richard: So I have to get what to succeed?

GM: As long as your roll plus your Attribute bonus is 5 or higher, you'll have cracked it.

Richard: Okay here goes... <rolls>

Oh, that's not good: a natural 1. And I don't have any Reputation Points left...

GM: Oops! Oh well, these things are sent to try us.

Young Albert has a hunt round the building, but is so tired and hungry that he loses interest part way through his search. That's a really high wall protecting the back of the building, and it's not as if there's anyone around at this time of night. Surely there'd be no harm in just having a jemmy at the front door?

Matthew: Oh dear. Am I close enough to see him doing this?

GM: Yes, Daisy came and told you almost as soon as Albert left so you're really not that far behind him. But as you approach, you can see that a policeman has also caught sight of Albert and is going to investigate.

Richard: Bugger. Have I noticed the policeman?

GM: Nope.

Matthew: Is Daisy with me?

GM: Do you want her to be with you?

Matthew: Yes.



GM: Then she's with you. She grabs your coat tails and whimpers, "Ere, mister, wot you gunna do to 'elp Albert? You can't let that bobby get 'im".

Matthew: "Never fear, Daisy my child, I have the perfect plan. Leave the talking to me and all will be well. Come along!" I march out directly towards Albert and shout "Ello, 'ello, 'ello, what's all this then, young fella me chap?"

GM: What does Albert do?

Richard: He looks up and tries to decide whether to make a run for it or not, then realises its Mr. Obadiah. He still hasn't seen the policeman.

Matthew: What is the policeman doing?

GM: Well, he's looking a bit confused, to be honest with you. I mean, you're not in uniform and it is the middle of the night...

Matthew: Right, has Albert said anything to me?

GM: Richard?

Richard: Yes, he manages to stammer "Sir?" just as he sees the policeman.

Matthew: I start to tell him off. "No, no boy, that's not the line! How many times have I told you to learn the words?"

GM: The policeman has reached the three of you now. He's looking really confused.

Richard: So is Albert.

GM: "Aye, aye, Sir, may I ask what's going on?"

Matthew: "Ah, Constable! It is Constable, isn't it? Yes, excellent. Well, my dear chap, we're rehearsing aren't we?"

GM: Albert notices that Daisy is making shushing gestures from behind Nimrod's back.

Richard: That's alright, Albert has no intention of saying anything. He thinks Mr. Obadiah's finally gone cuckoo.

GM: The policeman takes a long, slow look at you. "Rehearsing, Sir?"

Matthew: Can I roll to try and convince him?

GM: Yes, of course you can. What Attribute do you want to use?

Matthew: I think Cakes would be best.

GM: And that is?

Matthew: "Bit of a Scoundrel". Seems appropriate, given the circumstances...

GM: <grins> Yes, it does. Right, you're doing such a good job with the persuasion anyway, and you do have a very authoritative air, so the difficulty is only going to be Tricky rather than Extremely Tricky.

Matthew: I have +2 in "Bit of a Scoundrel", so I need to roll a 3 or more to succeed.

GM: Basically, yes.

Matthew: <rolls> Natural 6. Not bad.

GM: Fate is obviously going for the cosmic balance tonight, then! Don't forget to give yourself a Reputation Point for that. Right, so the policeman is pretty much going to believe anything you tell him from here on in.

Matthew: "Yes, my good man, rehearsing. Have you not heard of Sir Paul Cottingley's theatrical immersion theory? It's all the rage in London! No, no, obviously not and why would you, eh? London's such a ways away from here."

GM: "No, Sir. I mean, yes, Sir."

Matthew: "I know it seems like an odd time of night for such things, but Sir Paul is very clear on these matters. For the boy to give his best performance, he must feel the chill of the night air, the exhilaration of the crime, the terror of discovery, so that he may fully portray them on stage when his moment comes!"

Richard: "I'm still not sure, Mr. Ob..."

Matthew: I interrupt him before he can tell the Constable my name.

GM: That's alright, the poor man's really looking rather bemused now. I don't think he noticed.

Matthew: "Well, young man, I think we've taken up quite enough of the Constable's valuable time this evening. Apologise now for your lacklustre performance. We can but hope you will have learnt sufficient to make a better fist of it on stage."

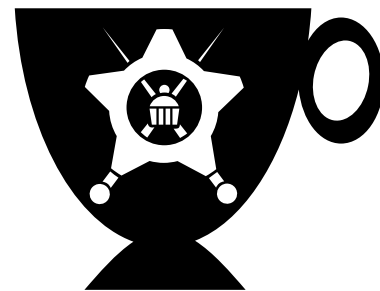
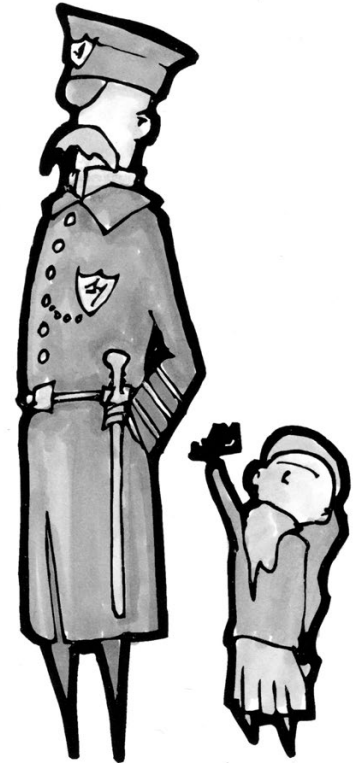
Richard: "Yes, sir. Sorry, Constable."

GM: The policeman mumbles something about it being quite alright and starts to leave.

Matthew: Make sure I get his name before he goes. I am a patron of the Theatre Royal and I'd like to send the chap some tickets for his troubles. Anonymously, of course.

GM: Of course. So what do you do now?

Matthew: Well, we go and find the back door. Follow me, young Albert, and I'll show you where it is.





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ACT 3: CREATING STORIES

THE PLOT THICKENS

It takes practice to become good at something, and creating stories from scratch is no exception. We already mentioned in *Chapter 1* the need to take into account your players' likes and dislikes, but there are a few other important points to bear in mind when you set out to develop a scenario.

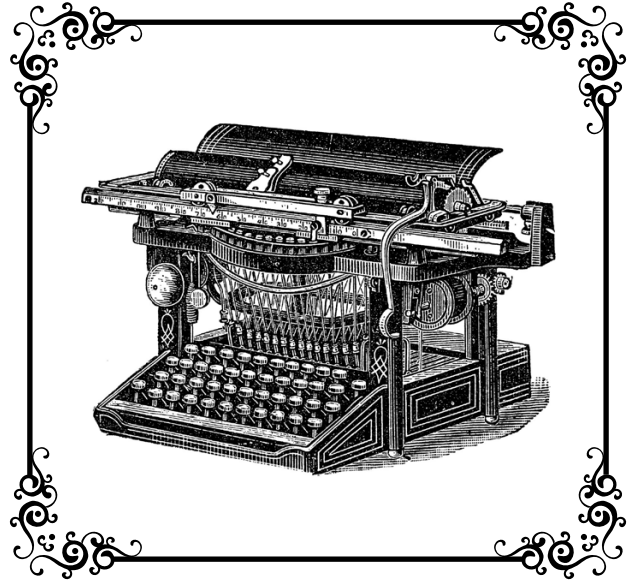
As with playing the game, there's no one right way to write one. Some people can literally take a few words and craft them into stunning games with no background notes or prompt sheets at all. Others prefer to have the scenario carefully written out, with every potential detail noted and cross-referenced. Some start with a background setting and then see what type of story they can build from it, yet others will have a clear idea of the major plot points they want to happen, then develop a background to fit around them.

Trite as it might sound, your story does need to have a beginning, a middle and an end. Sadly, it's not quite that straight forward in a roleplaying game; as a GM you will usually have quite a bit of control over setting up the story and presenting it to the players, but after that it will get quite a bit more complicated as the players take the ball and run with it (occasionally in what you, as the GM, might consider to be completely the wrong direction).

Make sure that the beginning of the scenario gives the players both a reason to be interested and enough information to set them on their way. Try to avoid gaming clichés where possible (you know, a strange man walks up to you in a bar and recruits you and three other total strangers to go off and do something for him), unless of course that's exactly the sort of thing your players love. Having the characters all be employees of the same company, or all members of the same club (a very Victorian thing to do) establishes a reason for them all to know each other (or, at the very least, *of* each other). Because of the period the game is set in, it is perfectly in-keeping for a myriad of different people to be invited to public lectures, dinner parties, balls, funerals and exhibition openings. This will allow you to bring together any characters that haven't already determined a possible acquaintance during character creation.

However you write your scenarios, it is essential to have a clear goal in mind. It's all too easy to have a really good idea about how to hook the characters in and who you want them to meet (particularly if you're planning on involving historical characters), only for it to fizzle out because you haven't figured out what the point of the story was. Sometimes you may have a cracking dénouement all ready to go and will have to work backwards to a logical starting point; it isn't important which direction the story gets written in, but that it has a definite destination.

Of course, there is always the danger of being too prescriptive about your end point to the detriment of the rest of the story, because you'll wind up forcing your players into a set pattern of actions just to get to the amazing ending that you've created for them. In that respect, you're much better off having a reasonably nebulous conclusion, such as "the destruction of



the evil scientist's lair" or "succeed in rescuing the Lady Helena from the dread sky pirates." Flesh out the evil scientist, who he is, what he looks like, what his lab contains, what it is that he's up to that needs stopping and the different ways that the characters might be able to pull it off, then let your players fill in the fine details of exactly how it all gets done as they play. You'll have given them the tools they need and they'll have created their own mythology, so everyone will have contributed to the plot's resolution and that, after all, is what we're aiming for.

But what about the middle of the story? One way to tackle it is to place all of the relevant plot information with NPCs, in items or at specific locations. Figure out what the players need to know to reach their goal, then spread that information around between a variety of people, objects and places. As long as the characters find all of the information, they will proceed smoothly to the finale (but always make sure that there are alternative ways of getting critical information to the players in case they accidentally toddle off in a different direction to the one you had planned).

Just in case the players do wander off in completely the wrong direction during a game, have a few stock NPCs ready for them to interact with (see the section on creating NPCs below for more details). These NPCs might act to gently nudge the characters back in the right direction (if there is such a thing), or as mentioned above, be an alternative method of providing them with what they need to finish the story. You could use this to add a bit of local colour to the game, but it could also be the beginnings of recurring characters that the players go to for advice when things get sticky.

You might prefer to create the middle of your story as a series of set-piece encounters. If so, think carefully about whether they need to happen in a particular order (a linear plot, like the earliest published roleplaying adventures) or whether the order is unimportant (a more freeform style). It takes great care to run a linear adventure and still give the players a sense of contributing to the story. If players do go to the set pieces in the wrong order in a linear adventure, you

need to think fast to stop the story from unravelling, so a freeform approach is often easier to manage.

Don't be afraid to use books, TV or film as an inspiration, because let's face it, there's really not that much new under the sun. Try not to make it too obvious exactly where your plot points have come from, though; nothing derails a game quite as quickly as the players working out that they're actually in a well-known movie plot, particularly if that then allows them to exploit out-of-character knowledge to complete the game. Nodding respectfully to other people's work is great - mugging it wholesale isn't.

ADVENTUROUS NOTIONS

The Empire of Steam is a rich and varied world, so where do you start? One way would be to use the Attribute categories to give you a theme: *Cogs* could be investigative, *Cakes* social and *Swordsticks* could be all-out brawling adventure. With this in mind, let us present a few story ideas that may be used to introduce characters to the world in all its glory:

Cogs Street musicians have, of late, been disappearing from the City's highways and byways. Who or what could be behind this vanishing act? An aggrieved music lover? Or is there a more sinister explanation? Could it have anything to do with the rumoured "special" Babbage Engine (p.24)? Who knows? The Ministry of Computational Sciences certainly isn't saying...

Cakes Patronage is frequently of great import to both adventurers and inventors; it only tends to have a tarnished reputation when it comes to its involvement in politics. Still, you find yourself currently in need of funds for your next project. Unless you fancy robbing a mail train (not advisable, given the sorts of weapons the guards have these days), it's time to get your glad-rags on. There is a society ball fast approaching, and rumour has it that several great philanthropists and patrons will be there, such as the Cowper-Temples (moral and social reformists), Sir Lowthian Bell (iron-master and MP from Durham) and even, potentially, Andrew Carnegie (over on a visit from America with his family). Just who can you talk into supporting what?

Swordsticks The Americans and Canadians aren't the only ones interested in space (see p.24). Russian scientist and engineer Konstantin Tsiolkovsky is already designing vehicles for space travel and has proposed a monumental space elevator to take people to the stars. The Canadians aren't happy about this, and are looking for someone to find out all they can about the project and whether or not it really is inspired by the Eiffel Tower...

Should the characters need a patron for their misadventures, it is worth remembering that the Royal Geographical Society was founded in 1830. Having started originally as a dinner club, it gained its Royal Charter from Her Majesty in 1859. From 1832 it granted a variety of medals and awards for geographical research, public engagement and education, and sponsored some of the most famous names in British exploration, such as Livingstone, Stanley and Shackleton, amongst others. A quick perusal of the various timelines in *Chapter 3* may also provide the necessary stimulus, should the old brain cells be proving recalcitrant.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

A non-player character (NPC) is, basically, anyone and everyone else that the characters talk to during the course of a game. They are usually run by the GM (although there can be exceptions; see below). There are several different levels of NPCs, depending on what role they need to fulfil in your story.

At the bottom of the scale you have the faceless grunts and urchins who are there, at the most basic level, to provide something for the characters to hit during a fight. They may also be the background regulars at the characters' favourite watering hole (sounds a bit posher than pub, yes?) or the nice ordinary people milling about in the street minding their own business.

When you are creating this type of NPC, think about how you're going to use them. If you need a quick and dirty character that really isn't essential to the plot (the sort that a player character collars in the street and starts randomly talking to, f'rinstance), just give them a +1 to any Attribute rolls. There's really no need to go to all the trouble of giving descriptive names to those Attributes; they are only average, everyday people, after all.

If, on the other hand, you want them to be a bit more of a challenge, define their *Cogs*, *Cakes* and *Swordsticks* Attributes. You could give them a name if they're something other than pure butch cannon fodder, and maybe even a Foible. Don't go too mad, though; they are still at the bottom of the pile.



SCALLYWAG

- Cogs** Worth a Pretty Penny (thievery and appraisal) +2
- Cakes** Snot-nosed Urchin (unkempt and frightfully common) +2
- Swordsticks** Slippery as an Eel (fast on his feet, dodges well) +3

At the next level, you will have NPCs who deserve a name and a bit of background. These NPCs might have small but valuable pieces of information to impart to the characters, or they may be casual friends & acquaintances. They could have a Foible, if it suits the plot and, potentially, Reputation Points.

**PENNY ALEXANDER,
LYONS TEA SHOP WAITRESS**

- Cogs** All Up Here, Sir! (superb memory for facts and figures) +3
- Cakes** Sweet Natured Girl (innocent, friendly, kind) +2
- Swordsticks** Bit of Elbow Grease (stamina, perseverance) +2
- Foible** Sweet-tooth (can't resist nibbling on cakes)
- Background** A pleasant child, who works hard to support her widowed mother and six younger siblings.

Then you have your biggies: the NPCs who deserve as much care and thought put into their development as the players put into their characters. These are the major protagonists in a scenario, the crucial people the characters must deal with one way or another. When creating this type of NPC, follow the full character creation rules on pp.9-11, not forgetting to include in their background why they're such important NPCs. This can be in the form of brief notes or all they way up to a story vignette (whatever is easiest for you to use).

**DANIEL CARMICHAEL,
ARTIST**

- Cogs** Capturing the Very Essence (painting & sketching) +3
- Cakes** Such a Familiar Face (sure you've met him somewhere before; slightly distracting) +2
- Swordsticks** Invigorating Walks in the Open Air (stamina & good leg muscles) +2

- Foible** Sucker for a Knick Knack (obsessively collects trinkets)

- RP** 1

Background A very gifted artist and a charming socialite, Mr. Carmichael tends to leave people a little bemused on first acquaintance. It's a skill he uses quite often to extract himself from boring encounters; while the person is desperately trying to remember where they know him from, off he slips. Although not quite famous yet, his reputation is growing. His collecting habits are bordering on kleptomania, though, and if the characters find Lady Evangeline's jade lotus blossom brooch in his studio, he's going to have a lot of questions to answer. He wasn't responsible for the vicious attack on her footman, but he was there when it happened. He didn't see the perpetrator properly, seeing as he was hiding behind the curtains to evade detection, but he can give a rough description and tell the players what the two men were arguing about.

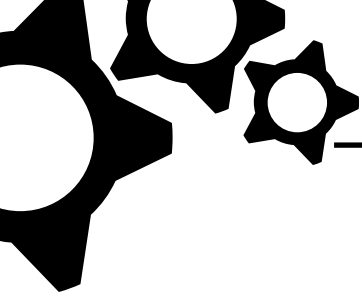
PLANTS IN THE PARTY

There are occasions when you might have visitors coming to play, or you might have a huge plot idea that needs the close co-operation of one of the players. In these cases, you can turn an NPC into a player character (albeit potentially very briefly).

If you have visitors joining the game for a one-off session, then it's easiest for all concerned if the GM creates characters for them. That way, they can be dovetailed into the ongoing storyline so as not to derail it. They may pick up the roles of NPCs that the players have already met but who now have more of an involvement in the plot, or they may be specifically created for that visit. It is possible that the GM may have ever so slightly nefarious plans for the visitors to carry out, such as gently distracting them or assessing them (say, on behalf of a patron), but this needn't be the case. Visiting characters can also be used to plug gaps in a party's skill repertoire.

The real plant in the party is an altogether different beast. A plant is a GM derived character that a player takes on, that as far as the other players know is just the same as the ones they've created for themselves. When it works, it's magnificent, but be warned: if it's mishandled, it could create a lot of ill feeling in a gaming group, so use it sparingly and wisely.

Plants are particularly useful if you do want to write a scenario in which a character death is an essential part of the overarching story, but you have to be patient. Insert the plant weeks ahead of when their death will be so that when it happens, it truly is a jaw dropping moment for the rest of the players. Obviously, this needs a lot of co-operation from a player who the GM trusts not to blab, and the portrayal has to be utterly convincing. Whatever you do, don't just use a plant simply to make the characters' (or the players') lives as difficult as possible; no one will thank you for it.



Chapter 3

The Empire of Steam

The setting for *CC&S* is the Empire of Steam. The following chapter is broken down into three sections, each dealing with a different aspect of the history of the Empire. The *Cogs* section will be of most interest to those fascinated by the engineering advances of the era, the *Cakes* section will (hopefully) entertain those keen on social and artistic history and the *Swordsticks* section deals with the politics and multiple skirmishes taking place at this time.

A brief timeline is included at the end of each section for those who do not wish to delve into the minutiae, outlining the key points that all characters would be aware of (and perhaps a few that they might not be!). Also included for the completist are timelines which detail what was happening in the real world during this period.

ACT 1: COGS

(Wherein the history of engineering and science are discussed.)

EUROPE

George Stephenson was born in 1781 and built his first steam engine in 1814. The more famous engine “Locomotion” was finished in 1825, the same year that the Stockton and

Darlington railway opened, with Stephenson quite literally at the reins (as it were). Along with his son Robert, he was an innovator in the design of steam engines and railways, winning the Rainhill trials with “Rocket” in 1829.

During the last years of his life, he began to avail himself of the design opportunities afforded by the miraculous Babbage Engines (or analytical engines, as they were before their renaming). He had long harboured the idea that steam engines could be made *independently directional*, a thought which many of his contemporaries believed to be ludicrous. Only his previously exemplary career reassured his financial backers.

The work on the directional steam assemblage was still in the rudimentary stages when Stephenson died in 1848, but the work was carried on by his son Robert with the view to it becoming a lasting monument to his father’s innovation. Her Majesty’s Government was not slow in realising the uses of such a contraption and approached Stephenson to develop it exclusively on their behalf, initially for potential military applications.

Undoubtedly the greatest engineer of the age was Isambard Kingdom Brunel, famous for the Clifton Suspension Bridge and the Great Western Railway, amongst other projects. Although he eschewed the use of Babbage Engines for much of his career, difficulties with the design of his atmospheric railway system in 1848 converted him to their possibilities. Although he had little to do with the actual building of the London Underground, his triumph with atmospheric traction apparatus led Charles Pearson to abandon steam trains as a viable option for the Tube, as it would eventually become known. The first line (the Metropolitan) opened between Paddington and Farringdon in January 1863 and was hailed as a miracle of “clean” transport.

Brunel was a major figure in the design and construction of trans-Atlantic shipping and work began on the Great Eastern in 1852. Thanks to the Babbage Engines and their calculations, work ran smoothly enough that he was able to switch his attentions to a collaboration with Robert Stephenson that had been ordered by a Royal (and highly secret) Commission in 1851, as a direct result of the revelations of the Great Exhibition. This project would lead to the magnificent Her Majesty’s Flying Steam City Atlantis.

The invention of the Lawrence turret lathe in 1855 enabled repetitive and accurate cutting of metal machine parts.

THE DIRECTIONAL STEAM ASSEMBLAGE

Consisting of a steam boiler and a dazzling array of pipes, gauges and levers, the directional steam assemblage, or DSA, relies on shifting the pressure created by the boiler into defined sections of piping, thus generating lift and thrust. Think of it as a steam-powered anti-gravity device with built-in steering capacity. By all conventional engineering wisdom, it shouldn’t work. But it does.



HER MAJESTY'S FLYING STEAM CITY ATLANTIS

This behemoth of the skies was constructed between 1864 and 1875 in Brunel's Bristol shipyards and the newly opened Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast. The six gigantic DSAs required to keep it aloft were built by Stephenson's Newcastle engineering works. Sadly, both Stephenson and Brunel died before construction began; still, it stands as a monument to their collective genius. It was officially opened by Benjamin Disraeli on behalf of Her Majesty in the summer of 1875.

The city is two and a half miles across at its widest point; the upper level resembles three interconnected giant cogs, one within another, whilst the lower layer contains two cogs and the engines that keep it aloft. It is anchored to an artificial island (Monturiol) in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean by twelve enormous chains. Its inhabitants affectionately refer to it merely as "The Cog," which is so much easier to say than its full name.

The outermost of the upper cogs is known as the Docking Cog; this is where most people and lighter freight are received, and almost all of The Cog's businesses are located. Manned artillery positions at the end of each docking arm help to protect the city against potential sky-pirate attacks (not that anyone has been silly enough to try – yet). Next is the Residential Cog, which contains accommodation, parks and recreational facilities for the city's inhabitants and visitors. At the centre of the upper cogs is the Administrative Cog, which houses numerous foreign embassies and the offices of Her Majesty's Government, run by Sir Jethroe Artrobus. At its heart stands the Pinnacle, an impressive spire with awe-inspiring views over The Cog, in whose basement sits the city's Babbage Engine. It also houses a rather interesting

museum, which quite inexplicably isn't actually open to the public.

The lower engineering level is known locally as "The Inferno," due to its constantly running boilers. The six DSAs are named after Greek gods of the winds (Hermes, Aeolus, Eurus, Boreas, Zephyrus and Notus), and lie nestled one behind each "arm" of the Docking Cog. The city's mighty engines are fuelled by coal dug from beneath the ocean, and winched up to the lower ring by a gigantic paternoster, which is also used to bring up heavy freight shipped in to the island of Monturiol below.

Monturiol is home to the mine that feeds The Cog's DSAs and the associated miners' community, as well as a joint Army and Navy garrison and docking for ships and submarines. It acts not only as a stopping off and refuelling point for many ships, but also as a base for research of the nearby ocean. There is also an abattoir on the island to ensure the availability of fresh meat (no live animals are allowed on The Cog after a series of unfortunate early incidents), and there are plans to extend the island to create its own farm.



Thanks to the Babbage Engines, a fully automated turret lathe, controlled by means of a "brain" wheel, was constructed by Mr. C. M. Spenser in 1863. Technology was now developing at an unprecedented rate, much to the bewilderment of the populace at large.

Although the vast majority of people relied on trains and ships if they wished to travel, the pioneering work of Henri Giffard on steam-powered dirigibles had enabled safe, powered flight for those who could afford it. In fact, by 1875 ocean going ships were pretty much only used by the poor, for bulk transport, or other tedious operations, such as the laying of undersea telegraph cables.

Of course, without the intervention of one man, none of these engineering advances would ever have been possible.

Charles Babbage was born in 1791 and in 1822 he wrote a letter to Sir Humphry Davy (who, along with George Stephenson, was the inventor of a miner's safety lamp) describing his plans for a difference engine that would calculate polynomials, incredibly useful mathematical functions used in the ever expanding field of engineering. Sir Humphry encouraged Babbage to present his work to the Royal Astronomical Society, who in turn funded Babbage to produce his computational machine. Work did not proceed without difficulty, but in 1833 Babbage met Ada Byron, Countess of Lovelace (more often referred to as simply Ada Lovelace).

The daughter of the mad, bad and dangerous to know romantic poet Lord Byron, Lovelace was a remarkably gifted young woman. Her level-headedness prevented Babbage's

often self-destructive nature from derailing the project, and her foresight recognised the potential in Babbage's machines. Her influence meant that the Government kept funding Babbage when he transferred his attentions in 1834 from the difference engine to the analytical engine, an actually programmable computing device. (Indeed, many uncharitable people have commented that Lovelace was the actual brains behind the operation, but her gentle sex being a general disadvantage in the field of engineering at the time, made Babbage a suitable foil for her genius).

In 1843 Lovelace collected and published her rules for programming the analytical engine in an independent paper. The analytical engines, though huge, began to take the nation by storm and soon every major city in Her Majesty's Empire had one. Routine tasks were now accomplished with great ease and accuracy, and although some human computers were wont to riot occasionally at their redundancy, most took the opportunity to retrain as punch-card programmers. A separate Government department, the Ministry of the Computational Sciences (MoCS), was created to oversee the engines' implementation and running. The entire network was fully connected by dedicated telegraph cables in 1869.

Sadly, in 1852, Ada Lovelace died. Babbage never truly recovered from the blow, descending more and more into the eccentricities that had nearly wrecked his early work on the engines. At this time, unbeknownst to all but a few in the MoCS, Babbage embarked on possibly his greatest project – the Babbage Intelligence. Beneath the basements of the International Exhibition buildings on Exhibition Road, South Kensington, Babbage supervised a series of excavations, then began building work on a vast analytical engine. Even the arrival upstairs in 1860 of the Science Collections from the South Kensington Museum did little to interrupt his machinations.

When Babbage died in 1871, a few months after completing the Intelligence, the great engine sparked into life (perhaps quite literally). Those in the Ministry are reticent to comment on rumours that Babbage transferred his consciousness into the machine and will merely agree with those who discover its existence that it is uncannily like the inventor in temperament (a fact they attempt to put down to remarkable programming and an immensely complex punch-card library). All analytical engines were renamed in Babbage's honour in 1872.

THE AMERICAS

The United States of America emerged from their four year Civil War in 1865. Coincidentally, this was also the year that Monsieur Jules Verne published "From the Earth to the Moon", although initially it was those to the North that took the most interest in this salient fact.

And so the one nation under God entered what became known as their "Gilded Age", a period of prosperity and advancement funded by wealthy industrialists, financiers and philanthropists. Cornelius Vanderbilt was foremost amongst these guiding lights and he gathered to himself Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan and A. W. Mellor, forming an upright Association of Commerce and Advancement (ACA). With their command of steel, coal, construction, shipping and banking, these patriarchs were ideally placed to influence the future

direction of their nation. They made it their business to identify, nurture and, at times, railroad science and engineering projects of significance into existence. It was Morgan who brought a man by the name of Thomas Edison to the attention of his learned associates in 1869. By fortuitous positioning and a determination to succeed, Edison was carving out a niche for himself in the new field of electricity. Let us not comment further here on his business conduct; it is sufficient to say that Mr. Edison was *no gentleman*. But then, the ACA were not looking for gentlemen; they were looking for success and in Edison, they found it.

Having fallen far behind the British in terms of steam-power, the Americans decided that they would lead the pack in this emerging science, giving Edison whatever he wanted to bring his projects to fruition. They also recruited a Scots émigré by the name of Alexander Graham Bell in 1871 to work alongside Edison on the development of America's own electrical computational engines. The relationship between the two men is prickly, partly due to each preferring his own company and mode of work, but mostly due to the fact that the machine is already being nick-named the Edison Device. Still, the ACA has high hopes of their collaboration.

One other area that a subsidiary of the ACA became interested in was that of space flight, although much later than their Northern neighbours, the new country of Canada. In fact, the all conquering Hudson's Bay Company, first granted a Royal Charter in 1670, had been drawing their plans in this direction for many years before their land holdings were incorporated by the British Crown in 1867. With the vast resources and land-mass available to them, the Hudson's Space Company began development in earnest after 1865, when they tempted Jules Verne to join them as chief adviser on their "space gun" project. The irony of this was not lost on the North American Space Exploration Board (NASEB), particularly as they had believed Verne's loyalties to lie with them, given the flattering tone of his aforementioned novel.

Although the exact location of the Canadian research facility is currently unknown, it is believed to be in the prairies of Rupert's Land (Saskatchewan). The Americans are said to be concentrating their efforts at the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah, where they believe that the visible curvature of the earth will give them an advantage in launching their craft when the time comes. The Americans are determined to beat their Northern neighbours to the Moon. Many nations are watching this so-called "Great Space Race" with interest, particularly the Russian Empire, the only other nation on earth besides Her Majesty's to have the resources and land needed for such an undertaking.

A BRIEF TIMELINE OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING IN THE EMPIRE OF STEAM

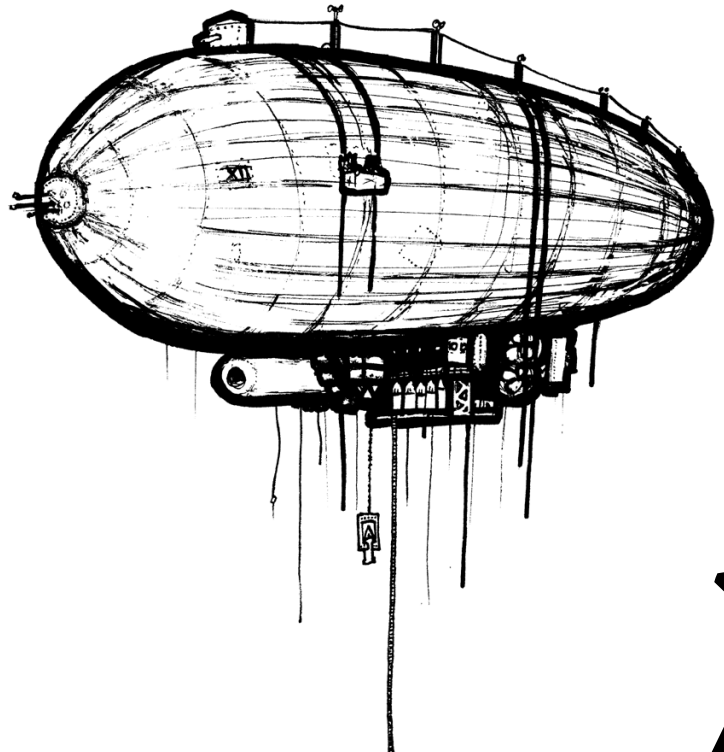
- 1836** Babbage completes the first working prototype of his analytical engine.
- 1843** Ministry of Computational Sciences founded in response to Ada Lovelace finalising the rules for programming the analytical engines.

- 1847 George Stephenson begins work on the Directional Steam Assemblage.
- 1851 Henri Giffard demonstrates his dirigibles at the Great Exhibition.
- 1863 The fully automated turret lathe comes on line, enabling production of the parts necessary for the Brunel/Stephenson project.
- 1869 The Empire's Babbage Engines are finally all linked by telegraphic cables.
- 1871 The Babbage Intelligence comes online.

TIMELINE OF REAL WORLD SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES

Although many of the people mentioned in the history of the Empire of Steam are real, the actual timing of events has been altered in some cases to take into account the presence of Babbage's analytical engines. Just as modern computers have allowed technology to advance at an accelerated pace in our world, their pseudo-historical counterparts have enabled such leaps in their world. Entries in italics are events that happened much earlier in the Empire of Steam, or didn't happen at all.

- 1781 George Stephenson born.
- 1791 Charles Babbage born.
- 1800 The French build a human powered submarine called the Nautilus.
- 1803 Robert Stephenson born.
- 1806 Isambard Kingdom Brunel born.
- 1815 Ada Byron, Countess of Lovelace, born.
- 1822 Babbage presents his idea on the difference engine to the Royal Astronomical Society. Funding arrives in 1823.
- 1825 Stockton and Darlington railway opens.
- 1829 The steam engine "Rocket" wins the Rainhill trials.
- 1833 Babbage and Lovelace meet for the first time.
- 1834 *Funding runs out for Babbage's difference engines, just as Babbage proposes a new analytical engine.*
- 1840 Charles Pearson first proposes the idea of "trains in drains".
- 1842 *The difference engine project officially abandoned by the British Government.*
- 1843 Ada Lovelace publishes a translation of an Italian engineering paper. Her accompanying notes contain the first description of what we would recognise today as computer programming.
- 1847 Thomas Edison born.
- Alexander Graham Bell born.
- 1848 George Stephenson dies.
- Brunel abandons plans for an atmospheric railway due to technical difficulties.*
- 1851 The Great Exhibition in London.
- Henri Giffard designs the first steam-powered dirigible.
- 1852 Ada Byron, Countess of Lovelace, dies.
- Henri Giffard flies his steam powered-dirigible.
- 1853 Parliament approves a bill for the construction of the first London Underground, running from Paddington to Farringdon.
- 1855 Invention of the Lawrence turret lathe.
- 1856 Nikola Tesla born.





- 1858** The first telegram, from Queen Victoria to President Buchanan, is sent across the Atlantic.
- 1859** Robert Stephenson and Isambard Kingdom Brunel both die.
- 1860** The Science Collections are moved from the South Kensington Museum into the former International Exhibition buildings. This is the forerunner of today's Science Museum, where a modern working model of Babbage's Difference Engine No. 2 now resides.
- 1863** The Metropolitan line opens on the London Underground.
- The first non-human powered submarine, Plongeur, is built by the French. It is driven by compressed air.
- 1866** The first fully successful trans-Atlantic telegraph cable is laid by the SS Great Eastern under Sir James Anderson, transmitting 8 words a minute.
- 1867** Spaniard Narcís Monturiol converts his human powered submarine, Ictineo II, to a peroxide propulsion system, creating the world's first combustion-powered submarine.
- Sakichi Toyoda, founding father of Toyota, born.
- 1870** Mitsubishi is first established as a shipping company.
- 1871** Charles Babbage dies.
- Alexander Graham Bell arrives in America from Scotland via Canada.
- 1873** C. M. Spenser designs the first fully automated turret lathe, controlled by a "brain wheel".
- 1874** Von Zeppelin designs the first of his airships.

- 1876** Alexander Graham Bell completes the first telephone call.
- 1883** Edison builds the first complete central power station in Brockton, Massachusetts.
- 1884** J. E. Hall builds the first cyclic elevator or paternoster (named from the first two words in the Latin version of the Lord's Prayer, meaning "our father", due to the lift's resemblance to rosary beads).
- 1891** Tesla coils invented.
- 1901** Marconi achieves the first wireless communication between Britain and Newfoundland.

ACT 2: CAKES

(Wherein the social and artistic refinements of the Empire are discussed.)

EUROPE

La Belle Époque, the Golden Age, actually came quite late to the party; fashionably so, if you wish, officially beginning in 1871. France, in particular, led the world in style where Britain led it in technology. Charles Worth, the father of haute couture, moved from London to Paris and opened his own design house there in 1857, giving a fashion show four times a year. *La Mode Illustrée*, first published in Paris in 1859, regularly featured his work and that of other top designers of the day. The American equivalent, Harper's Bazaar, did not appear for another eight years.

Not only that, but the French headed the field in developing new technologies that would have great social impact, notably that of the motion picture. M. Marey, an eminently practical man, made his motion picture camera look amazingly like a rifle, giving a whole new meaning to the word "shooting".

Life was indeed wonderful for the privileged; they had beautiful clothes and could travel extensively. Thomas Cook began his travel company by selling train tickets for grand days out in 1841, but by 1855 had developed package tours to Europe and by 1860 was running tours to America, making great use of the stately dirigibles now available. The world was a playground for those that could afford it, provided one could avoid all of the fighting that was going on.

Slavery had been completely abolished in Britain in 1834, 30 years before its abolition in America. People of all different nationalities and colours were common in Her Majesty's Empire as a result of Colonial expansion and many were household names. Arthur Wharton was the first black professional footballer and all round sportsman, Mary Seacole was as well known a nurse as Florence Nightingale, and Ira Aldridge was a famous Shakespearean actor.

For the poor, life was just as squalid as it had always been and, depending on where you lived and worked, decidedly more dangerous. The Industrial Revolution had brought vast numbers in from the countryside to work in factories; the hours were long, the conditions dreadful. The behaviour of

many unscrupulous businessmen eventually led to massive social reforms, which improved the Poor's lot somewhat. In some cases the advent of the Babbage Engines helped, but in others they resulted in unemployment and starvation. Poverty, potato famines in Ireland and Scotland, and the dream of something better drove many overseas to seek a fresh start.

Disease was also a constant threat. Many thought that diseases were spread by contaminated air (the so-called miasma effect), but others were not so sure. John Snow helped to prove that micro-organisms caused cholera, having traced an outbreak in 1854 to a contaminated public water pump. Lord Aberdeen, then Prime Minister, requested that the Babbage Engines be used to help Joseph Bazalgette in his engineering works, so that underground sewers could be built in London, thereby reducing the number and severity of cholera outbreaks. Open sewers disappeared from the capital by 1856 and multiple lives were saved. Other towns and cities soon followed suit.

There were many artistic and literary developments during the age; scientific romances were very popular, having been championed by the likes of M. Verne and Mr. Wells. The detective novel was coming into its own after its first appearance in 1841 with Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"; Wilkie Collins and Arthur Conan Doyle were very popular exponents of the genre. Doyle originally dabbled with the idea of scientific romances due to his fascination with technology, but thought better of it.

The Aesthetic Movement believed in beauty over moral and social awareness in the arts. Many cited the rise of technology as the impetus for its creation in 1864, although many more couldn't see what all the fuss was about (the machines were beautiful in their own right, and somehow curiously alive). Eventually there followed an aesthetic dress fashion, the antithesis of haute couture, which was in turn succeeded by the Rational Dress Movement. These rejected the corsetry and bustles of everyday women's fashion for flowing, unrestricted garments.

THE AMERICAS

America's age of prosperity had begun somewhat earlier than *La Belle Époque*, and was rather more dowdily titled. The Gilded Age, as it became known, began just as the Civil War ended. Great waves of émigrés had arrived in both America and Canada during the middle years of the 19th Century as a result of clearances and famine; their expertise helped fan the flames of the continent's newly found prosperity. But it was not all one way; many people moved back in the opposite direction to the Old Country, Britain. They tended to be engineers and scientists who had fallen foul of the ACA and its philanthropic might, all eager for a chance to work with the all mighty Babbage Engines.

As in many other places, the Age was a time of great social upheaval and uncertainty in the former Colony. The new Industrialists were building their own empires, and many had lost their power base with the abolition of slavery. There were frequent "panics" due to over-speculation in stocks, gold and whatever else was the favourite commodity at the time.

It was also a time of great population movement; the continent was settled from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast by the

white settlers, displacing the native populations as they went. Often the pioneer spirit was fuelled by greed as a result of the various gold rushes of the 19th Century, particularly in California. Although the first migrants travelled by stagecoach and wagon trains, later incomers could avail themselves of the luxury of the Trans-continental railway, built between 1863 and 1869. The railroad also allowed previously inhospitable areas to be colonised. Needless to say, the cities of the Pacific coast are somewhat less refined than their older, Eastern cousins, although many have lofty aspirations.

A BRIEF TIMELINE OF SOCIETY AND ART IN THE EMPIRE OF STEAM

- 1834** British slavery abolished.
- 1856** Bazalegette completes his great work, enclosing the London sewers.
- 1860** Thomas Cook takes his first package tour to the North Americas.
- 1864** The creation of the Aesthetic Movement.
- 1865** Jules Verne publishes "From The Earth To The Moon".
- 1881** A teenaged H.G. Wells writes "The First Men in The Moon".

TIMELINE OF REAL WORLD SOCIAL AND ARTISTIC HISTORY

For copious notes on the history of Victorian fashion, www.fashion-era.com is an excellent source. For the history of cinema, a well resourced site, including moving pictures, is: www.precinemahistory.net/index.html. As before, entries in italics happened much earlier in the Empire of Steam, if they happened at all.

- 1794** Cornelius Vanderbilt (shipping and railroad magnate) born.
- 1825** The first permanent photographic image produced.





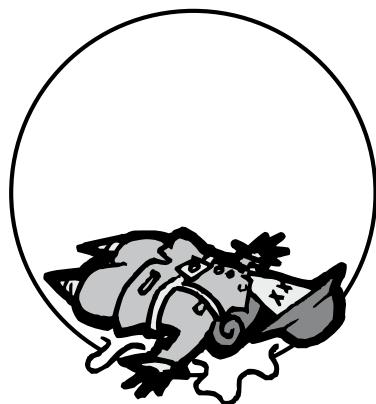
CHAPTER 3: THE EMPIRE OF STEAM

- 1828** Jules Verne born.
- 1834** The British abolish slavery, although most former slaves find themselves forced into “apprenticeships” that are little better than their original situation; this practice is finally ended in 1840.
- 1835** Andrew Carnegie (steel magnate) born.
- 1837** J. P. Morgan (financier) born.
- Tiffany opens in New York. Only later will it specialise in jewellery.
- 1839** The first daguerreotypes are created by M. Jacques Daguerre.
- 1841** Thomas Cook makes his first foray into tourism.
- Edgar Allan Poe publishes “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”.
- 1842** The Mines Act comes into force in Great Britain, preventing women and children from working underground in mines.
- 1845** Irish potato famine begins. It will last until 1852. The Scottish potato famine occurs a year later in 1846, lasting until 1857.
- 1851** The Great Exhibition in London.
- 1854** John Snow becomes the father of modern epidemiology by tracing a cholera outbreak back to a contaminated public water pump. Up until this point, cholera was thought to be caused by miasma or bad air, rather than by waterborne germs.
- 1855** A. W. Mellor (industrialist and banker) born.
- Thomas Cook escorts his first European Tour.
- 1856** The steel cage crinoline is patented by Mr. W. S. Thompson.
- William Perkins discovers the first aniline dye and calls it mauve.
- 1857** Charles Worth sets up his fashion house in Paris and is instrumental in creating haute couture.
- 1858** *The Great Stink of London leads to the creation of a massive underground sewer system, designed and built by Joseph Bazalgette. The incidences of cholera decrease markedly.*
- 1859** Sir Arthur Conan Doyle born.
- Charles Darwin publishes “On the Origin of Species”.
- La Mode Illustrée*, a premier fashion magazine, is first published in Paris .
- 1861** Tsar Alexander II ends serfdom in the Russian Empire.
- 1863** The International Red Cross is formed.
- The American trans-continental railway is begun.
- 1864** Babbage publishes “Observations of Street Nuisances”, earning him the enmity of, and constant persecution by, street musicians.
- 1865** Verne writes “From the Earth to the Moon”.
- “The Gilded Age” begins in America at the end of the Civil War as a result of the affluence of the new breed of industrialists.
- The United States abolish slavery.
- Thomas Cook accomplishes his company’s first American tour, which is escorted by his son.*
- 1866** H. G. Wells born.
- 1867** The bustle makes its first noticeable appearance. Soft at first, it will become a much harder and more rigid structure by the 1880s.
- Harper’s Bazaar fashion magazine is first published in America.
- 1868** “The Moonstone” by Wilkie Collins is published. It is credited as the first British detective novel.
- 1869** Verne publishes “20,000 Leagues Under the Sea”.
- Thomas Cook hires two steamers and takes his first tour up the Nile.
- The American trans-continental railroad is completed.
- 1870** Heinrich Schliemann excavates the ruins of Troy.
- La Belle Époque* begins in Continental Europe. It will last until the outbreak of World War I.
- The Aesthetic Movement forms. Its adherents include Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Beardsley and Dresser.*
- 1872** Thomas Cook organises and escorts (at the age of 63) the first round the world package tour.

- 1874 The first exhibition by a group of painters who would become known as the Impressionists takes place in Paris.
- 1875 The Theosophical Society is founded by Madame Helena Blavatsky.
- Liberty opens in Regent Street, London, initially selling oriental and unusual fabrics.
- 1877 Cornelius Vanderbilt dies.
- 1881 The Rational Dress Society is formed in line with Mrs. Amelia Bloomer's earlier ideas on practical dress for women.
- 1882 Etienne-Jules Marey invents the Fusil Photographique, a portable "motion picture" camera that looks like a rifle (see www.precinemahistory.net/1880.htm for pictures).
- 1885 Statue of Liberty arrives in New York and is officially opened in 1886.
- 1887 The first Sherlock Holmes story, "Study in Scarlet", is published.
- 1888 Jack the Ripper begins his reign of terror in Whitechapel, London.
- 1890 The beginning of Art Nouveau.
- 1893 Maxim's restaurant opens in Paris.
- 1895 Louis Lumiere invents the Cinematographe, a portable motion picture camera, film developer and projector.
- 1901 Queen Victoria dies.

H. G. Wells writes "The First Men in the Moon", introducing Dr Cavor and his miraculous favorite.

"The Gilded Age" ends in America.



ACT 3: SWORDSTICKS

(Wherein the unfortunate fisticuffs and political machinations of the Empire are discussed.)

EUROPE

When Her Majesty came to the throne in 1837, many thought she would be unable to lead the country effectively. Britain had already suffered politically as a result of a somewhat eccentric royal family, which most embarrassingly had led to the loss of the American Colonies in 1783. Few would have predicted the might of the Empire that Victoria, then a mere slip of a girl, would eventually head.

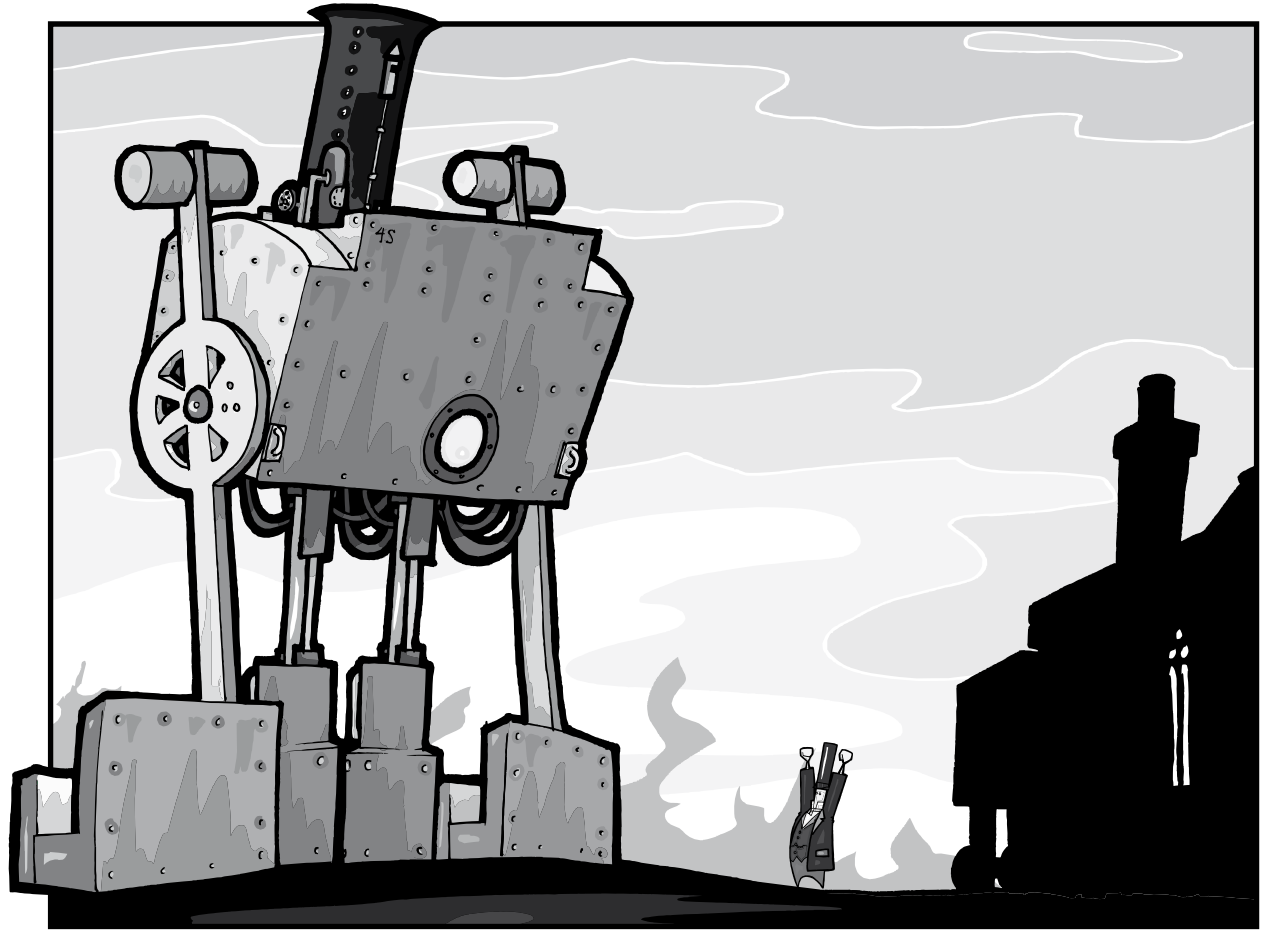
British politics was dominated by the Whigs (forerunner of the later Liberal Party) and the Conservatives. The Fabian Society, who promoted the socialist cause, was not established until 1884. Two of Britain's most famous Prime Ministers during this period were Benjamin Disraeli and William Gladstone, great statesmen and bitter rivals.

Disraeli was Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer three times (1852, 1858–1859 and 1866–1868) and Prime Minister twice (1868 and 1874–1880). He was terribly alarmed at the human cost of industrialism throughout his political career, fears that were only heightened by the arrival of the Babbage Engines (although many hoped that they would improve the lot of the common man). This occasionally brought him into conflict with Her Majesty, who was fascinated by both the machines and the power they lent to her Empire. However, Disraeli was always careful not to let his opposition to Babbage get in the way of his friendship with the Queen, working indirectly if necessary to curb the power of the MoCS (who effectively operated outside the control of the rest of the British Government).

Gladstone was a different character altogether, and constantly had to work against Her Majesty's dislike of him. Perhaps it was his habit of attempting to rescue prostitutes, but it was more likely to be due to his mechanical hand (having lost his real one in a gun accident in 1842), which she complained clanked and whistled most annoyingly. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer four times (1852–1855, 1859–1866, 1873–1874 and 1880–1882) and Prime Minister four times (1868–1874, 1880–1885, 1886 and 1892–1894), occasionally doing both jobs at once. Starting off as a Conservative, he ended up as one of the first members of the newly formed Liberal Party.

Although he too presided over many social and political reforms, his eccentric behaviour frequently brought him into conflict with his peers, particularly his views on religion, reform and foreign policy. Unlike Disraeli, who had been very careful not to upset Her Majesty about the Babbage Engines, Gladstone made his dislike of these new mechanical "gods" very clear; he held them largely responsible for the violent expansion of the Empire, fuelled as it was by the new weapons the machines were helping to develop.

This standpoint may seem at odds with his ownership of a mechanical hand; indeed, he was initially a supporter of Babbage's work. Unlike Disraeli, who was suspicious from the start, Gladstone believed that these computational marvels



would enable the lower classes to improve themselves, rather than slave from cradle to grave. But the creation of the MoCS in 1843 (when Sir Robert Peel was Prime Minister) caused him grave concern and eventually turned him, not against the machines themselves per se, but against the uses to which they were being put. He also had a penchant for chopping down trees, especially oaks, which is rather difficult to do effectively with one hand.

Not only were the Babbage Engines helping to design new weapons of war, such as Hiram Maxim's machine gun in 1879, they were helping to make existing weaponry much more accurate. The British Empire's artillery, always fearsome, became positively terrifying once clockwork Babbage Engines were attached, enabling pinpoint accuracy when firing. Infantrymen effectively only needed to be there to load the ordinance and punch-cards into the machines; the rest was under the Engines' control. As a result, the Crimean War lasted a mere eighteen months, despite the best efforts of the military commanders, when many had assumed it would mire the Empire in the Peninsula for several years at least.

The Engines also enabled new vehicles to be developed by the Armed Forces, although the benefits did eventually reach the population as a whole. Joseph Hawker freely admitted that his steam-powered tracked artillery platform, or TAPs, would have taken many more years of development if not for Mr. Babbage's machines. Tracked vehicles were not encouraged on

the Empire's roads, but wheeled steam carriages became very popular with the Military and the well-to-do.

Despite the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the rest of Europe was a political hotbed, with old empires falling and new rising to take their place. Fragmented kingdoms and principalities banded together to forge new national identities. Despite a veneer of civility (after all, during this period most middle- and upper-class persons could travel freely without need of a passport), Europe was constantly teetering on the brink of war. Frequently, it fell off the precipice.

Added to this, the German Empire was on the rise; Otto von Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor, presided over the unification of Germany in 1871. Bismarck wielded immense power, far more than the Kaiser, and brought in many protectionist policies during his reign, as well as pushing the nation to great industrial heights. His determination soon made them the most powerful economic force on the continent due to their mastery of coal, steel and engineering. Although bullish, he was always careful who he picked his fights with (usually France), and unlike Britain and France he wasn't particularly interested in Empire building by means of establishing colonies overseas; he preferred to strengthen the German nation on its home soil. Only in the rush for Africa did he give in to base land-grabbing. Many of the engineering and military advances he has overseen are closely guarded secrets, and several governments around the continent are dreading being in the front row at their unveiling.



THE AMERICAS

After their independence was won from the British in 1783, the United States began fighting quite a lot of other people. There was a little spat with Britain and British North America (effectively what would become Canada) between 1812 and 1815, in which the British forces most embarrassingly razed the White House to the ground. Then there was the war with Mexico (1846–1849) over Texas, of all places.

Not content with arguing with their northern and southern neighbours, they decided in 1861 to start fighting amongst themselves. Primarily over the proposed emancipation of slaves, these things are never quite that simple. Several southern states seceded from the Union, which the northern states took as an outright act of rebellion. Let's just say that President Lincoln's administration didn't get off to what anyone would call a flying start.

The war raged on for four years, slowly drawing to a close over the course of 1865. Lincoln was assassinated not long after Robert E. Lee signed terms in April of that year. The process of reconstructing the Union had begun many years before the surrender; every time the Union forces won territory back from the Confederates, it was brought back into the fold, politically speaking. Officially reconstruction ended 12 years after the War and involved a great deal of political manoeuvring on the parts of those involved.

Technically, Britain maintained a neutral stance throughout the war, only slightly blotting its copybook by tacitly supporting some Confederate naval shenanigans, and when Mr. Gladstone made a rather unfortunate speech in Newcastle. Still, President Ulysses Grant was quite prepared to let bygones be bygones and brought about the Treaty of Washington in 1871. It staved off the immediate threat of war with Britain, soothed frayed nerves over some border disputes with Canada, and allowed everyone to go fishing without throwing a strop. Whether President Grant's keenness had anything to do with the massive construction project going on mid-Atlantic is anyone's guess...

President Grant was also a bit of a one for hob-nobbing around Europe. Once his presidency finished in 1877, he found the time to dine with both Her Majesty the Queen and Bismarck (although not at the same time, obviously).

JAPAN

The Orient was always a source of mystery and intrigue to both Her Majesty's Empire and the developing industrial nations of the world. Determined to seek ingress to Japan, Commodore Matthew Perry was dispatched by the United States government and succeeded in negotiating the Treaty

of Kanagawa in 1854. Sadly for the Americans, this agreement was little more than a token gesture on behalf of the Japanese, who were watching the Western Empires carefully for signs of duplicity.

Always inscrutable and, to the western mind, utterly alien, the Japanese craftsmen sought to use these fragile links to garner what information they could on the development of the Babbage Engines and other emerging technologies. Slowly, they realised that greater contact would be required if they were to exploit the new ways. The Harris Commerce Treaty was signed in 1858 and with it, Emperor Komei's nation began their inexorable climb towards technological mastery and steam-powered robots...

A BRIEF TIMELINE OF POLITICS AND WAR IN THE EMPIRE OF STEAM

- 1837** Her glorious Majesty, Queen Victoria, ascends the throne.
- 1841** The Liberal Party formally replaces the Whigs in British politics.
- 1843** The MoCS is formed by Sir Robert Peel.
- 1853** The Crimean War begins, ending in early 1855.
- 1871** The unification of the German nations is overseen by von Bismark.
- 1875** Joseph Hawker unveils his Tracked Artillery Platforms (TAPs).
- 1879** Hiram Maxim unveils his portable, self-powered machine gun.

TIMELINE OF REAL WORLD ALTERCATIONS

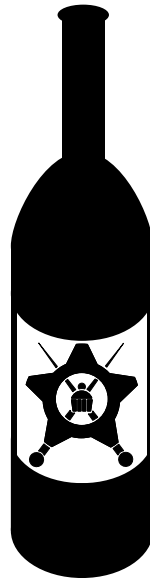
This is by no means an exhaustive list of the political events and wars that took place during the period mentioned; that would require an entire book of its own. Needless to say, the British were pretty much involved in a dust-up somewhere in the world for well over 100 years. Should you require further details, it is recommended that you peruse the forums on www.victorianwars.com.

- 1775** The American Revolutionary War (more commonly known as the War of Independence) begins.
- 1783** The American War of Independence ends.
- 1789** The French Revolution removes the monarchy from power, Marie Antoinette being perhaps its most famous victim. The French Republic is born.
- 1799** Napoleon Bonaparte is made first consul of France, and promptly starts the Napoleonic Wars against pretty much everyone in Europe.

- 1804** Napoleon I becomes Emperor of France.
Benjamin Disraeli born.
- 1809** William Gladstone born.
- 1815** Napoleon I briefly re-establishes his Empire (after his abdication in 1814), but is defeated at the Battle of Waterloo by Arthur Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington.
Prussia joins the German Confederation.
Otto von Bismarck born.
- 1819** Queen Victoria born.
- 1832** The Reform Act in Great Britain improves the electoral system by removing rotten boroughs and increasing the number of people eligible to vote.
- 1833** Letters discussing the concept of a steam-powered tank appear in various British newspapers.
- 1837** Queen Victoria ascends to the throne (Huzzah!).
- 1839** The British enter Afghanistan in the First Anglo-Afghan War.
The First Opium War begins. The British East India Company takes on the Qing Dynasty to force free trade between China and the West.
- 1840** New Zealand becomes a British colony, leading to the Maori Wars of 1845-1872 after repeated treaty violations.
Queen Victoria marries Prince Albert.
- 1842** The First Opium War ends.
Afghan troops massacre British and Indian soldiers, leading to the British retreat from Afghanistan. Some things just never change.
- 1848** Louis Napoleon Bonaparte made President of the Second French Republic.
The Communist Manifesto is published.
- 1852** The Second French Empire is established after Bonaparte's successful coup.
- 1853** The Crimean War begins, with Britain, France, the Ottoman Empire and Sardinia taking on the might of the Russian Empire. This war sees the first tactical use of both the railways and the telegraph, as well as bringing nursing to the fore in the shape of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. It also has the distinction of being the first war to be extensively documented in photographs.
- 1854** The Treaty of Kanagawa negotiated by Commodore Matthew Perry, opening Japan to the West in an albeit limited capacity.
- 1856** *The Crimean War ends.*
The Second Opium War, involving Britain, France and the Qing Dynasty, begins.
The Anglo-Persian war begins.
- 1857** The Anglo-Persian war ends after 5 months.
The Indian Mutiny. Native Sepoys rise against the British East India Company, leading to the Company's abolition in 1858.
- 1858** The beginning of the British Raj, as the Crown takes charge in India.
The Harris Treaty opens Japan to the West fully (in terms of trade).
The Orsini plot to assassinate Napoleon III in aid of Italian independence, fails.
- 1860** The Second Opium War ends.
- 1861** Abraham Lincoln becomes President of the United States.
The start of the American Civil War.
Prince Albert, the Prince Consort, dies.
The Gatling gun is patented. It relies on a hand-crack for firing.



- 1862** Otto von Bismarck appointed Prime Minister of Prussia.
- 1864** The first use of a submarine (CSS Hunley) in combat, during the American Civil War. This submarine still relied on being driven by a hand-crank.
- 1865** The end of the American Civil War.
Abraham Lincoln is assassinated.
- 1866** The Austro-Prussian War takes place.
- 1867** Canada officially formed as a country.
The creation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.
Ulysses S. Grant becomes President of the United States of America.
- 1870** The Franco-Prussian war begins.
- 1871** The Franco-Prussian war ends.
The German Empire is created, with Prussia very much in command, leading to the Second Reich.
The Martini-Henry breech loading rifle comes into service in the British Forces. A design flaw has been postulated as one reason for the massacre of British troops at the Battle of Isandlwana during the Zulu War in 1879.
- 1872** Joseph Hawker proposes ideas that will lead to the development of the modern tank, *although these will not reach fruition until the 1910s.*
- 1877** Ulysses Grant's presidential term ends.
- 1879** The Anglo-Zulu war.
- 1880** The First Boer War starts.
- 1881** The First Boer War ends after 3 months.
Benjamin Disraeli dies.
- 1884** *Hiram Maxim creates the first automatic machine gun, the Maxim gun.*
- 1895** The Lee Enfield bolt-action rifle is adopted by the British Forces as its primary firearm.
- 1898** Otto von Bismarck dies.
William Gladstone dies.
- 1901** The first modern flamethrower is designed, although the general concept is thousands of years old.
Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt becomes President of the United States.
Queen Victoria dies.



Chapter 4

Devices & Designs

This scenario has been written for the sample characters provided in *Chapter 5* (p.43), although with a few tweaks it can easily be used with any party of characters. As long as you have someone with scientific/engineering skills, someone who likes research and someone who can hold their own in a fight, you'll be fine.

If you plan to play through this scenario as a character, we would ask that you please stop reading now. Instead, pop along to *Chapter 5* to see if there is a character you fancy playing (if you haven't already created your own). If, however, you are the GM, please read on...

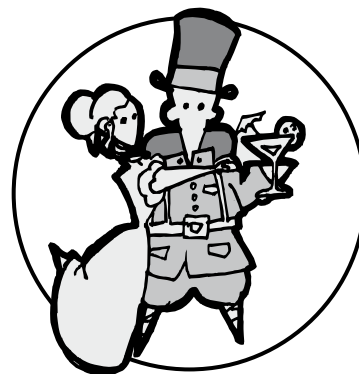
ACT 1: A BIT OF A DO

The British Museum stands in the heart of the fashionable London district of Bloomsbury. Not only is it home to a marvellous collection of art and antiquities from all over the world, but it currently still houses the national natural history collection (although that is in the process of being moved to a purpose built facility in South Kensington). The Museum also incorporates the British Library and its magnificent Round Reading Room (with shelving for one million books), situated in the centre of the Museum's enclosed central courtyard.

The year is 1880, and tonight is the gala opening night for a new temporary exhibition: "Decorative Objects of the Orient". The Museum's entrance hall has been decked out with buffet tables, due to the inclement weather (which has proven far too foggy and damp for the reception to take place in the courtyard as originally planned); the tables are groaning under the weight of delicious looking canapés and crystalware. A few chairs have been placed around the walls, should the ladies present feel the need for a sit-down. Liveried serving-staff glide between the guests dispensing nibbles and drinks and silently retrieving empty glasses, all without ever making eye contact. The exhibition itself is taking place in the Grenville Library (just off the entrance hall), the doors of which are currently closed. There are a variety of people present, from patrons and staff to reporters and society darlings. This is an opportunity for the characters to engage in chit-chat with the other attendees, some of whom they may well know.

If your players are using the sample characters in *Chapter 5* then, as suggested, Archibald Dumas is currently acting as Professor Mainwaring's chauffeur, and Scarlet and Prudence are cousins. Prudence originally met the Professor when he came to the British Library hunting for engineering texts, which led to all sorts of strange adventures for the four (including the ones in the examples in *Chapter 2*). Their invitations to the Museum's new exhibition have come about through Prudence's position at the Library.

If your players are using their own characters, then Mainwaring, Dumas, Scarlet and Prudence will act as NPCs they can meet throughout the course of the scenario, there to offer help and guidance if the players get stuck. Look carefully at the character backgrounds and Attributes that your players have created to see if there are any hooks you could use to get them invited to the British Museum. If all else fails, they could always receive tickets from a friend who can no longer make it!



POTENTIAL PEOPLE TO HOB-NOB WITH

**MR. AUGUSTUS WOLLASTON FRANKS,
KEEPER OF ANTIQUITIES**

Cogs Living in the Past
(expert on medieval art & literature) +3

Cakes Oo, Look - Shiny Things!
(keen & eager, but a little obsessive) +2

Swordsticks Kick About
(association football & rugby union player, in his youth) +2

Background Educated at Eton and Cambridge, Franks is a world-renowned expert on British and medieval antiquities, as well as being an obsessive collector of objet d'art. Many people credit him with making the British Museum what it is today through his determined efforts to expand the Museum's collections. No-one was entirely surprised when he refused the position of Principal Librarian (as the directorship of the British Museum is known), given that he was already the Director of the Society of Antiquities. He is responsible for the new exhibition, and is immensely proud of the decorative pieces he has secured from China and Japan.

**MR. EDWARD AUGUSTUS BOND,
PRINCIPAL LIBRARIAN**

Cogs Bookworm
(detailed knowledge of manuscripts & catalogues) +3

Cakes Perspicacious Planner
(highly organised & methodical) +2

Swordsticks Leg Before Cricket
(quite the batsman, in his youth) +2

Background Bond took over as Principal Librarian in 1873, having worked his way up from an assistant's position in the Museum's manuscript

department, which he joined almost 40 years earlier. He eschewed the use of a Babbage Engine to help catalogue the Museum's vast collection of books and papers during his tenure, preferring manpower to that of steam. Calm, methodical and frightfully efficient, he is not only an expert on manuscripts, but also the study of ancient writing. He is hoping that this evening will help to ensure additional patronage, with a view to extending the Museum premises.

If Prudence is present as a player character, then both Mr. Bond and Mr. Franks will approach her, given that they all work for the Museum and Library.

**JACK PENDLE,
YOUNG REPORTER**

Cogs Nose for a Story
(journalism & investigative skills) +2

Cakes On the Up
(ambitious & charming, excellent communication skills) +3

Swordsticks Rough and Tumble
(excellent scrapper) +2

Background Quite possibly what many British people would think of as the archetypal ambitious young American reporter, Jack Pendle came to England to try and make his fortune. He quickly found a job with The Graphic, an illustrated weekly journal that also has grand ambitions. Although he'd much rather be working for The Times, Jack is quite prepared to learn his craft in the "minor leagues", whatever they might be. He is keen to interview as many people as he can for his next article, in between taking full advantage of the Museum's hospitality.

WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON?

Notorious cat-burglar Pierce “The Ghost” Ridgeland (also known as Patrick Hollander or Percy Tufton) has been commissioned to steal one particular item from the exhibition: a small, flattened ring of jade (roughly 3 inches in diameter), pierced with four holes, and covered in swirling carvings that have been inset with some sort of dark, silvery metal. Dressed as a servant (because nobody ever looks closely at the waiting staff), he and two accomplices have infiltrated the reception; while his companions stage the “fire” diversion and help to usher the guests away, Ridgeland plans to sneak into the Grenville Library and steal the ring.

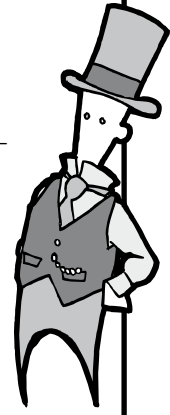
**PIERCE RIDGELAND,
CAT-BURGLAR**

- Cogs** Light-fingered (thievery & burglary skills) +3
- Cakes** Just Another Face in the Crowd (blends into any background) +2
- Swordsticks** Cat-like Reflexes (agile, active & athletic) +2
- Background** If you were to study his face, you would have to admit that Pierce Ridgeland is a good-looking man. But the funny thing about Ridgeland is that most people normally don't bother to look that closely. He's adept at blending in, which comes in very handy given his chosen profession. Smart and from

a well-to-do family, Ridgeland steals not for the money or the excitement, but because he finds it easy. Pierce has no idea who hired him, nor how they found out about him; the money they're paying is good, but more importantly, it's something a bit different. He has already stolen two other similar jade rings from private collections.

**RIDGELAND'S ACCOMPLICES,
SHADY CHARACTERS**

- Cogs** Flimflam Man (misdirection & deception skills) +2
- Cakes** Yes, Sir, No, Sir (socially barely noticeable) +2
- Swordsticks** Pugilistic Tendencies (boxing & fisticuffs) +3
- Background** Two of the lesser members of Ridgeland's little band of criminals (know collectively as “The Toffs” by police because of their modus operandi of only hitting wealthy “benefactors”, frequently during society parties), they have been brought along purely to manage the distraction and to keep people out of Ridgeland's way.



Once all of the hundred-or-so guests have assembled in the entrance hall, Mr. Bond taps his champagne glass to gain people's attention. He gives a little speech welcoming everyone, before handing over to Mr. Franks, who is positively beaming with pride. Mr. Franks briefly explains the nature of the exhibition (a number of carved curios from the Orient, made from a variety of materials, such as bone, horn, jade and stone), before opening the doors to the Grenville Library and ushering in a few people at a time (so he can explain in more detail to each party what the pieces are).

The characters are amongst the first few groups to enter the room. If they are familiar with it at all, they notice that some of the usual fixtures and fittings have been removed to accommodate glass display cabinets containing the exhibits. Franks eagerly points out key pieces, but never dwells too long

on any one item, as he is keenly aware that there are other people waiting to see them. As Franks reaches the final display case at the far end of the room, a great commotion starts in the entrance hall, and a servant rushes into the exhibition shouting: “Fire! Fire!”

When the characters return to the entrance hall, they can see smoke billowing from the doorway to the south stairwell, behind the buffet tables. The other guests are rapidly making their exit through the main doors, out towards Great Russell Street and safety.

The characters should be given the chance to spot that the servant who alerted them to the fire hasn't left the premises (or doesn't leave the room with them), but it's not the end of the world if they don't; after all, in all the confusion, it's going to be an Extremely Tricky thing to do (at the very least). If they

DETECTIVE RUPERT CHAMPION

Cogs Long Arm of the Law
(investigative skills) +3

Cakes Puzzled Frown
(always polite, but often
distant & detached) +2

Swordsticks Cambridge Blue
(all-round sportsman) +2

Background Detective Champion surprised everyone when he first announced he was joining Her Majesty's Metropolitan Police; everyone had expected the quiet young man to follow in his father's footsteps and join the diplomatic corps. His active mind is constantly attempting to figure things out, frequently leaving him looking slightly distracted and a bit vague. This isn't Champion's first encounter with "The Toffs," and he's sure it won't be his last.

do spot something, they can try to follow up, but Ridgeland will have changed out of his servant's clothes in the Library and slipped away through the crowd of guests.

When the Fire Brigade arrive, they quickly discover that there is no fire: someone had set off several smoke bombs in the stairwell in what appears to have been some sort of prank. Mr. Franks and Mr. Bond will soon realise that one of the items has been taken from the exhibition and the Police will be called. The guests will be questioned quickly, quietly and efficiently in one of the side rooms off the entrance hall before being allowed to leave (if they haven't done so already).

ACT 2: THE PLOT THICKENS

The next morning, whilst reviewing the papers, at least one of the characters spots the following newspaper report:

"MYSTERY JADE THIEF STRIKES AGAIN!"

For the third time in as many weeks, a small, decorative piece of Oriental jade has been stolen whilst other, more valuable items have been left alone. This latest piece was snatched under the very noses of the guests at last night's reception at the British Museum. From the description received by this reporter, it matches the previous two objects in style and design, differing only in size. The first was taken, along with a manuscript, from the South Kensington

Museum; the second from the private collection of Sir Reginald Mason. Police believe the thieves are operating to order but appear to be no nearer to cracking the case."

Accompanying the report is a sketch drawing of the three pieces: the characters should recognise them from their brief tour of the exhibition last night (as they are all virtually identical). Any character with a science or engineering Cogs Attribute should also have a funny feeling that the three pieces fit together, one inside the other, with just enough space between them for them to move freely. They may also (on a Tricky Cogs roll) realise that if you did fit the three rings together, they would resemble French physicist Léon Foucault's gyroscope, only smaller and more delicate.

If Prudence is one of the player characters, then she will also recognise the three rings from somewhere. On a Tricky Cogs roll of her own, she will realise that it was in a manuscript the British Library recently received back from Sir William Thomson, who had borrowed it the previous year to help his research into naval compasses. If Prudence is not one of the player characters, then she should be able to guide them in the right direction if they visit the Library to research gyroscopes (or even if they just pop back to have another look at the scene of the crime).

There are several directions the characters' investigations could now go: each of the main ones are presented below. There is no set order in which they should take place and, depending on how the characters decide to tackle things, some may not happen at all (just try to move any critical information somewhere else if this looks like this is going to happen).

THE BRITISH LIBRARY

However the players come across it, the manuscript should prove very enlightening. It appears to be a copy of a notebook belonging to a German physicist called Johann Bohnenberger. In it are diagrams that closely resemble what the scientist/engineer character recognises as Foucault's gyroscope, only from about 35 years earlier. Besides Bohnenberger's own designs, there are diagrams of the jade rings as well.

If one of the characters can speak German, then they can translate Bohnenberger's notes about gyroscopes, but it will take them at least a day to do so fully. What is strikingly obvious, even if the characters can't speak (or read) German, is that the words "China" and "Marco Polo" keep cropping up in the text. A very quick translation should tell the characters that Bohnenberger had come across the jade rings in a very old copy of "The Travels of Marco Polo" (from around the time it was written in 1295) in the University Library at Tübingen, where he worked. If nobody in the party speaks or reads German, then somebody in the Reading Room will be able to help them discover this information.

What is also very obvious from Bohnenberger's notes is that, besides having a stand, there is also a spherical central piece to the machine. Bohnenberger made his out of ivory, but next to the diagram of the Chinese sphere is the word "sterne-metall" (star-metal). Hopefully one of the characters will realise that this can refer to only one thing: meteoric iron.

Whilst they are at the Museum, the characters can also chat to Mr. Franks, who can be found in the Grenville Library checking over the exhibition. He is most distraught, particularly as he nearly didn't include the jade ring, having only purchased it a few weeks earlier from one of his contacts in Limehouse, a Mr. Solomon Ruan, of Ruan's Import and Export. Franks knows nothing about gyroscopes; he thought the object was a peculiar form of an ancient Chinese bi (a funerary disc associated with the sky and heaven).

THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

Although it will be almost another twenty years before this becomes the Victoria and Albert Museum, the South Kensington Museum still has a very fine collection of objects and artworks, particularly when it comes to those from the Orient.

Provided the characters are friendly and polite, they should be able to find a junior member of staff to chat to about the recent burglary (this will be even easier if Prudence is amongst the characters, or if they have contacts in the art and antiquities world, or if one of the characters is a reporter). The theft took place two weeks ago, in the dead of night. The only objects taken were almost as the newspaper described: a small, inlaid jade ring and a fragment of a Chinese scroll that was in the process of being prepared for display. The junior staff member doesn't know what was on the scroll, but one of the curators might well do; they can be found in the basement of the museum.

If the characters do chat to one of the curators, then all they can tell them is that the scroll was very delicate and appeared to have something that looked a bit like part of an orrery drawn on it. If the characters have a copy of the diagrams in Bohnenberger's book (or, heaven forbid, they've "borrowed" the book itself), the curator can confirm that it did indeed look a lot like those sketches. The scroll had been in the Museum's possession for a very long time from what they can remember of its label, and had been brought out of storage a little before the jade ring was acquired.

Questioning staff about where the jade ring came from will identify that it had been purchased within the last month from a reputable dealer in Limehouse. If pressed, the member of staff can find the dealer's details: the shop is called Ruan's Import and Export. Like the scroll fragment, the ring had not been on display, but was being cleaned and catalogued in preparation for public viewing.

SIR REGINALD MASON'S RESIDENCE

Sir Reginald's butler answers the door, and politely informs the characters that he is currently not at home (even if he were, it would be highly unlikely that he would agree to see the characters, unless they happen to be titled or famous). However, his private secretary, Walter Benjamin, is present if the business is urgent; he could be persuaded to see the characters if their calling cards are sufficiently reputable (or if they have contacts in common).

If the characters successfully gain entry, they find that Sir Reginald's home is tastefully decorated with Oriental-style furnishings. His secretary can inform the characters that Mason served as a high-ranking diplomatic attaché to Her

**WALTER BENJAMIN,
PRIVATE SECRETARY**

Cogs Wheels Within Wheels (knowledge of diplomatic & political matters) +3

Cakes Soul of Discretion (trustworthy & discreet) +2

Swordsticks Pot-shot (ability to use fire-arms, such as shotguns) +2

Background Not an outstanding student by any means, Benjamin nevertheless worked hard and kept his nose clean at university. Through his father's influence he landed a job in Her Majesty's Civil Service, becoming Sir Reginald's private secretary after his retirement to England. Discreet, organised and good at his job, there isn't a thing he doesn't know about Sir Reginald's business; not that he'll divulge any of it if he thinks that knowledge will be abused.

Majesty's Colony of Hong Kong for a great many years before retiring. Much of his collection was acquired whilst resident abroad, but since his return he has regularly added to it, and is widely regarded as something of an expert on Chinese decorative arts. He should have been at the exhibition opening last night, but was called away last week to deal with family matters in Scotland (just before the theft took place).

Benjamin can also confirm that the item stolen was as described in the newspaper article. From his description it was the smallest of the three rings, but still decorated all over with swirls of inlaid metal. It was also a relatively new addition to the collection; whilst visiting Limehouse to see an old friend, Sir Reginald had stumbled across it at an Oriental import business called Ruan's. Benjamin has the receipt for the item carefully filed away, with the business' address on it, which he will copy down for them (however, he will not let the characters see that actual bill, as he does not wish Sir Reginald's private expenses to become a matter of public interest).

RUAN'S IMPORT AND EXPORT

Located in one of the more salubrious parts of Limehouse, on the edge of Chinatown, Ruan's Import and Export occupies a well-proportioned Georgian property away from

the river. The shop-front's windows are tastefully arranged with furniture and knick-knacks, and the inside is a well-lit Aladdin's cave of Oriental art and soft furnishings. At the rear of the shop is a windowed office, where the accounts ledgers can be seen on shelves above a large desk, and a flight of stairs leading upwards. In front of the office is a counter, behind which stands a young woman of Oriental origin. If the characters ask for Solomon Ruan by name, or ask to speak to the manager, she will ask them to wait while she fetches him.

Mr. Ruan will not be in the least bit surprised to see the characters, given that he has been following the story of the thefts in the papers with some interest. He spoke to the police earlier, but could think of nothing unusual about the pieces, other than that they were in a recent shipment from Peking.

**RUAN QI-SHI,
BUSINESSMAN**

Cogs Give Them What They Want
(good eye for a business opportunity) +3

Cakes Pillar of the Community
(well known & respected in his area) +2

Swordsticks Soft Shoe Shuffle
(elegant dancer, light on his feet) +2

Background Usually answering to his English name of Solomon, Mr. Ruan is a middle-aged and immaculately dressed Chinese gentleman. Having been predominantly educated in England, his command of the language is exemplary. The nature of his business isn't particularly discriminating: he's happy to import anything (and everything) that the English might require. Currently, the antiques market is his most lucrative sideline and unlike some other Limehouse merchants, he always insists upon the genuine article being sent from China, not fakes. After all, he has his family honour to maintain, something that is very important to him.

As far as he's concerned, they are pretty little things that came from an excavation somewhere in the city, and nothing more. From a collector's point of view he can understand why someone would want them to make up a matching set, but he has no evidence that they were all part of one device. If asked why he sold them separately, he will simply smile and reply: "Good business practice."

If the characters show him the diagrams (if they have them), he will laugh and comment that he has just sold a sphere very like the one in the picture. It was in a different shipment to the jade rings and only arrived yesterday, but was from the same excavation site. The sphere was made of a dull metal, was of the most intricate filigree design and remarkably heavy for its size, as well as being more than a little magnetic. In fact, he was sad to see it go so quickly, as it was rather handy for finding pins and paperclips.

With the right encouragement (for example: appealing to his honour, concern for the damage the thefts will undoubtedly cause his reputation if the perpetrator isn't caught, buying something), Mr. Ruan can be persuaded to hand over the customer's details. However, he will not respond to overt threats or physical intimidation, particularly as he has quite a few burly chaps working in the stockroom behind the shop.

ACT 3: SHOWDOWN

Hopefully by now the characters will have all the information they need to figure out that someone is trying to reconstruct some sort of ancient gyroscopic device from the original pieces, using the scroll fragment from the South Kensington Museum as a guide. If they are being good, law-abiding citizens, then they could present their findings to Detective Champion, who would be very grateful for the assistance. If they do tell him what they've discovered, and the address of the suspected next victim, then a few days later they will read in the paper that a burglary has been foiled, although the perpetrator managed to give the police the slip.

However, being adventuresome types, it's unlikely that they'll do anything of the sort. The characters now have at

WAREHOUSE WORKERS

Cogs Boxing Clever
(stock handling & warehouse skills) +2

Cakes Strong, Silent Type
(limited understanding of English) +2

Swordsticks Rough and Tumble
(brawling skills) +3

Background Large, loyal and adept at taking care of themselves...

least two options: go and talk to the next potential victim and try to persuade her to either sell them the piece or warn her of the danger her new purchase is in, or stake out the address and see if they can catch the burglar red-handed.

Mrs. Dayton will listen politely to the characters should they go to visit her, but she will refuse to part with the bauble (as she calls it) at any price if they attempt to buy it from her. She will let them see and handle it, though, and promise to take great care of it until the thief is caught.

Two days after Mrs. Dayton has bought the central sphere, Pierce Ridgeland will attempt to steal it. If the characters have formed a feasible plan to stake out the building, then they should have every opportunity to apprehend Ridgeland either as he attempts to break in or out. This could very easily lead to a midnight chase across the roof-tops of London, with lots of thrills and spills and near-death (hopefully) experiences. Ridgeland is quite prepared to sacrifice the sphere to the characters to ensure his getaway, though – he’s not stupid and would rather live to steal another day.

If the characters do retrieve the orb, they can either return it to Mrs. Dayton or keep it for themselves. If they capture Ridgeland, he can only tell them where he made his drops of the stolen items. Watching the drop site will lead to nothing, as the criminal mastermind is well aware that their plans have been rumbled. They may try to retrieve the item again at some point in the future, but for now it has drawn too much attention and they will leave well alone.

There is always the chance that the characters will want to steal the sphere for themselves. They should be given the opportunity to do so, if they wish, but if they’ve warned Mrs. Dayton about a prospective robbery, she may well have engaged security of her own to protect it. And who’s to say what trouble it could cause the characters even if they do successfully get away with it...

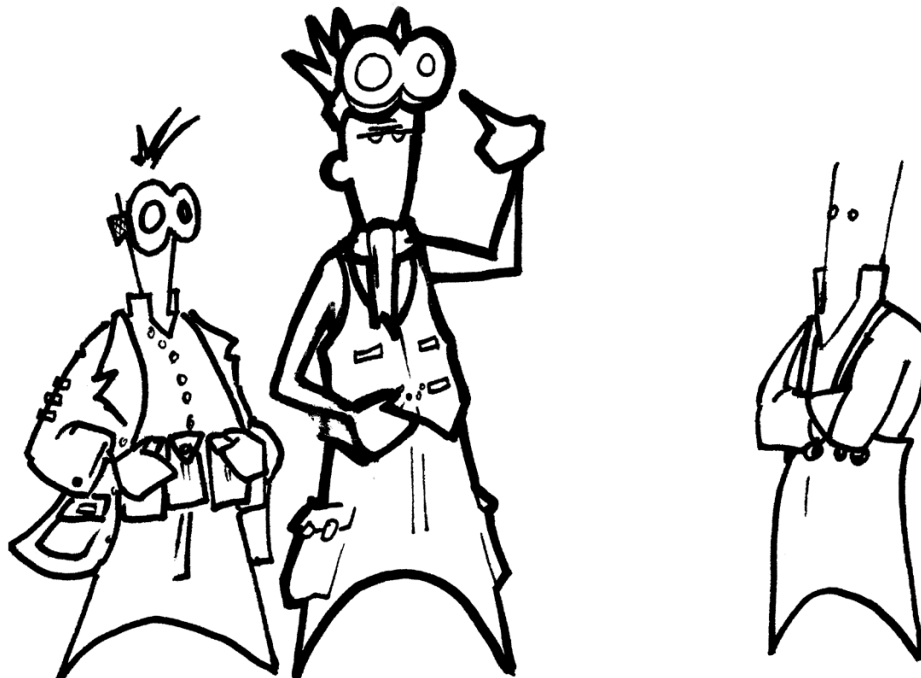
**MRS. WILHEMINA DAYTON,
COLLECTOR**

- Cogs** Armchair Traveller
(widely read on foreign cultures) +3

- Cakes** Knows Her Own Mind
(independent & determined)
+2

- Swordsticks** Bull’s Eye
(archery skills) +2

- Background** Since the death of her entrepreneur husband a few years ago, the comfortably-off Mrs. Dayton has indulged her passion for pretty things and foreign lands by building up quite the collection of travel books and antiques. She has studied various archery techniques (as a woman of her age practising such a sport doesn’t raise too many eyebrows), and plans to travel abroad in the very near future to see the sights she has so long read about.



WHO IS BEHIND IT ALL?

There are several people and organisations who could be behind the thefts; we leave it up to the GM to decide which is most fitting for their game, if any of them. After all, it could just be a rival collector who wishes to deny his compatriots the joy of their latest acquisitions. Of course, if the GM is being particularly devious, Mrs. Dayton could be acting as the rival collector, or as someone who is well aware of the significance of the pieces and is preparing to offer them to the highest bidder; she could even be working on behalf of Her Majesty (see below).

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

There is always the possibility that Her Majesty's Government suspect that the Chinese machine is an anti-gravitational generator and are determined to make sure it doesn't fall into enemy hands. After all, who else would be better placed to know where all of the pieces were and who to get to retrieve them without drawing suspicion on themselves?

THE JAPANESE

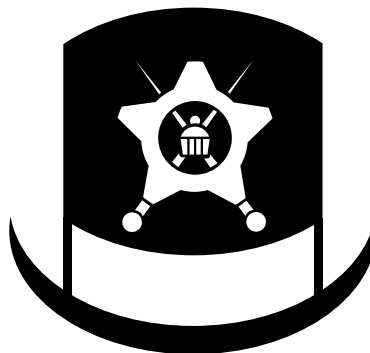
Building large, stable mechanised men for heavy industrial labour is difficult. The Japanese' own research into gyroscopes has advanced immensely

since they discovered Foucault's work, but miniaturisation has proven difficult. Their desire to retrieve the ancient Chinese gyroscope is twofold: corner the market in small, efficient mechanisms that will enable their robot building to reach new heights, and prevent anyone in the West from having the technology to rival them in this field.

THE AMERICANS/CANADIANS

Although both have plans for powering their prototype spacecraft, researchers in either one or both programmes have stumbled across the ancient Chinese device in other manuscripts and currently believe that not only would it aid in the stability and navigation of their vessels but, thanks to the forces generated when the inlaid bands of meteoric iron spin around the iron core, it would also provide the necessary lift to propel them into space, if properly re-scaled (and so do away with the need for large quantities of heavy fuel).

Of added interest to the Americans is that, if the anti-gravitational power of the device is genuine, it would spell disaster for the DSA technology of the British Empire, rendering it obsolete and leaving the world's markets ripe for the taking (by them, of course).



Chapter 5

Sample Characters

Here are four sample characters to use either as a source of inspiration during character creation, or to pick up and play. You may recognise them from the examples in *Chapter 2*. Although they have been written here as stand-alone characters, there's no reason why they couldn't be used as a ready to go adventuring party by tweaking their backgrounds (Dumas could be Mainwaring's chauffeur, Prudence could be an acquaintance of Mainwaring's through the Library, and Scarlet and Prudence could be cousins).

**PRUDENCE WILBERFORCE,
LIBRARIAN**

Cogs I'm Sure I Read That in a Book Somewhere! (remembering esoteric/practical knowledge from books) +3

Cakes Ah, Sir, Your Book Has Arrived (has a wide variety of contacts) +2

Swordsticks How Dare You Talk to a Lady Like That! (brawl with unexpected weaponry) +2

Foible Insatiable Curiosity

RP 1

Background Miss Wilberforce is a terribly pretty young lady, with a mind far older and wiser than her fair looks would suggest. Her thirst for knowledge has left her head crammed with information, both useful and useless (although she insists that no data is ever truly without merit). She manages her section of the British Library with aplomb and a cheery smile. After all, she is surrounded by the thing she loves most: books. Although usually pleasant and courteous, heaven help the person who ruffles her feathers (she has been known to manhandle transgressors from the Library by the scruff of their necks!).

**SCARLET MASTERSON,
BIG GAME HUNTER**

Cogs Off Piste (survival & tracking in hostile environments) +2

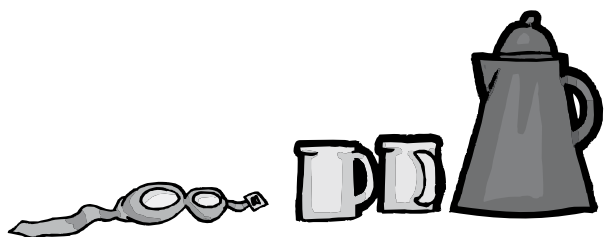
Cakes Gone Native (rather woolly on European social conventions) +2

Swordsticks Big Guns (firing & maintaining big guns) +3

Foible Doesn't Suffer Fools Gladly (has no patience with idiots & time wasters)

RP 1

Background Raised in Africa by her widowed father, Scarlet was always allowed to run wild with the native children while he concentrated on recording botanical specimens. The skills she learnt then served her in good stead and she became a big game hunter and tour guide for wealthy Europeans. She only returned to England after her father's death to take care of his estate, but plans to return to Africa as soon as possible. Her behaviour is considered a little eccentric when in polite society and she is often vocal in her support of native Africans.

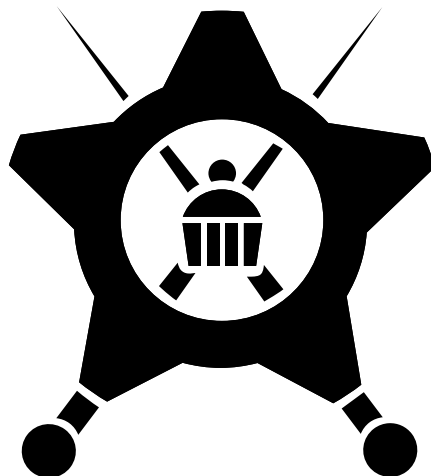


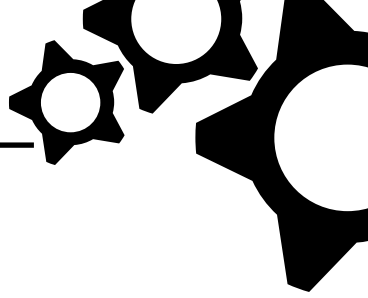
**PROFESSOR CHARLES MAINWARING,
ENGINEER**

Cogs	Build 'Owt (can build any technological device) +3
Cakes	Foreman of Works (aura of authority, man management skills) +2
Swordsticks	A Damn Good Thrashing (combat with fists & walking sticks) +2
Foible	Loves it When a Plan Comes Together (must plan everything)
RP	1
Background	The Professor used to help the Government with their grand engineering projects, but left to nurse his seriously ill wife, to whom he was utterly devoted. After her death, he threw himself into his own private works with something akin to a mania, shunning his friends & colleagues (many of whom wrote him off as a potentially dangerous fanatic). Slowly, though, his sanity returned and his amazing creations became recognized as marvels of their type.

**ARCHIBALD DUMAS,
CHAUFFEUR**

Cogs	Pedal to the Metal (can drive any vehicle) +3
Cakes	Winning Smile (charming fame/notoriety) +2
Swordsticks	Fisticuffs (hand to hand combat) +2
Foible	Won't Be Beat (has to win)
RP	1
Background	Once a famous racing champion, Archibald fell on hard times after getting in with a bad lot. It was left to an old school friend to provide him with gainful employment after his fall from grace. Not only does Archibald act as chauffeur for his friend, he fulfils the roles of personal assistant, butler and confidante. Not even remotely handsome as a result of one too many fights, Archibald is never the less quite a hit with the ladies. It must be all that Gallic charm.







Book Two

ATLANTIS CITY IN THE CLOUDS

Chapter 1

Her Majesty's Flying Steam City Atlantis

INTRODUCTION

Atlantis: City in the Clouds is a sourcebook for the steam-punk roleplaying game *Cogs, Cakes & Swordsticks*, and is intended to introduce you to the gravity-defying city and its inhabitants, as well as providing a location for your adventures in the Empire of Steam.

As with *Cogs, Cakes & Swordsticks*, this tome is here to provide you with sufficient information to support a variety

of stories, and to act a springboard for your own ideas. If there are elements that do not appeal to you, then please feel free to adapt, shape, and mould the setting to your requirements. Above all, the Golden Rule is to have fun. And tea. And cake. And maybe some more tea and cake.

So please allow us to welcome you to Her Majesty's Flying Steam City *Atlantis*, the brainchild of Albert, the Prince Consort and those giants of the engineering world, Mr. Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Mr. Robert Stephenson.

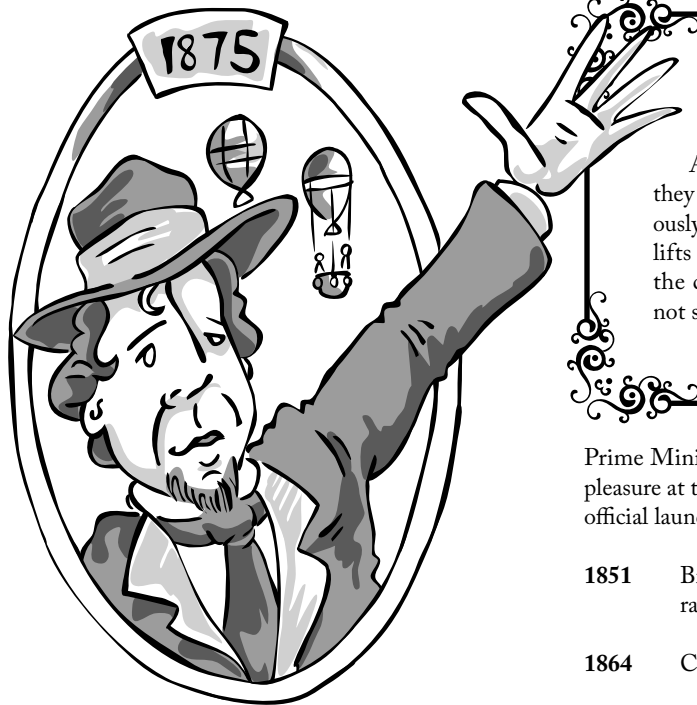
HISTORY

Brunel and Robert Stephenson were first secretly commissioned in 1851 by Prince Albert, after the triumph of the Great Exhibition, to design and build a flying metropolis that celebrated the might of Her Majesty's Empire. The aim was to astound her political rivals, as well as to provide a forum for commerce and trade conveniently located in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. The project was to be called Her Majesty's Flying Steam City *Atlantis* (HMFSC *Atlantis*), affectionately known by all those who now live on her as "The Cog". Not only is this easier to say, but it fits far better on letterheads and business cards.

When both Stephenson and Brunel died in 1859, many in positions of authority feared that HMFSC *Atlantis* would never leave the drawing board to grace the skies. Only the Prince Consort's dying wish ensured its continued funding. After Prince Albert's death in 1861, Her Majesty decreed that any and all monies necessary were to be made available to Brunel's son, Henri Marc, to see to fruition the project that her beloved husband had taken so great an interest in.

With all of the necessary components in place, work began on HMFSC *Atlantis* in the summer of 1864. Fabrication of the infrastructure was handled by the shipyards in Bristol used for Brunel's SS *Great Western* and SS *Great Britain*; the recently formed Harland and Wolff shipyards in Belfast were also brought in on the project. The Directional





PATERNOSTERS

A paternoster lift (or a cyclic elevator as they were initially known) is a loop of continuously moving compartments. Those riding such lifts were expected to jump on and off while the compartments were in motion; they did not stop.

Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli conveyed Her Majesty's pleasure at the completion of this epic engineering task at the official launch in the summer of 1875.

- 1851 Brunel and Robert Stephenson begin the collaboration that will lead to HMFSC *Atlantis*
- 1864 Construction of HMFSC *Atlantis* begins
- 1875 HMFSC *Atlantis* officially opens

Steam Assemblages (DSAs), the mighty and improbable engines designed by George Stephenson that are required to lift the city skyward, were built by Robert Stephenson and Company in their Newcastle works.

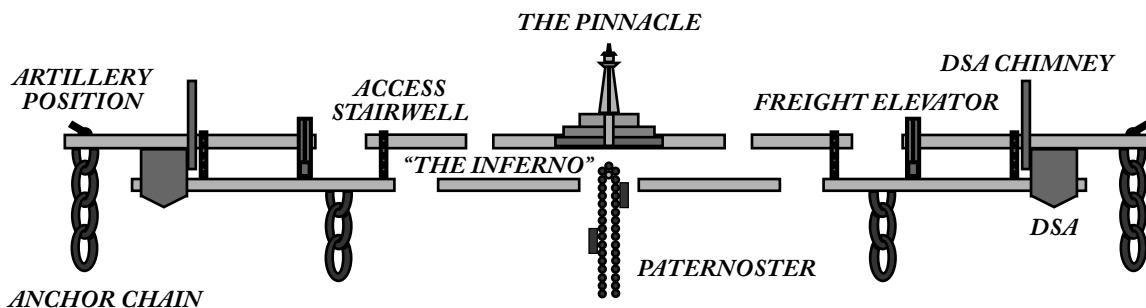
The steam leviathan was built in modular units and shipped on gigantic barges to the mid-Atlantic artificial island that had been constructed to receive them. The site of the island had been very carefully chosen: not only was the seabed there unusually raised into a convenient plateau just below the ocean's surface, but rich veins of coal were found to lie beneath (thanks to surveying work carried out in 1862 by Señor Monturiol's marvellous submarine). The plateau enabled anchorage at achievable depths and would also supply the raw materials needed to power the mighty DSAs.

Due to some rather inclement weather and a few unfortunate fracas in distant parts of Her Majesty's Empire, overall construction of the *Atlantis* took a little over ten years. Although Her Majesty did not attend the opening ceremony, having become a virtual recluse since her husband's death,

CONSTRUCTION

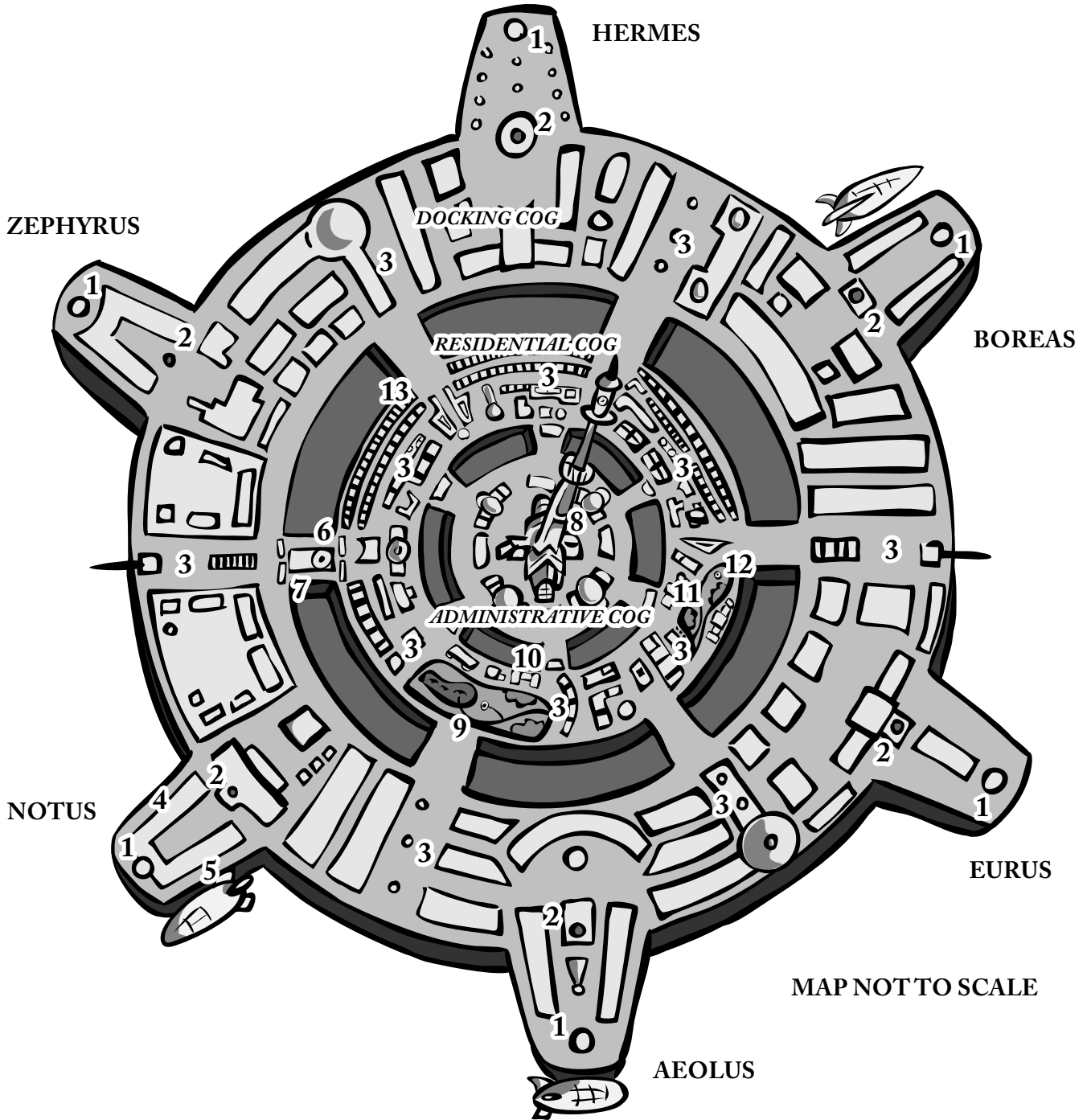
Floating above its artificial island, the city itself is a true marvel of engineering. Approximately two and a half miles wide from cog-tip to cog-tip, it is a multi-layered structure held aloft by six enormous DSAs, sheltered in the lee of its mighty docking arms. The Upper Ring consists of three interconnected cog-like circles nestled one within the other, each with its own particular function. The Lower Ring has only two cogs and is home to the engines, furnaces, and workers that keep the city hovering serenely above the Atlantic Ocean.

The city is anchored in position by 12 mighty chains firmly bolted to the ocean floor, each one with an explosive charge mounted at island level in case an emergency release is ever required. Needless to say, each charge is carefully guarded and can only be activated by co-ordination between the Governor's Office in the Pinnacle and the Chief Mining Engineer's Office on Monturiol (as the island has become known).



PLAN NOT TO SCALE

HER MAJESTY'S FLYING STEAM CITY ATLANTIS



KEY

- 1. Artillery Position
- 2. DSA (only chimney visible on Docking Cog)
- 3. Police Boxes
- 4. King's Consignments
- 5. Hanson & Golightly
- 6. Police Station

- 7. Stephenson Garrison
- 8. The Pinnacle
- 9. Armstrong Park
- 10. The Grand Athenian Hotel
- 11. High Battersea Park
- 12. The Mechanical Mouse Tea Rooms
- 13. 31 Evermore Terrace Boarding House

Connecting the island to the city are two enormous cables, up which large items of cargo and coal (mined from beneath the Mid-Atlantic plateau) are shifted by an early example of a paternoster. Unlike most paternosters, the Monturiol device's motion can be suspended at both ends of the loop to allow for the loading and unloading of cargo. Altering the compartments' settings whilst handling coal means that the cables do not need to be halted, as this engages a tipping mechanism which deposits the coal down chutes into huge storage bunkers beneath the engineering level.

ACT 1: THE UPPER RING

THE DOCKING COG

The outer, upper ring of the city is known as the Docking Cog. Here dirigibles moor to unload their cargo, be that goods or passengers. Nearly all of the city's supply businesses are restricted to carrying out their operations here, so there are a myriad of warehouses, shop-fronts, and stalls, providing for every conceivable need that a visitor or resident might have. The moorings are housed on the arms of The Cog, along with the warehouses and passenger reception/embarkation areas.

Artillery positions are to be found at the very tips of each arm in case of sky pirate incursion, although so far these vagabonds have limited their activities to swooping down on small, unprotected dirigibles on their way to HMFSC *Atlantis*. A small fleet of military light attack dirigibles are stationed on The Cog to render aid to the victims of such brutalities.

The main business area is arrayed along the supporting ring, with most of the companies there housed in pleasing brick offices or stores, the retailers vying with each other as to who has the most enticing window displays. None of the buildings are more than two stories high. Store owners are most likely to reside above their shops, and dockworkers tend to be billeted in their company's warehouses.

There are covered arcades housing specialist markets, such as those for fruit, vegetables, and flowers (many of which are grown in greenhouses on the Docking Cog) and meat (the livestock for which are brought by steamer to Monturiol, where they are slaughtered in the island's abattoir, although there are plans afoot to enlarge the island to enable the establishment of *Atlantis*' own livestock and arable farms). There are also six market squares (on the main ring behind each arm), where a variety of open markets are held on alternate days.

Equidistant between every arm of the Docking Cog can be found octagonal green police boxes. Big enough to house two officers, a table, four chairs, a stove (for heating and cooking), and a water closet, these stations can also be found in similar positions between the outer walkways on the Residential Cog. One officer is permanently stationed in each box, with six bobbies per ring walking the beat between them.

Massive walkways lead from the Docking Cog to the Residential Cog, home to the city's hotels, boarding houses, and homes. Some trade is permitted along most of the walkways, although it is tightly regulated by HMFSC's Police Force, working closely alongside their military colleagues deployed in the city.

DOCKING COG BUSINESSES, SERVICES & PERSONALITIES

KING'S CONSIGNMENTS

Established by the late Mr. Marshall King, King's Consignments is a very reputable shipping business with offices on The Cog and at all of the main civilian dirigible ports on the British mainland. Their rates are towards the top end of reasonable, which allows them to maintain smart offices at all of their locations. The company mainly ships freight, but will occasionally take passengers, on the understanding that satisfactory references can be provided.

Very much a family concern, the current head of the business is Mr. Nathaniel King, eldest son of the company's founder. His brothers and sisters (of whom there are many), are responsible for managing the company's mainland offices. Should you wish to ship anything via King's Consignments, their offices and warehouses on The Cog can be found on the Notus (Number 6) Arm.

NATHANIEL KING, GENTLEMAN OF BUSINESS

Cogs Sure Hand at the Rudder
(business skills) +3

Cakes Smooth as Silk
(charming without being oily) +2

Swordsticks Flashing Blade
(excellent swordsman) +2

Background Young Mr. King is quite the gentleman: charming, polite, well-presented, and (whilst not classically handsome), he is a confirmed favourite with the ladies, being pleasing on the eye to mademoiselles and matrons alike. Men admire and like him too; he seems to fit in wherever he goes. Currently residing

NOT WHAT IT SEEMS?

There are unconfirmed rumours that Nathaniel King is not only acting head of King's Consignments, but is part of the notorious Balloon City Sky Pirates Gang and the eldest son of the Pirate Queen, Lady Hesther. These scurrilous gossips also claim that he is responsible for choosing targets for his family's hidden business operation through his position on HMFSC *Atlantis*. But surely such a pleasant young man could have nothing to do with such criminal shenanigans?

THE BALLOON CITY SKY PIRATES

One of the most successful and revered sky pirate gangs is that hailing from the mysterious Balloon City. No-one outside the gang knows its exact location and many believe that, given its name, the entire city moves around to evade detection. Those lucky enough to have seen it claim that it is a wonder to rival HMFSC *Atlantis*, but on a much smaller and far more colourful scale.

The gang choose their targets carefully, attempt to avoid bloodshed wherever possible, and are always terribly polite when holding up passenger dirigibles although their preferred targets are freighters, which are generally less messy to deal with. Indeed, they always leave a business card with the words: "The Balloon City Sky Pirates thank you for your kind patronage" at the scene of every attack.



**LADY HESTHER,
PIRATE QUEEN**

Cogs I Have a Plan
(planning & organisation) +3

Cakes Excellent Judge of Character
(what it says) +2

Swordsticks Defender of the Clan
(avoids combat unless her gang is threatened) +2

Background Head of the Balloon City Sky Pirates since her husband's untimely death, Hesther is a very pleasant, genteel matriarch in her late fifties. She rarely ventures out on raids these days but, despite rumours of her ill-health, is actually as fit as a fiddle; she merely prefers to stay in Balloon City and rely on a whole host of strategically placed family members to keep her informed of goings-on in the wider world. She's no soft touch, though, as her enclave are well aware, governing with a firm but fair hand. The extended pirate clan also have one other advantage over more run-of-the-mill sky pirates; they possess their own (albeit cruder) version of the DSA, the prototype plans of which were lovingly purloined by the late "Lord Frederick" during his time as a draughtsman at Stephenson's Newcastle engineering works.

**GIDEON MAYFAIR,
PORT SPY**

Cogs Facts and Figures
(business & merchandise appraisal) +2

Cakes Tug of the Forelock
(polite & deferential) +3

Swordsticks Handy With a Blade
(knife-fighting) +2

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...Continued from previous page.

Background Hard working and deferential, no-one would suspect young, fresh-faced Gideon of belonging to one of the best pirate gangs in the Empire. Currently positioned in the Port Authority's buildings at Cardington, his main job is to identify likely marks for Aunt Hesther.

SKY PIRATES

Cogs Worth a Pretty Penny (thievery & appraisal) +2

Cakes Dashing Rogue (charming but immoral) +2

Swordsticks En Garde! (fencing) +3

Background Led by Glenda Mayfair (Gideon's twin sister), as members of the Balloon City gang, the pirates will carefully assess the risk versus the gain of any attack and only take what they think each victim can afford to lose. If their adversaries prove too tough for them, they will immediately disengage.

GLENDA MAYFAIR, SKY PIRATE

Cogs Eye on the Main Prize (shrewd business skills) +2

Cakes Feisty Filly (supremely confident & self-assured) +3

Swordsticks Flashing Blade (sword fighting) +2

Background Much more rambunctious than her "little" brother, Glenda craves adventure and excitement. However, she is a shrewd businesswoman and will not take unnecessary risks. Her piratical activities have led to her being immortalised in several popular romantic poems which, although they describe her curvaceous figure and chestnut hair correctly, always leave people expecting someone taller (and older). Like her Aunt Hesther, she prefers to stay in Balloon City when not out raiding.

on *Atlantis*, Nathaniel has a very hands-on approach to business and is determined to expand his father's business empire.

DOCK WORKER

Cogs Stacked (safe handling & management of cargo) +3

Cakes Bluff and Bluster (loud, confident & rough) +2

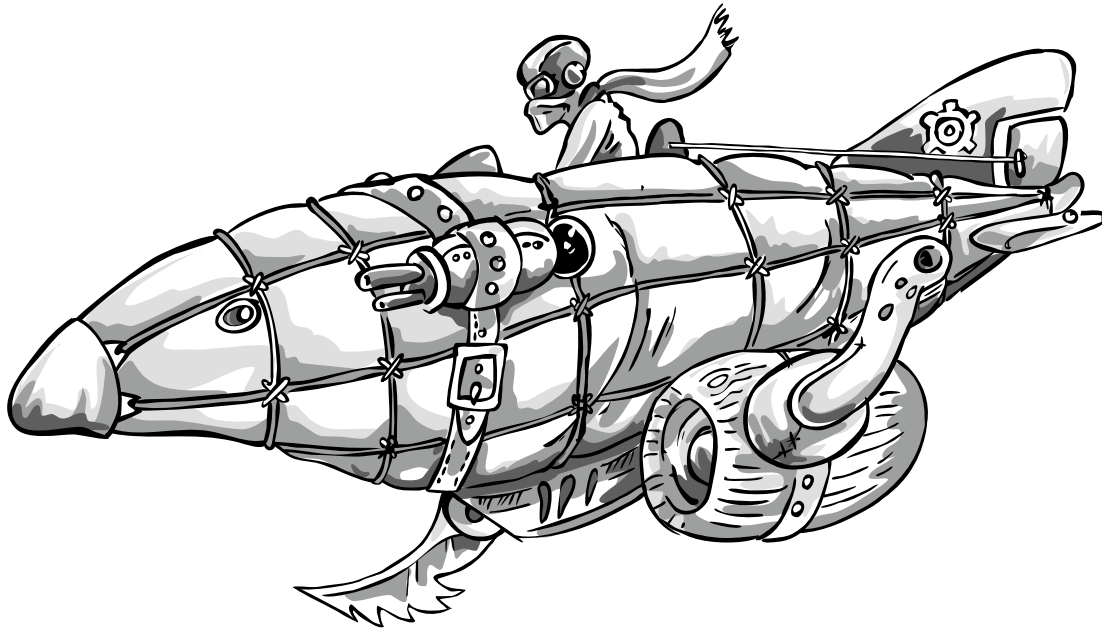
Swordsticks Rough and Tumble (brawling) +2

Background Dock workers of this sort are equally likely to be found on Monturiol unloading the sailing ships. Their job can be dangerous and they are renowned for their strength and quick thinking.

HANSON & GOLIGHTLY'S AERO TOURS

Originally dealing only with freight, Miss Avril Hanson decided to change tack when she inherited her parents' company. Taking a leaf out of their book (her parents having handed over the reigns so that they could travel the world), she decided to move into the up-and-coming field of tourism. Bringing in the renowned artist, traveller, and gastronome Mr. Charles Golightly (a childhood friend) to aid her, the pair set about redesigning and updating the company's fleet and developing exciting and unusual travel itineraries.

Although not as long established as their main rivals, Hanson & Golightly believe that their touring service is every bit as good as Mr. Thomas Cook's (although certainly better catered – Mr. Golightly is a stickler when it comes to food). Concentrating mainly on arranging trips to Europe and the Americas, their fledgling business came on leaps and bounds with the opening of HMFSC *Atlantis*, which has subsequently become one of their most popular destinations. Their booking office, reception, and docking bay can also be found on the Notus Arm, almost directly opposite those of King's Consignments.



Miss Hanson (now Mrs. Golightly) and her husband run the company from offices in London (when they aren't away exploring new destinations), with the offices on The Cog being left in the tender care of Miss Elysia Dunham. Miss Dunham maintains a staff of booking clerks and passenger liaison officers, and has an extensive network of leisure contacts.

**ELYSIA DUNHAM,
TOUR OPERATOR**

Cogs Pencils and Paperclips
(office management skills) +2

Cakes Everything in its Place
(organised & methodical) +3

Swordsticks Tough Old Bird
(physical stamina) +2

Background The lack of silver in her hair belies Miss Dunham's true age; she really should have retired years ago, but was fascinated by the chance to work on dear Miss Hanson's madcap business venture. Not a great traveler herself (she prefers to read about places rather than visit them), her many years of service as Mr. Hanson's business secretary have given her the edge when it comes to dealing with pilots, passengers, and poppycock. Highly organised and efficient, she is occasionally recalled to London when the Golightlys are touring, but prefers the calmer nature of life on The Cog compared to the big city.

BOOKING CLERK

Cogs Dotting the "I"s
(secretarial skills) +2

Cakes Supremely Serene
(always calm & efficient) +3

Swordsticks The Pen is Not Mightier
(fencing & duelling) +2

Background Smartly liveried, the young ladies and gents of Hanson & Golightly are impeccably mannered and never flustered, even by the most curmudgeonly of passengers.

THE JOINT MILITARY & POLICE ENCLOSURE

There is a relatively small joint Army and Air Fleet garrison (the Stephenson Garrison) on the walkway linking the Docking and Residential Cogs between the Notus (Number 3) and Zephyrus (Number 5) Arms. This prevents use of the walkway by members of the public unless they are there on business, or attending Police Headquarters (which is also located there). A much larger deployment of Her Majesty's Army and Navy are stationed in Brunel Garrison on Monturiol.

**COMMANDER UTTAMVEER SINGH,
GARRISON CHIEF
(JOINT AIR FLEET & ARTILLERY)**

Cogs Master of the Mercurial
(piloting skills) +3

Cakes Vand Chhakna
(generous, kind, pious) +2

Swordsticks Cutting Truth
(sword fighting using the traditional curved kirpan) +2

Background Born in the Punjab and educated at Cambridge, Commander Singh is as wise as he is handsome. Always interested in flying, he enrolled in the Royal Air Fleet as soon as he graduated and was consistently top of his class at the Academy. In his current position, he is responsible for his own flyers and the artillerymen on The Upper Ring. A devout Sikh, Commander Singh is resplendent in his uniform, topped by a red plaid dastar (turban). His courtly manners make him a great favourite with the ladies, although he is far too modest to notice the effect he has on the female population of The Cog.

ARTILLERYMAN

Cogs Squaddie
(knowledge of army history & tactics) +2

Cakes Under Pressure
(keeping cool under difficult circumstances) +2

Swordsticks Ready, Aim, Fire!
(use & maintenance of artillery weapons) +3

Background It is the responsibility of the artillerymen to man the guns and protect incoming and outgoing dirigibles in the face of sky pirate attacks. They see themselves as better than their infantry colleagues.

LIGHT ATTACK DIRIGIBLE (LAD) PILOT

Cogs Head in the Clouds
(light air vehicle piloting skills) +3

Cakes Upper Crust
(well educated) +2

Swordsticks Rat-a-tat-tat
(aerial combat) +2

Background Brave and fearless (somewhat of a prerequisite given the craft they fly), the LAD pilots must be ready to launch at a moment's notice if sky pirates decide to attack.

**INSPECTOR DAVID MACINTYRE,
CHIEF OF POLICE**

Cogs I Spy With My Little Eye
(detection & interrogation skills) +2

Cakes Know Thine Enemy
(good judge of character, understands people's motivations) +3

Swordsticks Hot Pursuit
(athletic & fast, for the most part) +2

Background The Inspector is highly rated amongst his fellow officers for his quiet, calm, and methodical way of solving crimes. Oddly enough, he is also highly rated by his foes, who appreciate his gentlemanly, almost old-fashioned manner (that and the fact that for while in his youth, he was a bit of a bad 'un and has a great understanding of the criminals' ways). Many were surprised when he was assigned to *Atlantis*, seeing it more as a side-step than a promotion, but MacIntyre is currently not a well man despite his youth, and has been stationed here for the good of his health by the Chief Police Surgeon.



POLICEMAN

- Cogs** 'Ello, 'Ello, 'Ello
(police training) +2
- Cakes** Servant of the People
(knows his place) +2
- Swordsticks** Strong Arm of the Law
(brawling) +3
- Background** Deferential, polite, and discreet, the police force of HMFSC *Atlantis* are nevertheless a formidable adversary should their ire be roused. Fortunately, overt crime on The Cog is relatively rare and any transgressors are swiftly dealt with, making this one of the easier police billets in the Empire.

THE RESIDENTIAL COG

The housing on *Atlantis* varies from the plain and functional to the grand and opulent. For the shop assistants and manual workers of *Atlantis* (other than those employed by the mines and on the Lower Ring), home will most likely be a two-story brick terraced house of two to four bedrooms, located on the outer side of the ring, close to the walkways from the Docking Cog. Houses on the inner side of the ring, facing the Administrative Cog, tend to be for The Cog's professional work-force and are usually three-story terraced brick villas, reached from the pavement by a flight of stairs (as proper basements to house the kitchens and the staff are not permitted by building regulations, the main entrance by necessity moves to the first floor).

To maintain the spirits of those living on HMFSC *Atlantis*, there are several very charming parks within the Residential Cog. On a Sunday afternoon, they are a highly pleasant location to wander, with the bandstands a particular attraction, thanks to the preponderance of military bands.

Armstrong Park is the largest on The Cog, boasting its own boating lake and several bandstands. The immaculate flower beds and paths are maintained by a discreet army of gardeners. The plants have all been carefully bred by them

NOT WHAT IT SEEMS?

Not content with blackening the names of local business people, certain disgruntled individuals also claim that there is a nefarious reason for the prohibition of basements on The Cog. According to these highly fanciful malcontents, there is a secret underground level to *Atlantis*, linked to the single, solitary basement beneath the Pinnacle.

to ensure their hardiness, as although day-time temperatures can be pleasant, the evenings can be rather cool. There is a marvellous orangery close to the lake, where dances are held every Tuesday after dinner. In the centre of the lake is a folly, known as the Portico, where young lovers frequently arrange clandestine meetings. The island can also be reached by a most romantically designed bridge, should the paramours be less than enthusiastic about rowing.

High Battersea Park is much smaller than Armstrong Park. It lies behind the Number 3 DSA, Eurus, and lacks both a boating lake and a bandstand - in fact, without a certain tea rooms, it would barely register a mention at all. The Mechanical Mouse Tea Rooms, a small, single-storied, white-washed building with a brick-red tiled roof, is nestled at the centre of the park - all roads do indeed lead to it, and with good reason. There is a pretty lawn in front of the tea rooms, suitable for picnics in good weather (picnic blankets are provided by the hostesses for their customers).

Close to the parks are the finest houses on *Atlantis*, home to those entrepreneurs and leaders of society who have chosen to conduct their business (or even retirement) on The Cog. Grand villas (again, tastefully restrained to three stories) line the streets facing the parks on the inner side of the ring, their dressed stone columns and entrance porticos glowering down at passers-by from behind black iron railings. Many of these villas have their own private gardens to the rear.

As with the housing, the hotels of the Residential Cog vary greatly. Some are small and homely, found in the nicer residential areas and nestled amongst the brick villas. Others are quite grand, and are located in or on the edges of the largest parks. Boarding houses tend to be found in the larger terraced properties.

RESIDENTIAL COG BUSINESSES, SERVICES & PERSONALITIES

THE GRAND ATHENIAN HOTEL

Located on the edge of Armstrong Park, the Grand Athenian is one of the The Cog's most genteel options for accommodation. Reflecting the opulence of some of London's finest establishments, the hotel is supremely adept at catering to its patrons' whims and necessities.

MME. CHARLOTTE SAVOY, HOTEL PROPRIETOR

- Cogs** Inn Coming
(hotel management skills) +3
- Cakes** If Looks Could Kill
(charming & polite until riled) +2
- Swordsticks** Quick, Quick, Slow
(ballroom dancing) +2
- Background** Only distantly related by marriage to the Count who originally owned the land on which the eponymous London hotel is currently being built, Mme. Savoy runs a high

class but relatively inexpensive establishment on the edge of the largest and most picturesque of HMFSC *Atlantis*' parks. Originally trained as a dancer, she met her husband Ernest Savoy whilst working as an exhibition dancer in his father's hotel in Rouen. A slender, graceful woman in her late fifties, she has been solely responsible for the Grand Athenian since the death of her beloved Ernest two years ago. Her tongue, when angered, is almost as sharp as her brain, and many an unfortunate staff member has been subjected to her withering stare when they have displeased her.

31 EVERMORE TERRACE

A modest boarding establishment typical of its kind, 31 Evermore Terrace is one of the newest to offer room and lodging to visitors and the recently arrived. Many more examples can be found in the streets nearby.

**MISS ELIZABETH FALKNER,
BOARDING HOUSE PROPRIETRESS**

- Cogs** Little Red Book
(running a boarding house) +3
- Cakes** Old Mother Hen
(fussy & maternalistic) +2
- Swordsticks** Fifteen Love
(tennis player when younger) +2
- Background** Although frequently referred to as a spinster, it's not that Miss Falkner hasn't had suitors, oh no. In fact, there was one particular gentleman but he treated her terribly badly, forcing her to retreat to The Cog with nothing but a small inheritance from her father (who did not die of shame as a result of her broken engagement, no matter what the neighbours said). Still, the money enabled her to set up a respectable boarding house for visiting business gentleman. She takes a motherly interest in her lodgers, even though many of them are actually older than she, her disappointments having aged her prematurely.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE COG

The central, upper ring is the Administrative Cog. Entrance to this inner bastion is regulated at checkpoints between it and the Residential Cog. No person is permitted entry without the correct paperwork, or at the very least a sincere letter of introduction. Embassies of Her Majesty's Dominions are situated here in the outer and lowliest level of the administrative block, alongside those of specially invited Governments (such as the United States). Diplomatic attachés and their staff reside in their embassy buildings.

NOT WHAT IT SEEMS?

Perhaps the most discussed but little understood target of The Cog's gossipmongers is the Pinnacle's museum. They claim that there are hidden rooms containing forbidden collections that only those in the know are permitted to see but never speak of. However, the exact nature of these dark depositories is something on which even these tattle-tales are strangely silent.

The next tier up houses those Government departments and military necessities required for the efficient operation of the city, and at the very centre of The Cog is the Pinnacle, home to the Governor of HMFSC *Atlantis*. It also houses in its lower levels a museum honouring the construction of the city which, sadly, most of the city's inhabitants will never see due to its location in such a sensitive area. Primarily it is used as a venue for the entertainment of visiting dignitaries, as well as for important negotiations of State.

The basement of the Pinnacle (the only building permitted to have such a thing) contains the enormous Babbage Engine charged with monitoring the performance and safety of the city and maintaining contact with the rest of Her Majesty's Empire, linked to its brethren by enormous telegraph cables running down two of the anchor chains. The lantern at the Pinnacle's summit not only affords magnificent views over The Cog, but also contains a beacon to warn dirigibles of its presence.

**PERSONALITIES OF THE
ADMINISTRATIVE COG**

**SIR JETHROE ARTROBUS,
ADMINISTRATOR IN CHIEF**

- Cogs** A Head for Figures
(management skills) +2
- Cakes** Grease the Wheel
(diplomatic skills) +3
- Swordsticks** Queensbury Rules
(boxing) +2
- Background** A smart, refined man in his late fifties, Sir Jethroe is a skilled diplomat and smoother of ruffled feathers. His superb memory means that he never forgets a face, knows what everything costs and where it is, and can organise The Cog with nigh on military precision. His penchant for boxing led him into some wild exploits as a young man, and he still likes a flutter on the odd bout,

although his own days in the ring have been curtailed by the need to maintain the dignity of his office (no-one wants to see their Governor with a shiny black eye).

**LADY CAROLYN FENTIMAN,
BRITISH DIPLOMATIC ATTACHÉ**

Cogs Unflappable
(competent in any situation) +2

Cakes Smashing Do!
(always knows what to say) +3

Swordsticks Hatpin at the Ready
(defend oneself with small, sharp weapons)
+2

Background A doughty, elderly lady, well-versed in diplomatic etiquette, she is renowned for her ability to organise large scale social functions and keep her head in a crisis. Her occasionally twittering manner should not be allowed to lull the reader into a false sense of security; she still has all her marbles and knows exactly how to use them. One of the main reasons she has excelled as a diplomat is through her ability to keep secrets.

**THE HONOURABLE
MRS. SARAYU WADIYAR-ALLINGHAM,
INDIAN DIPLOMATIC ATTACHÉ**

Cogs Dynastic Dynamo
(political & diplomatic knowledge of India & the Empire) +2

Cakes Rare Exotic Bloom
(captivating beauty & sense of humour) +3

Swordsticks Sticky Wicket
(excellent all-round cricketer) +2

Background Mrs. Wadiyar-Allingham, a cousin of the Wodeyar dynasty of Mysore, India, fell in love with a steady but talented young diplomat. Her family had little hope of her finding a better match (due to her headstrong ways) and had no objections when the young man requested her hand in marriage. She proved an able assistant to her husband throughout his career and after his untimely death, took on his role as Indian attaché to The Cog. Her exotic nature and humour are bewitching and her mind is as equally captivating.

**MR. GARDENER JEFFERSON,
AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC ATTACHÉ**

Cogs Best Education Money Can Buy
(general knowledge) +2

Cakes Centre of Attention
(spoilt, vain & very self-confident) +3

Swordsticks College Blue
(athletics) +2

Background His very first posting, Mr. Jefferson is very green in the ways of diplomacy. Sent here by Washington to either sink or swim (unbeknownst to him, they view him as extremely expendable should his mission go wrong), his main brief is to find out as much as possible about Canada's space program from Miss Davies, the Canadian attaché. Having been spoilt rotten by his Mama (the fearsome head of a wealthy old New York family), Mr. Jefferson is of the opinion that no woman can resist him, and figures that the easiest way to complete his assignment is to fervently woo Miss Davies, who will be as but putty in his hands...



**MISS CALDONIA DAVIES,
CANADIAN DIPLOMATIC ATTACHÉ**

Cogs Keeping it in the Family
(political & diplomatic knowledge) +2

Cakes Manipulative Minx
(sweet & innocent? Nope, not really) +3

Swordsticks Trip the Light Fantastic (dancing) +2

Background Although a relative novice in the world of diplomacy, Miss Davies is never-the-less following in a fine family tradition. Unlike her American counterpart and erstwhile suitor Mr. Jefferson, she is highly politically savvy. She also has a very bad habit of allowing people (men in particular) to believe that she is rather naïve and trusting, which she most certainly is not (meaning that poor Mr. Jefferson will be in for quite a shock at some point in the not too distant future). The smart money knows she will go far, provided she can keep her vanity in check.

**MONSIEUR REMY BARRAS,
FRENCH DIPLOMATIC ATTACHÉ**

Cogs Apathetic Advocate (legal knowledge) +2

Cakes You Rub My Back
(charming, especially if he wants something) +3

Swordsticks En Garde! (fencing) +2

Background Although no Tallyrand, M. Barras does his best. Initially a student of the law, his failure to complete his training was widely put down to his profligate ways (one of several less charming personality traits that he does have in common with the great Tallyrand). After an alleged bribery scandal, Barras was packed off to The Cog to redeem himself (very much like Commander Winters, but for different reasons). Never one to pass up the chance for a deal, he is a canny manipulator of people.

ACT 2: THE LOWER RING

The lower ring of HMFSC *Atlantis* is the engineering ring or “The Inferno,” as it is more commonly known to those who dwell there. Here are to be found the boilermen, stokers, and mechanics whose filthy labours ensure the continued flight of the city.

Beneath each of the upper ring’s arms there sits a single, gigantic DSA, its chimney rising up through the Docking Cog to disgorge its smoke high into the atmosphere. Only four

DSAs are used to elevate the city at any given time, although all six are required to manoeuvre it if adjustments to its position are required. Their operation is carefully controlled by the Babbage Engine in the Pinnacle via a complex system of firings to maintain the city’s stability during change over periods.

As befits such behemoths, the DSAs have been given names from the Greek legends. Originally there were to be only four engines, so the committee in charge decided, rather romantically, to name them after the Greek Gods of the four winds. Stephenson, at a later stage of the design process, decided that six engines would be far safer and make the city far easier to steer; Brunel agreed and the design was altered. Never ones to let hard geometry get in the way of aesthetics, the committee decided to keep the original names (even though the engines no longer pointed in the cardinal directions they were named for) and added two more equally grandiose names. The number one engine, therefore, is named for the god Hermes through his association with flight, commerce, and travellers. Number two engine (diametrically opposite Hermes) is named for Aeolus, chief god of the winds. Number three engine is Eurus, god of the east wind; number four engine is Boreas, god of the north wind; number five engine is Zephyrus, god of the west wind and the final engine, number six, is Notus, god of the south wind.

Each DSA is fed twenty-four hours a day by a continuous stream of coal hauled from beneath the Atlantic, even when not in service; firing up such a gargantuan machine would take far too long and risk damage to the components, so even when not in use they are kept ticking along on a slow burn. Living quarters are located next to each DSA for the teams of people assigned to that particular station; even the Shift Charge Engineer responsible for each DSA is expected to maintain a lodging down there, although they are allowed to venture into the Upper Ring when not engaged in their shift (unlike their lowly compatriots, who must remain in The Inferno).

There are three shifts (mornings, afternoons, and nights) and thirty-six Shift Charge Engineers; one for each shift at each DSA, running on a week on-week off schedule to maintain productivity. These Shift Charge Engineers report to the Under Engineer for each engine, who are technically always on call should a problem arise (although in actuality work more along the lines of standard office hours, with Sunday off). The Under Engineers report to Mr. Templeton Hazemoor, The Cog’s Chief Engineer. The lower members of staff - the stokers who feed the furnaces - are allowed one shift off per week, when they are permitted to descend to Monturiol in one of the cargo containers. The numbers of these stokers fluctuates, but there are around three to four hundred of them on or below the city at any given time.

The central ring of The Inferno is where coal and cargo from Monturiol are unloaded and stored. Any cargo for Topside (as the upper levels are jocularly called) is temporarily stored here until it can be transferred to the relevant location by heavy freight elevators, although most of the cargo for the Upper Ring is smaller stuff that can be brought in at the correct level by dirigibles. Food for the Engineering Ring comes up via the paternoster, which is then prepared by the canteens located next to each DSA. As with most other cargo, food

NOT WHAT IT SEEMS?

As if there wasn't dirty laundry enough on the Engineering Ring, the local grapevine has it that the prohibition on alcohol is being circumvented, and that somewhere there is an illicit still making good use of any "excess" steam.



supplies for the Upper Ring (except meat) are brought in by dirigible. Food and board for the workers on the Engineering Ring is included as part of their meagre wages. The consumption of alcohol is strictly prohibited on this level.

PERSONALITIES OF THE INFERNO

**MR. TEMPLETON HAZEMOOR,
CHIEF ENGINEER**

Cogs Man with a Spanner
(engineering skills) +3

Cakes Man of Means
(confidence, wealth) +2

Swordsticks Fast on His Feet
(surprising agility) +2

Background The rather portly but very smartly attired Head of Engineering on The Cog. Highly educated, sensible, and from a well-to-do background, he is surprisingly agile on his feet for a man of his age and size. He is more than capable of delivering a good drubbing, verbally or physically. Softly spoken, he runs the engineers with an amiable, no-nonsense attitude and is more than prepared to get his hands dirty should the need arise. He is respected and trusted by his men, and is just as likely to be found in the Engineering Ring as in the Administrative Cog.

STOKER

Cogs Treat Her Like a Lady
(setting, stoking & boiler management) +2

Cakes Rough as a Badger's
(uncouth & uncultured) +2
or
Rough Diamond
(socially graceless but good at heart) +2

Swordsticks Forearms You Could Crack Coconuts On
(brawling) +3

Background Burly men, responsible for feeding the DSAs. Their lives are hot and hard and they relish their free time on Monturiol.

ACT 3: MONTURIOL

Monturiol, more commonly known as “The Island”, is an artificial landmass, constructed as a base of operations during the building of HMFSC *Atlantis*. It is now home to the joint Army and Navy Brunel Garrison, docks, and the mine which feeds the city’s mighty engines. The miners live cheek by jowl with their place of work, although compared to many back in Britain employed in similar jobs, their standard of living is quite high. Food and board are provided, as they are for the citizens of the Engineering Ring, although tightly regulated taverns are present by the docks for recreational purposes.

The Army are responsible for the protection of the mine and island, the Navy for policing the dock-side and shipping (and keeping an eye on the chain charges). A small fleet of ironclads are anchored here to help in the defence of the island, should the more usual form of pirates (or a hostile force) attempt to assail this lonely outpost. One or two submarine craft are also maintained here, partly for further research of the plateau on which the island stands, but also partly for regular inspection of the chains and mine-workings.

PERSONALITIES OF THE ISLAND

**COMMANDER RUPERT WINTERS,
JOINT BRUNEL GARRISON CHIEF (ARMY)**

- Cogs** Battlefield Thinker
(military planning & tactics) +2
- Cakes** Stiff Upper Lip
(never relaxed, socially stunted) +2
- Swordsticks** Military Man
(guns, swords, cannons, etc.) +3
- Background** Assigned to *Atlantis* after a rather embarrassing social faux-pas, Winters is a more than capable soldier and quite a good leader. He feels slightly bitter to have been handed what is effectively a baby-sitting job, but he is determined to make the most of it and get back into Her Majesty’s good books.

**COMMANDER JOHN NEVILLE,
JOINT BRUNEL GARRISON CHIEF (NAVY)**

- Cogs** Life on the Ocean Wave
(naval procedures & tactics) +3
- Cakes** On the Up
(ambitious but not cut-throat) +2
- Swordsticks** Master of the Maritime
(sailing small & large boats/ships) +2
- Background** Neville, the youngest of three sons, was always destined to enter the Navy; it is a

family tradition, after all. Young for a Commander, his family’s military history has ensured a rapid ascent up the ranks. Unlike Winters, Neville does not see his posting as a punishment, rather as a brief interlude on his way to greater things. His ambition is well-tempered, though; he has seen too many of his peers ruin their chances as a result of arrogant over-confidence in their own abilities. John Neville is no fool and will bide his time, waiting for the right opportunity to shine.

**DR. CUTHBERT BARRINGTON,
JOINT ARMY/NAVY SURGEON**

- Cogs** All Patched Up
(field medical & surgical skills) +3
- Cakes** Drifting
(detached & reserved, no ambition) +2
- Swordsticks** Handy with a Blade
(knife fighting) +2
- Background** Neither the best nor worst there is, Dr Barrington is a competent medical officer whose lack of ambition has allowed him to drift on to The Island. There are rumours of a tragic past that drove him from his Jamaican home into the military and battles with the bottle, but he is always there, sober, stalwart, and distant.



GARRISON SOLDIER

- Cogs** Squaddie
(general knowledge of army history & tactics) +2
- Cakes** Buttoned Up
(formal & detached in the presence of officers) +2
- Swordsticks** Fix Bayonets
(infantry combat skills) +3
- Background** Garrison soldiers are very much like infantrymen everywhere – a close knit community that works hard and, if given the chance, plays hard as well. They are rotated between Monturiol and The Cog, where they work with their civilian counterparts in the Police to maintain law and order.

GARRISON SAILOR

- Cogs** Hoist the Mainbrace
(sailing skills) +3
- Cakes** Jolly Jack Tar
(lively, flirty & cheeky) +2
- Swordsticks** Swashing My Buckle
(sword fighting) +2
- Background** The sailors of Monturiol have a relatively easy life, compared with some other members of Her Majesty's Navy. They are mostly involved in supporting oceanographic research and protecting the territorial waters around The Island, and regularly take part in exercises to keep their hands in, should sea pirates ever be foolish enough to muster an attack.

MR. JOSIAH GREENDALE, MINES MANAGER

- Cogs** Peerage Berk
(detailed knowledge of society gossip, scandal & genealogy) +2
- Cakes** Bombastic Buffoon
(arrogant; condescending to social "inferiors") +3
- Swordsticks** In the Pink
(riding & country sports) +2
- Background** His family owns many mines, and although he has no love for the business, Josiah Greendale knows all about reputation and wealth. Indeed, he's rather fond of both. After his family were awarded the rights

to mine on Monturiol, Greendale was dispatched to the island along with Joseph Little, his Deputy. Some say his family put him there to get him out of the way, others that it was the one job even he couldn't ruin. Either way, he wouldn't be caught dead on site and leaves Mr. Little to deal with the everyday running of the mine. Sincere and verbose with those of his own social class, he is a terrible snob and immensely rude to those beneath him on the social scale.

MR. JOSEPH LITTLE, DEPUTY MANAGER OF THE MINE

- Cogs** A Rich Seam
(mining management) +2
- Cakes** The Middle Ground
(interacts with workers & management on equal footing) +3
- Swordsticks** Salt Runs Through His Veins
(sailing) +2
- Background** Having worked his way up into the management from the coalface, Mr. Little has seen both sides of the mining industry. He walks a difficult line between the Manager and the men. It is his duty to ensure the smooth running of the colliery, although if pushed he would side with his workers, as he views Greendale as a volatile liability (not that he has ever let his boss know his true feelings towards him). Like Mr. Hazemoor, he is well respected by his workforce, who would no doubt have revolted by now if not for his presence. Little only ventures up to The Cog when summoned by his superior. In his spare time, he is working on a boat that he plans to sail around The Island.

MR. WILLIAM THOMAS, CHIEF MINING ENGINEER

- Cogs** Hit It With a Hammer
(mining mechanical engineering) +3
- Cakes** Salt of the Earth
(polite, friendly, kind, of humble origins) +2
- Swordsticks** Go the Distance
(running) +2
- Background** It seems a little obvious that a Welshman should end up in a colliery, but Mr. Thomas' family have a long history in mining. Not at the same level as his boss (Mr. Greendale), of course, but many in the know suspect that coal flows in his veins (something of

a mining in-joke, that). Younger than Mr. Little, Mr. Thomas also worked his way up through the ranks and was hand picked by the Deputy Manager on the strength of his reputation as a miracle worker when it comes to recalcitrant machinery. Unlike many of his countrymen, Mr. Thomas does not indulge in spontaneous outbursts of song (unless he's had one too many, then everyone finds out why he normally refrains).

MINEWORKER

Cogs Mole Man
(mining knowledge & skills) +3

Cakes Blinded by the Light
(awkwardness out of social sphere) +2

Swordsticks Pick and Shovel
(brawling with work tools) +2

Background It's a dangerous job, but relatively well paid, all things considered. These men are responsible for digging out the fuel needed to keep the mighty furnaces of *Atlantis* burning. Like their counterparts, the stokers, they play just as hard as they work.

**MAGGIE TRUMBLE,
LICENSEE OF "THE WRECK"**

Cogs Gills and Firkins
(licensee skills & knowledge) +3

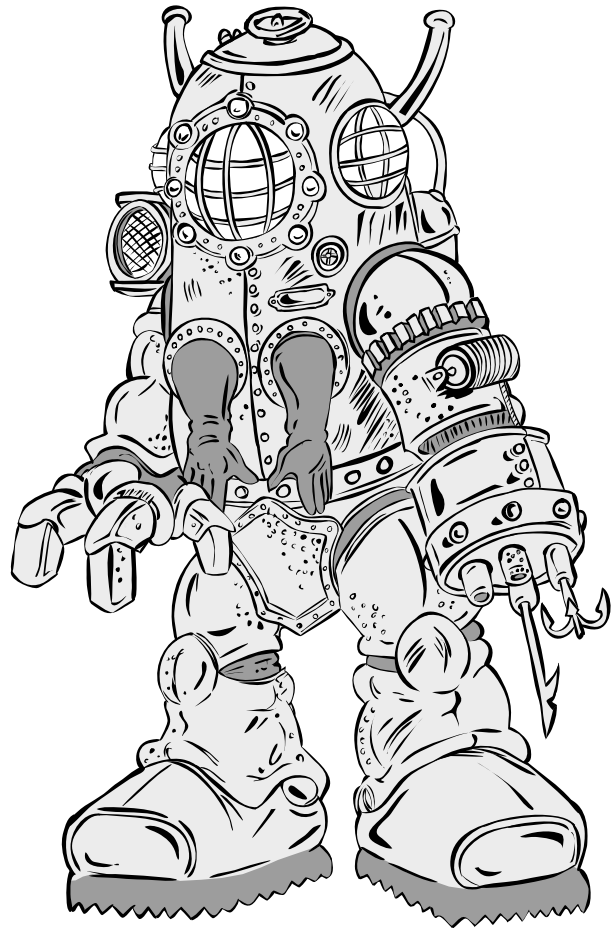
Cakes Dainty But Dangerous
(charming, but hard as nails) +2

Swordsticks Feel My Boot Up Yer...
(manhandling techniques) +2

Background Mrs. Trumble, a tiny, brunette woman, is an experienced land-lady and has seen it all. Her delicate frame belies a core of steel and her regulars learnt long ago not to be fooled by her easy-going charm. When riled, Mrs. Trumble is more than capable of ejecting the biggest ruffian without ever disturbing her carefully coiffured locks. No-one is quite sure why she's ended up on Monturiol, but her regulars are more than grateful that she did.

NOT WHAT IT SEEMS?

There have been a positive plethora of strange sightings off the coast of Monturiol in recent weeks. Some have uncharitably put them down to either the questionable eyesight or even more suspect drinking habits of the witnesses, but there are one or two sober and upright individuals who swear blind that something is lurking out there...



Chapter 2

Adventure In The Clouds

This scenario is intended to allow players to become familiar with the world of HMFSC *Atlantis* and can be used either with the pregenerated characters listed in the adjoining chapter, or as a way to introduce player characters to each other and the second Jewel of Her Majesty's Empire.

The action is arbitrarily set in the year 1880, five years after HMFSC *Atlantis* was officially opened, although it can be run at any time after 1875.

If you are using the pregenerated characters found in **Chapter 3**, each of these characters has a reason for travelling to The Cog. They should all arrive at Cardington in plenty of time for their flight.

If you are using player generated characters, there may be links in their backgrounds that can be exploited to get them to HMFSC *Atlantis*, along the lines of those used for the pregenerated characters. If there are not, whilst it is perhaps a *little* clichéd (alright, it's a *lot* clichéd, but what the heck), each of the characters has received a ticket from an unknown

source, requesting their presence on the flight of the FS *Aristaeus*. Exactly who (or what) has sent these tickets remains to be seen...

If you are a player, we humbly suggest that you stop reading now, in order that you do not spoil your enjoyment of the following adventure. Thank you.

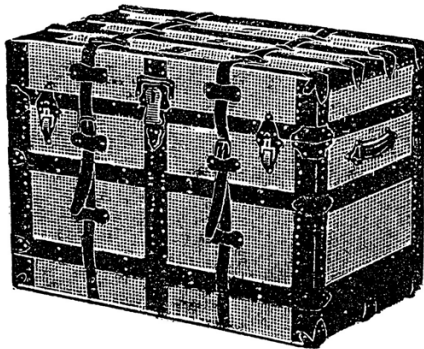
FOR THE GM'S EYES ONLY

Not everyone was pleased when the British Empire flexed her engineering muscles and constructed the flying behemoth that is HMFSC *Atlantis*, and the Government knew that it was likely to become the target of a variety of agitators' machinations. Fortunately, by due diligence and extensive intelligence gathering, the city has so far been kept safe. That is all about to change.

Unbeknownst to the authorities, an obscure Prussian militant group, the Order of the Blue Eagle (OBE), has plans for *Atlantis*: they are determined to either cripple or destroy it by whatever means necessary. They intend to capitalise on the chaos, embarrassment, and resentment that such a catastrophe would bring to the British Crown by fomenting a rebellion that would see Her Glorious Majesty Queen Victoria replaced by Wilhelm I, King of Prussia and first Emperor of the unified Germany, thus bringing much of the world firmly under Prussian control.

In order to bring their plans to fruition, the OBE are playing a very long game. They installed apparently perfectly reputable individuals on The Cog many years ago as sleeper agents, only recently activating them. After all, Kaiser Wilhelm is not getting any younger, and he has been lucky to survive two recent assassination attempts; he may not survive a third.

The OBE agents have carefully positioned themselves so that they have access to all of the necessary locations for their plan to succeed, the first part of which is to seriously damage or destroy one of the DSAs in order to ruin the city's balance and steering capability (as all six DSAs are required for the



process of manoeuvring in mid-air). They then plan to set the city adrift by detonating the charges on *Atlantis'* anchor chains and blowing up the paternoster cables. Not only would any rescue effort be extremely difficult, it would also be costly, and the physical damage caused would take years to repair. Added to that, Britain's reputation for protecting its citizenry (and those of other nations) would be seriously tarnished. As with many militants, it hasn't entirely dawned on them that public anger could just as easily be directed their way, should their involvement ever be revealed...

ACT 1: FROM HERE TO THERE

(Wherein the characters travel to HMFSC Atlantis.)

SCENE 1: BOOKING IN

Cardington is a thriving dirigible port very close to the market town of Bedford. It deals solely with civilian traffic, as Her Majesty's Air Fleet dirigibles are predominantly based out of Farnborough, in Hampshire (close to the extensive military base at Aldershot). There is a mixture of freight and passenger companies located on the site, over which tower the lofty sheds that house the gas-filled giants of the skies.

The characters will be travelling with that most reputable of firms, Hanson & Golightly (see p.53), whose reception building at Cardington may look like a large wooden shed from the outside, but is a warm and beautifully furnished sanctum on the inside, complete with complimentary cold buffet and hot or cold refreshments. It has often been commented that many passengers choose to travel with the firm purely on the strength of the groaning cake trolley and the quality of the tea dispensed by the gigantic silver samovar housed at Cardington. Mr. Francis Caldicott is the passenger liaison who is accompanying this trip; it is his job to look after the passengers after they have checked in, and to ensure their comfort during the journey.

The FS *Aristaeus* is the pride of the Hanson & Golightly's Aero Tours fleet, a sleek dirigible with extremely comfortable guest accommodation, capable of making the flight from Cardington to Lakehurst, New Jersey in a little under 4 days (compared to the very fastest steamship, which can only manage between 7 and 8 days for a transatlantic crossing). On this occasion, the ship will only be calling at HMFSC *Atlantis*, which has become rather a popular tourist destination since its opening five years ago. The outward trip is expected to take approximately two days. The Captain of the FS *Aristaeus* for this journey is Aurora Dane, ably assisted by her crew.

Other passengers on the trip include Mr. & Mrs. Richard Ansty (newlyweds), Mr. Martin Ellsworth (MoCS), and Mr. William Pettifer (courier), plus any of the pregenerated characters from *Chapter 3* that have not been taken.

MR. FRANCIS CALDICOTT, PASSENGER LIAISON

Cogs All Mapped Out
(geographical/cultural knowledge) +2

Cakes Velvet Glove
(calm, diplomatic, soothing) +3

Swordsticks No Longer in His Prime
(former athletics champion) +2

Background Mr. Caldicott is no longer as young as he was, more's the pity. In his youth he was a great athlete and, despite the passing of time, is still pretty trim. He has travelled extensively and has a virtually photographic memory when it comes to customs and the best spots for sight-seeing. Currently acting as a passenger liaison on The Cog on behalf of Hanson & Golightly's Aero Tours, he is in charge of organising accommodation and flights for visitors.

CAPTAIN AURORA DANE, DIRIGIBLE PILOT

Cogs Freedom of the Skies
(piloting & navigation) +3

Cakes Scrubs Up Well
(surprising charm) +2

Swordsticks Dirty Scrapper
(underhanded fighting) +2

Background Currently helming the dirigible FS *Aristaeus*. A level-headed young woman who, much to the horror of her socially ambitious family, decided to become a pilot rather than marry to her/their advantage. A bit of a tom-boy in many respects, she always turns out smartly in her pilot's uniform (causing quite a stir as she favours rational dress and occasionally britches!) Should the need arise, she can be very glamorous and charming. A superb pilot, she can fly practically anything.

- The good Captain is secretly in love with Nathaniel King of King's Consignments.

UNDER-SECRETARY, MARTIN ELLSWORTH, MoCS

Cogs By the Book
(Ministry regulations & rules) +3

Cakes Sharp as a Knife
(too smart by half) +2

Swordsticks Whatever Means Necessary
(prefers subterfuge to outright conflict) +2

Background Conforming to many people's stereotypical view of a Man from the Ministry, Ellsworth is a dapper, ambitious young gent with a stiff, formal attitude. He is widely regarded



to be too sharp for his own good and have far too high an opinion of himself. He is on *Atlantis* to ensure the correct management of the Babbage Engine (and who knows what else).

- Mr. Ellsworth is being sent to *Atlantis* after concerns were raised by the Central Babbage Engine over recent glitches in the system.
- He knows that someone in the Pinnacle is tampering with the *Atlantis* Babbage Engine, but doesn't know who.
- His mission is secret. He will claim to be visiting The Cog as part of an annual Ministry audit.

**MRS. PHYLLIDA ANSTY,
PUNCH-CARD OPERATOR**

Cogs Not Just Pretty Little Holes (computing skills) +3

Cakes Shy, Retiring Type (as it says) +2

Swordsticks Light the Blue Touch-paper (explosive temper/boxing) +2

Background Mrs. Ansty (née Parker) is such a quiet, well-bred young lady that few would believe

the transformation when she loses her temper. Not that it happens very often, of course, but being a girl amongst eight boys (and the granddaughter of esteemed prize fighter Bernie Frasier, the Belton Basher), Mrs. Ansty learnt how to look after herself at a young age. She is very competent at her job and is very newly married to Mr. Richard Ansty, the Under Engineer for Hermes, the Number 1 DSA. Unbeknownst to her good husband (and pretty much everyone else), she is part of the OBE on The Cog and sister of the Misses Charlton, proprietresses of the Mechanical Mouse Tea Rooms.

- Her position as a punch card operator gives her access not only to The Cog's Babbage Engine, but also to the Administrator's Office, where one of the two control panels for the chain charges is located (the other being on Monturiol).
- She has courted and married Ansty purely to get access to the DSAs
- A ceremonial OBE dagger is locked away in a strong box in her office in the Pinnacle (for a description, see p.70). She also wears a blue eagle pin hidden under her jacket lapel.
- Stashed in her office (beneath a creaky floorboard) are incriminating letters from

her mother and sister, showing her “official” family history to be a complete fabrication.

- When her temper gets the better of her (usually if she doesn't get her own way), she can be prone to committing rash acts.

**MR. RICHARD ANSTY,
UNDER ENGINEER, HERMES (NUMBER 1) DSA**

Cogs Getting in to Gear
(engineering skills) +3

Cakes Sucker for a Sob Story
(kind, naïve & quite gullible) +2

Swordsticks Crawling Along
(excellent swimmer) +2

Background A quite outstanding engineer, almost as good as Mr. Hazemoor (see p.60), young Mr. Ansty is very passionate about his engines. He knows every inch of them and can make them purr like kittens; granted, gigantic steam-powered kittens, but you know what we mean. He has been concerned about the recent glitches Hermes has been suffering, but has been too distracted by his recent nuptials to make a full investigation. Very much in love with his new wife, he is completely oblivious to the fact that she and her sister plan to make him one of the main scapegoats for the OBE's dastardly scheme.

**MR. WILLIAM PETTIFER,
COURIER**

Cogs Signed, Sealed and Delivered
(delivery operations & security) +2

Cakes Honest, Open Face
(inspires confidence & confidences) +3

Swordsticks Never Saw That One Coming
(avoids fighting where possible, but more than capable of holding his own when pressed) +2

Background Every delivery service needs a man they can rely on; for the Bedfordshire Gentleman's Parcel & Post (“Always at your disposal, Sir!”), there are few more reliable than Little Billy Pettifer. Small in stature, and occasionally mistaken for a jockey, Billy inspires trust in those who meet him. He knows far too many awful jokes, but people never seem to take offence (and he's always careful never to tell the more risqué ones in the company of a lady). Well travelled, both in Britain and Europe, his reputation

is well-deserved; virtually nothing can keep him from delivering those important parcels for the company's well-to-do clients. He is en route to The Cog to deliver a small but weighty parcel to a Signor Ignacio Danté.

- Mr. Pettifer has no idea what's in the parcel and will not allow anyone to examine it (it's definitely more than his job is worth to allow any package under his care to be tampered with).

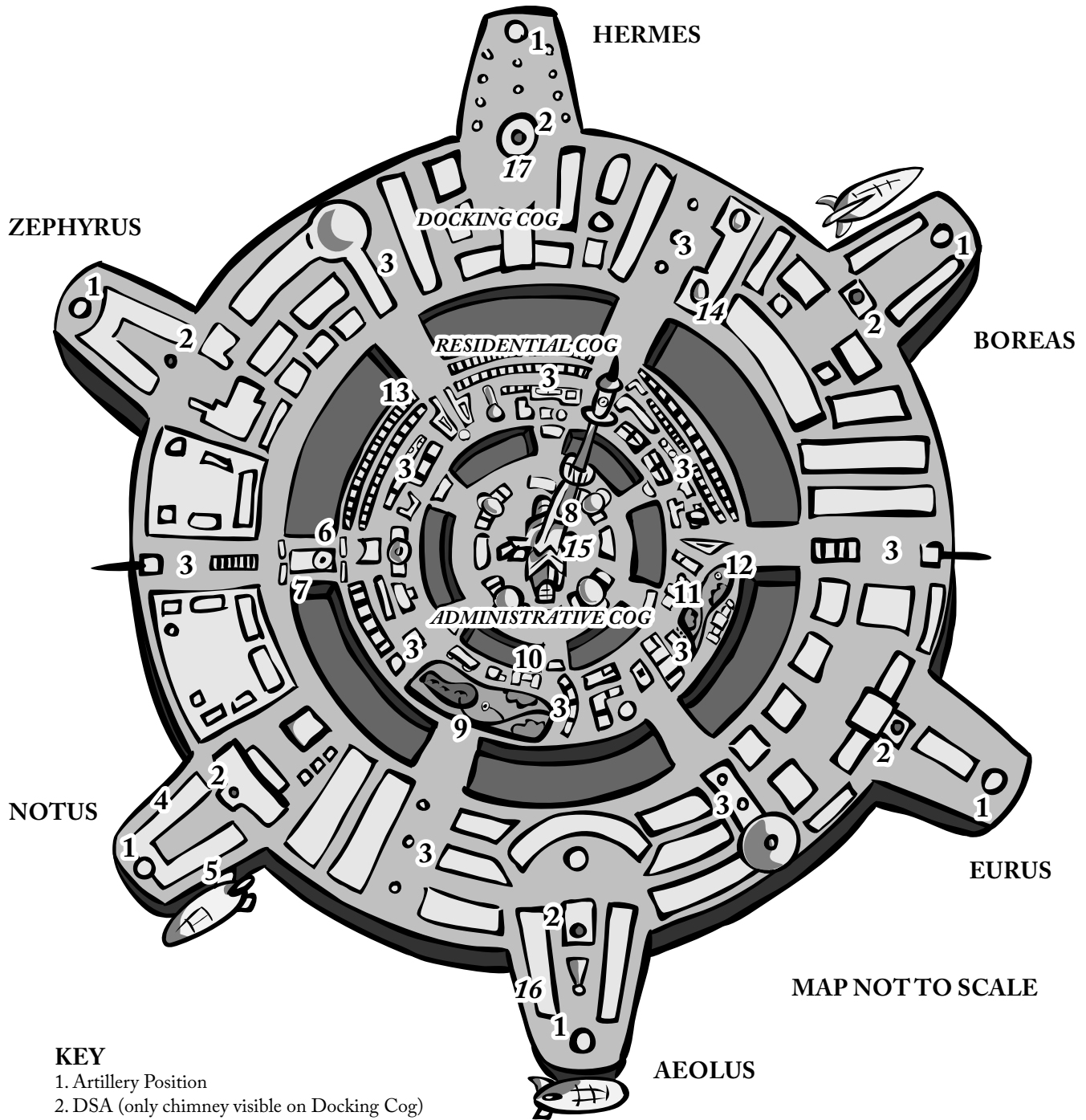
SCENE 2: IN FLIGHT

Mr. Caldicott will take great pains to introduce the passengers to each other once the FS *Aristaeus* is under way, in order to encourage social interaction during the flight. Should the characters fail to talk to each other, Mr. Caldicott will intervene by making suitable dinner seating arrangements and encouraging charming parlour games (such as Charades) to break the ice.

The flight to HMFSC *Atlantis* is purely to enable new characters to get to know each other, and to get to know the key characters in the plot to damage the floating city. When play-testing at gaming conventions, we actually did get the players to engage in a few rounds of Charades, which worked very well. Of course, if you require a bit more excitement, you could always have the Balloon City Sky Pirates (pp.52-53) make an attack (just not too close to HMFSC *Atlantis*, so as to prevent reinforcements coming to the characters' rescue!).



HER MAJESTY'S FLYING STEAM CITY ATLANTIS - GM MAP



MAP NOT TO SCALE

KEY

- 1. Artillery Position
- 2. DSA (only chimney visible on Docking Cog)
- 3. Police Boxes
- 4. King's Consignments
- 5. Hanson & Golightly
- 6. Police Station
- 7. Stephenson Garrison
- 8. The Pinnacle
- 9. Armstrong Park
- 10. The Grand Athenian Hotel

- 11. High Battersea Park
- 12. The Mechanical Mouse Tea Rooms
- 13. 31 Evermore Terrace Boarding House
- 14. Cottage Hospital
- 15. The German Consulate
- 16. Bedfordshire Gentleman's Parcel and Post
- 17. Hermes engineering access stairway

And if it becomes helpful to the plot, the pirates may well have accidentally stolen something incriminating from Mrs. Ansty and decide to warn Nathaniel King about the danger... (Yes, he really is a dashing pirate.)

SCENE 3: ARRIVAL

The FS *Aristaeus* is due to arrive on The Cog mid-afternoon, two days after departure from Cardington. Hanson & Golightly's docking berth is located on the Notus Arm (behind which DSA Number 6 shelters). For the safety of the passengers, embarkation is via an enclosed walkway between the dirigible and The Cog; originally open walkways were used, but people had a habit of fainting at the most inopportune moments, particularly on clear days (when you can see all the way down to the Atlantic Ocean).

As at Cardington, passengers will find themselves in a delightful reception room, where all of the necessary paperwork is taken care of. All visitors to The Cog must register with the authorities on arrival, stating their business, length of stay, and the address at which they will be residing. Ostensibly, this is to ensure everyone's safety should the worst happen, but it's also because the Empire loves paperwork and (slightly more sinisterly) keeping track of its citizens.

Once this rather mundane activity has been completed, Mr. Caldicott will usher the group into waiting steam carriages (horses being banned from The Cog for reasons of cleanliness, after initial trials in burning their manure proved a little too, er, fragrant) which will whisk them through the hustle and bustle of the Docking Cog all the way to the Grand Athenian Hotel, on the edge of Armstrong Park (see p.56 for further details).

ACT 2: MURDER MOST FOUL

(Wherein the first terrible deed is done.)

SCENE 1: AFTERNOON TEA

Once the characters have settled in to their rooms, they may wish to explore the delights of the Residential Cog. One particularly popular meeting place is the Mechanical Mouse Tea Rooms in High Battersea Park, run by two sisters, the Misses Charlton. Mr. Pettifer, a regular visitor to The Cog, will heartily recommend it to the characters on account of the pleasant walk (giving them a little time to become accustomed to the strange thrumming vibrations of the city's walkways) and the excellent high teas on offer. In fact, he's on his way there himself and would be happy to show them the way.

If the characters do decide to accompany Mr. Pettifer to the Mechanical Mouse, he will insist on sitting separately from them, as he is expecting to meet his client there. The tea rooms are busy, although the characters will be able to grab their own table shortly after arriving. Miss Charity, a tall, rather well-built young lady, will take their orders when they are ready.

Not long after he arrives, Miss Charity approaches Mr. Pettifer with a note and profuse apologies for not handing it to him sooner. Should the characters speak to Mr. Pettifer on his way out, he will laugh and mention that his client has been detained and will meet him later that evening. If asked,

he will join the characters for tea and can be a useful mine of information about The Cog.

MISS SIMONE CHARLTON, PROPRIETRESS, THE MECHANICAL MOUSE TEA ROOMS

Cogs More Tea and Cake, Vicar? (superb cook) +3

Cakes Shy and Retiring (quiet, reserved, wary of strangers) +2

Swordsticks Rolling Pin of Doom (handy with kitchen objects as a means of defence) +2

Background Never that comfortable in the presence of others, Miss Simone much prefers the privacy of her kitchens in the Mechanical Mouse. It is fortunate for the inhabitants of The Cog that she should feel this way, as her cakes and pastries are legendary. She has no involvement in her sisters' nefarious deeds and until the events of this scenario, has no idea that her sister Phyllida is even on The Cog.

MISS CHARITY CHARLTON, PROPRIETRESS, THE MECHANICAL MOUSE TEA ROOMS

Cogs Brains Behind the Operation (business & spying skills) +3

Cakes I Feel as if I've Known You for Years (disarmingly charming) +2

Swordsticks Cold Hard Steel (knife fighting) +2

Background As different from her eldest sister as chalk from cheese, Miss Charity is highly sociable and very charming despite her overall plainness (or, as some have rather unkindly commented, quite probably because of it). A superb business woman, privately she has some very odd political views and believes that the Prussian Royal Family should be on the throne of England, not Her Majesty. Recruited by their mother (a not-so-distant cousin of said Prussian royalty) into the OBE at a young age, Charity and Phyllida work secretly for the greater glory of Prussia and the destabilization of the British Empire. Miss Charity is currently engaged to Mr. William Thomas, Chief Mining Engineer.

- As leader of the OBE on HMFSC *Atlantis*, she has half a dozen goons at her disposal

(none of whom she trusts much above planting explosives, and all of whom she plans to kill with said explosives, which will no doubt come as quite a shock to them).

- She has become engaged to William Thomas in order to gain access to the control panel for the chain charges in the Chief Mining Engineer's Office on Monturiol.
- Miss Charlton can best be described as ruthlessly efficient and determined.

SCENE 2: DEADLY DEALINGS

No matter whether the characters went with him to the tea rooms or not, William Pettifer will later be found dying, either by the characters (if they decide to take an evening constitutional after dinner), or by passing members of the public (who will immediately call in the Police). The exact location of poor Mr. Pettifer's demise is left to the discretion of the GM, as long as it is convenient to the plot, although Armstrong Park is one such suitable spot.

Pettifer utters two dying words: one of the character's names (the one he has interacted with the most, or someone who has something to hide) and the name "Danté". Unfortunately for him, Pettifer saw through Charity Charlton's disguise (for she is Danté - well, one of them) when he handed over the parcel, and she decided to silence him permanently.

Unfortunately for her, Charity was disturbed before she could finish the job, meaning that eye-witnesses (or the characters themselves) saw a tall man, heavily muffled in a

knee-length, black coat, scarf and wide-brimmed hat running from the scene.

Evidence found on the body (or rather, in it): a dagger with an engraved blade (showing hounds and ears of wheat - the former from the Prussian royal family's crest, the latter referring to Prussia's agricultural prowess), its ivory pommel inlaid with a Prussian blue enamelled eagle (Prussian, of course). This is Charity's ceremonial OBE dagger. Characters would know that the actual Prussian eagle is normally depicted in black, not blue.

Evidence not found on the body: the package, which contains the timing devices needed for the various explosive devices the saboteurs have built (made for Miss Charity by her contacts on the mainland).

The characters will be brought in for questioning by Inspector MacIntyre (p.55), or Samuel Hunter (if he is not a player character). Even if Samuel is a player character, MacIntyre will give the investigation to him to lead, seeing as he travelled with the dead man, but also as a test of his abilities.

Although all of the characters will be questioned, the character Pettifer named will be in for a particular grilling, even though they have nothing to do with the crime. If that character happens to be a little on the shady side, they may have to watch their step for the rest of their stay...

The Police will ask about the characters' movements, and will show them the dagger to see if they recognise it. They will also ask about the parcel and anything the characters might know about Mr. Pettifer's activities since his arrival on *Atlantis*, and whether or not any of the characters know a Signor Danté.

SCENE 3: FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

Once they have been questioned, the characters are free to go, but will be asked to remain available to the Police at all times. If they wish to (and let's hope they do), they are now at liberty to investigate this terrible deed in any way they see fit. If they don't wish to investigate, then they are free to explore the delights of *Atlantis* and will be caught up in the explosive events as they unfurl (which may well spur them into action).

There are several ways in which the investigation can proceed. In order to keep that investigation flowing freely and to ensure that the characters can access as much information as possible, key details are specified below. There may be some information that only certain, specific people would be likely to know, and their names are mentioned either as part of that point or in brackets after it. If no specific person is mentioned and the information is likely to be common knowledge, any of the people the characters have already come into contact with will be able to fill them in. Otherwise, the characters should be able to find out the details for themselves through research, both practical and theoretical.

GENERAL CLUES

- Everyone knows that there is very little crime on The Cog. Yes, there is the occasional fight dockside, both on The Cog and Monturiol, involving some of the less savoury residents, and some pick-pocketing as well (mostly on the Docking Cog, where new, unchaperoned visitors are easy marks), but nothing big like murder - that's definitely a first.

SIGNOR IGNACIO DANTÉ MAN OF MYSTERY

Sadly for Signor Danté, he doesn't actually exist. He is a convenient front for Phyllida Ansty and Charity Charlton, and therefore has whatever Attributes and characteristics the sister currently playing him has. Should he be encountered, he speaks with a heavy accent that is neither truly Spanish or Italian, and will occasionally break into either language depending on what country people believe him to be from. He is always heavily muffled "against the cold" and is in possession of a gigantic black beard and unruly hair (what little of it can be seen peaking out from under his scarf & hat). Phyllida has altered the records to give him an address and an arrival date on The Cog of a fortnight before Mr. Pettifer arrives with his parcel. He is not the same Danté that Mlle. Delon is engaged to, although the potential for confusion should not be overlooked.

- Recently there have been lots of niggling little problems on The Cog: double-booked berths, brief power outages, DSA grumbles, paternoster issues, false air-raided alarms, etc. Nothing big, just minor annoyances, which somehow haven't been made common knowledge back home in Blighty.

REGARDING DANTÉ

- According to the official records, Signor Danté arrived on The Cog two weeks ago for his annual holiday. His occupation is listed as "travelling salesman". (Known to any clerical worker in the Administrative department, or Phyllida Ansty.)
- The visitor registration logs have his address as 31 Evermore Terrace, a relatively new boarding house run by a Miss Falkner (p.57; known to any clerical worker in the Administrative department, or Phyllida Ansty). If questioned, Miss Falkner will flatly deny that a Signor Danté has ever been a resident and certainly knows no-one matching his description.
- Checking at the small office of the Bedfordshire Gentleman's Parcel & Post (over on Aeolus Arm) reveals that they have no record of any contact with a Signor Danté. However, this isn't particularly unusual as the package was an incoming one. (Known to the booking clerks at BGP&P, for which use the same stats as the Hanson & Golightly clerks on p.54.)
- If the characters go back to check the records (or check them thoroughly the first time), they show that the details for Signor Danté were entered on to the Babbage system by a Miss P. Parker. If the characters do not make the connection to Phyllida Ansty, use an appropriate Attribute roll to nudge them gently in the right direction. If Phyllida is making a pretence of helping them, then she will do everything to try and prevent this information coming to light (although it's come as quite a shock to her that her name is attached to the file – she thought all entries were anonymous).
- The original paper forms that Signor Danté filled in are nowhere to be found, which is troubling, as all paper records must be kept until after the person's departure, and according to the system, Signor Danté should still be on The Cog. (Known to any clerical worker in the Administrative department, or Phyllida Ansty.)
- If questioned, Charity Charlton will say that the note for Mr. Pettifer from Danté was brought by a messenger boy. No trace of the boy will be found, and all on-board messenger companies will deny receiving such a commission.
- Charity Charlton will also deny having seen anyone matching the eye-witnesses' description of the murderer at the Mechanical Mouse Tea Rooms.

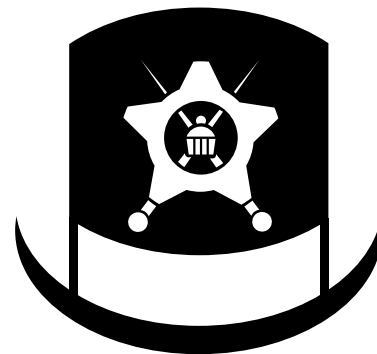
REGARDING THE OBE

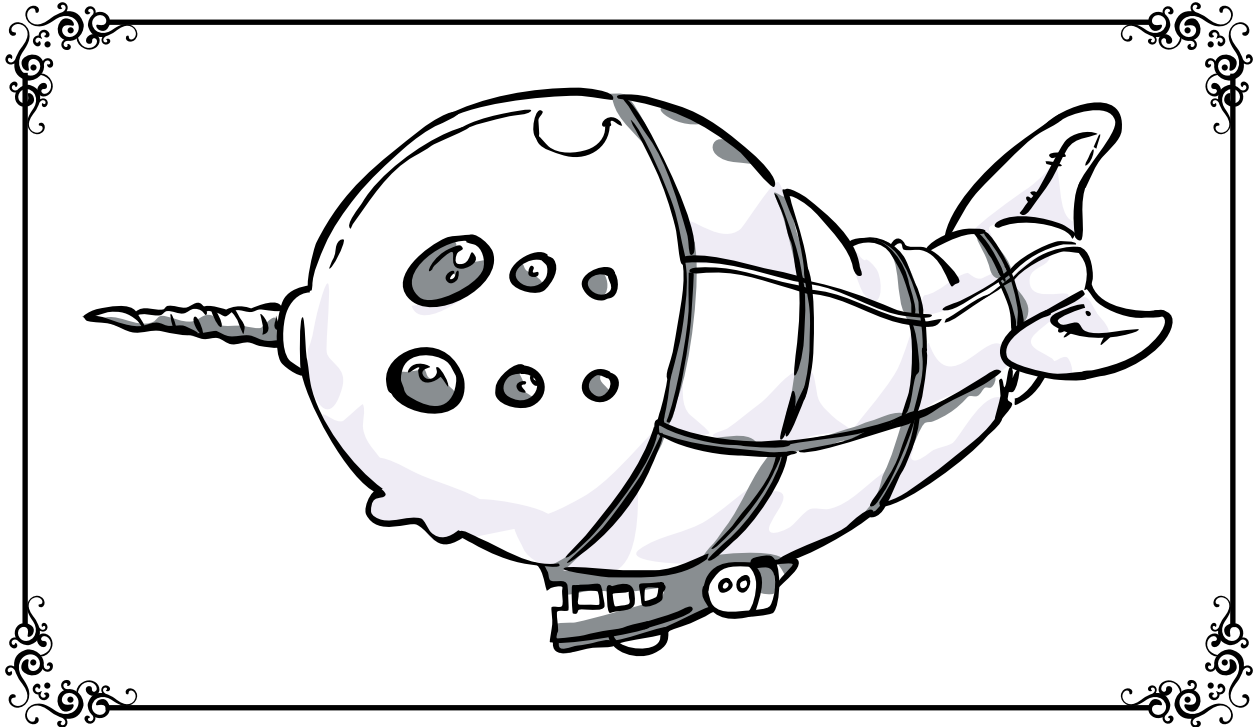
- Few people have heard of the OBE but perhaps the German diplomatic attaché, *Herr Kapitän* von Werner, can help. Getting in to see him in the German Consulate, on the other hand, could prove tricky if Arthur

Maddingsby (*Chapter 3*) is not being used as a player character, but coming up with a suitable ploy should hopefully test the players' ingenuity if they are determined to speak to him.

HERR KAPITÄN FERDINAND VON WERNER, GERMAN DIPLOMATIC ATTACHÉ

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Cogs | The Good Old Days
(European history & politics) +2 |
| Cakes | Not What I Was Expecting
(polite, genteel, charming) +3 |
| Swordsticks | Hussar!
(riding, mounted combat & sabre) +2 |
| Background | Once a dashing cavalry officer, <i>Herr</i> Ferdinand was invalidated out of the military as a result of a bad fall. Still, his tact and charm counted for a great deal and when von Bismarck himself recommended von Werner for the Prussian diplomatic corps, he was not in a position to refuse. Now an old man, he loves his country (even if he is a little unsure of the unification) and regards his position on The Cog as a just reward for a lifetime of service. |
- *Herr Kapitän* has heard of the OBE, and recognises their symbol. Other than that, he knows relatively little about them, although he is certain that they are not a covert operation by Bismarck to discredit the English. This is a gut instinct; he has no proof, but it would be against all of Bismarck's principles.
 - Von Werner has never used the BGP&P service, as the diplomats on The Cog have their own channels for such things.
 - He has also never heard of Danté, other than as the author of the Divine Comedies (which he will joke, is ironic, given the name of the Engineering Ring).





ACT 3: THE BIG BANG

(Wherein matters come to an explosive head.)

At some point after the death of Mr. Pettifer, DSA Number 1 (Hermes) blows up, seriously injuring Richard Ansty. The precise timing of this event will depend on how well the characters' investigation is going, hence there are no scenes for this section of the adventure: if they are getting too close to Signor Danté, then it's time for the fireworks to begin. Alternatively, if the investigation is flagging, then the partial destruction of Hermes could help to kick start their enquiries.

When the bomb explodes, the whole of HMFSC *Atlantis* rocks and judders alarmingly, generating panic amongst the citizenry. Hermes was one of the four engines currently under full steam supporting the flying city, hence the sudden (albeit reasonably slight) tilting and general alarm, but within ten minutes the platform appears to be stable again, thanks to an inbuilt safety mechanism that has ignited one of the resting engines.

If the characters are quick enough, they will be able to arrive on the scene not long after the explosion, and will be called upon to take part in the rescue efforts, particularly if they have medical or engineering skills (or any other relevant Attributes). There are many badly injured workers who require attention, amongst them Richard Ansty. Although there are several cottage hospitals on The Cog, most of the wounded will need to be transported down to Monturiol and the military hospital there.

As the characters are helping with the rescue effort, someone matching Signor Dante's description can be spotted in

the crowd of gawkers who are gathering around the staircase down to the Engineering Ring. Should anyone give chase, Danté will not be easy to catch due to the volume of people fighting to get to the site of the explosion. At this point, Danté is still being played by Charity Charlton, who will actively defend herself using her Swordsticks Attribute "Cold, Hard Steel (knife fighting)" if cornered. Miss Charlton has been taken somewhat by surprise as the bomb has detonated early, and neither she nor her sister are in place to carry out the rest of the plan.

SHOULD DANTÉ BE CAPTURED

- Close to and in broad daylight, it should become obvious that Signor Danté is not all that he seems.
- Once unmasked, Charity Charlton will deny everything and subsequently attempt to escape from *Atlantis*.
- Searching the house where the Misses Charlton live will reveal a hidden attic, where other bombs, complete with their timing mechanisms and a variety of incriminating OBE paperwork, will be found. Family photographs, including some of Phyllida Ansty (both alone and with her sisters) can also be found in the house.
- Questioning Mr. William Thomas (p.62), Miss Charity's fiancée, will reveal that their relationship began around the same time as Richard Ansty's. Hopefully this will set alarm bells ringing in the player's heads...
- Thomas has no involvement in the plot whatsoever, and is heartbroken by the current turn of events, particularly as he believed he had found a soul-mate just as interested in mining and cabling as he. After all, it's not every woman who wants to be taken on tours of the mining operations...

SIFTING THROUGH THE WRECKAGE

- Investigation of the wreckage shows that the explosion was not caused by a DSA/boiler malfunction as initially suspected, but by sabotage. (Known to Mr. Hazemoor, p.60 if the characters do not discover it for themselves.)
- The explosion originated in Richard Ansty's office, apparently in his briefcase. (Known to Mr. Hazemoor, if the characters do not discover it for themselves.)
- The construction of the bomb is not English in origin and the timing mechanism appears to be defective (Known to Mr. Hazemoor and Sylvie Delon).
- The remains of a letter from Signor Danté to Richard Ansty discussing the plot (typed, of course) have been found in the pocket of the suit jacket Ansty was wearing when the bomb went off. (Known to Mr. Hazemoor, if the characters do not discover it for themselves.)
- Checks of Ansty's engineering logs shows repeated minor issues with Hermes over the previous month or so, none of which he reported to his superior, Mr. Hazemoor.
- The prevailing theory is that Ansty intended to blow up Hermes after he had left work for the day, but the timer malfunctioned, leading to a premature explosion. In actuality, this is only partially true.
- Mr. Hazemoor likes Richard Ansty a great deal and nothing will convince him that Ansty had anything to do with the explosion. However, if pressed, he will admit that there's something about Ansty's new wife (and the speed of their relationship) that makes him ill at ease.
- The bomb was actually placed in Ansty's briefcase by his wife, along with the other incriminating evidence. She is rather shocked that he has survived the explosion and is very worried that her sister's plan is falling apart, although her distress may easily be mistaken for something else if questioned. If Charity has been captured, Mrs. Ansty will start to panic, making her behaviour even more erratic.

BY THE SICKBED

- Ansty has been moved to the nearest cottage hospital as he is too badly injured to transfer down to Monturiol just yet. As soon as he has recovered consciousness, Danté (Ansty's own wife Phyllida this time, even if Charity isn't in custody) will attempt to silence him. She will use poison to dispatch her husband, in such a way as to make it look as if he died of his injuries.
- If the characters go to visit Ansty, they see a man of medium height, with a heavy black beard and an oversized, very long overcoat and full-brimmed hat leaving Ansty's room. Although the overall description matches that of Danté and the person they may or may not have chased from the site of the explosion, the fact that this person is obviously shorter and much less stockily built should really set alarm bells ringing (especially if Danté is already in custody).
- Ansty can't be of much help as a result of his injuries and the poison that is slowly killing him. He can only painfully mutter a few words of denial as to having been involved in any form of plot, but does remember that his wife packed his briefcase that morning...

**OBE GOON,
HENCHMAN**

Cogs Now You See It
(deception & camouflage) +2

Cakes Look Both Ways
(two-faced: outwardly friendly, inwardly conniving) +2

Swordsticks Rough and Tumble
(brawling) +3

Background Low down in the ranks of the OBE, these particular goons have been hired for their ability to follow orders and get things done, rather than for their sparkling after dinner conversation. They don't know much about the OBE's plans for *Atlantis*, but they do know who they answer to (and it isn't Signor Danté).

FINALE

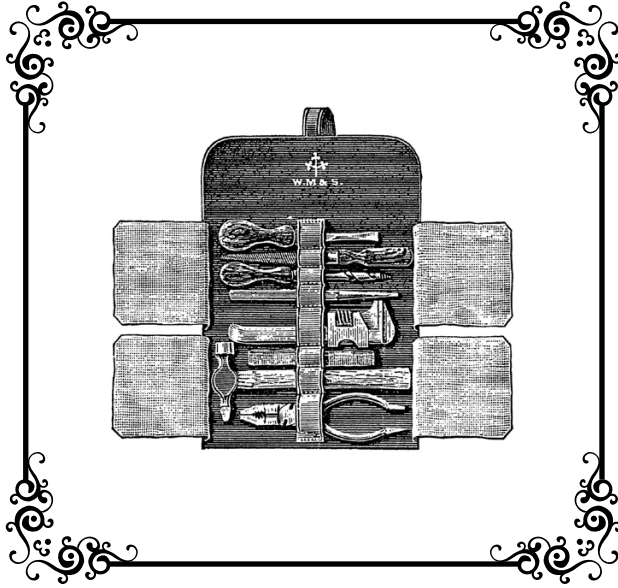
If the characters haven't already apprehended Charity Charlton, then they are in a race against time. If they wish to prevent further mayhem and bloodshed, they must track down Signor Danté (both of them) and prevent Phyllida and Charity from activating the explosives on Monturiol and in the paternoster cubicles. Even though their original plan has gone awry with the premature explosion on the Engineering Ring, they are determined to see their plot through to the bitter end.

If the characters have apprehended Charity, then there is still the small matter of who the *other* bearded gentleman is. Phyllida cannot carry out the rest of the plan by herself and in her anger at being thwarted by the characters, will set her sister's goons on to them. Of course, if one of these goons should be captured, it's entirely possible that they will spill the beans. But then again...

Basically, if the players are struggling with the plot at this point, extracting the information from the goons may help them to catch up with Phyllida before she, too, attempts to escape from HMFSC *Atlantis*.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE

Below is a timeline of events to help you keep track of what is happening when. The timings between certain events are flexible, and can be shortened or lengthened depending on how well the players are progressing with the plot. The final outcome will hopefully be avoided, but if it isn't, then



the characters will find themselves adrift over the Atlantic Ocean in a city that can no longer steer itself effectively and that only has a limited supply of fuel left to keep those DSAs running...

The FS *Aristaeus* leaves Cardington (11am)



Approximately 24 hours

(Optional pirate attack)

Approximately 24 hours

Arrival at HMFSC *Atlantis* (2.30pm)



Before Midnight

William Pettifer is murdered



Within 24-36 hours

Number 1 DSA *Hermes* explodes



Within 12 hours

Richard Ansty dies



Within 12 hours

Chain charges and paternoster cables explode

GM TROUBLESHOOTING

If the players are stuck and need a little help, you can always use the pregenerated characters to give them hints (provided they aren't playing them). Even if they are playing them, you could use the contacts listed in some of the backgrounds (Mr. Hazemoor & *Kapitän* von Werner, for example) to nudge them in the right direction.

If they're still stuck, check everyone's Attributes. Think about how they might be used to help the players and their characters along then let them roll using any suitable Attributes they have (with the Difficulty rating determined by how obscure the piece of information is that they're trying to discover). Someone with an excellent memory might suddenly recall something telling from a conversation they had on the journey to The Cog, whilst someone with observational skills (for example, the Cogs Attribute "I Spy With My Little Eye", p.90) might just as suddenly remember seeing something that didn't seem quite right at the time and has been worrying them ever since. Someone who is good at athletics (for example, the "Go the Distance" Swordsticks Attribute on p.94) may well realise that, should they see him, Danté doesn't walk or run like a man. And let's not forget that a character who is good at judging people's characters or motivations (for example, using the Cakes Attribute "Know Thine Enemy", p.92) may well sense that there's more than meets the eye to both Phyllida Ansty and Charity Charlton.

Don't forget about the other passenger on the trip as well: Martin Ellsworth. He may be there on a secret mission, but he's smart enough to make use of whatever resources he has to hand to find out who's behind the Babbage Engine glitches. Depending on your style of play, he might involve the characters openly, having had issues getting people's co-operation on his own (after all, he is a bit of a cold fish), or he might prefer to work from the shadows, surreptitiously feeding clues to the characters should they become stuck (this way, if things go wrong, his hands will be clean).

And as to the mystery of who sent tickets to any non pre-generated characters involved: well, let's just say that there are plenty of rumours that the Babbage Engines are far cleverer than even their most ardent opponents fear, particularly the one lurking beneath the streets of South Kensington...



Chapter 3

Dramatis Personae

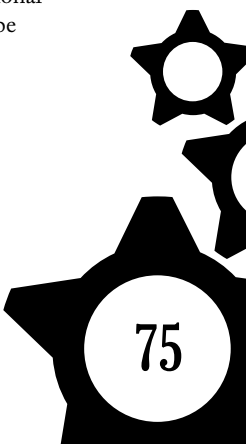
This section details the six pregenerated characters that can be used with the scenario in *Chapter 2*. If these characters are surplus to requirement, then they will be passengers on the FS *Aristaeus*, or can be bumped into around The Cog (and may even have vital information to impart).

SIR REGINALD THORNLEE, ADVENTURER

Cogs	A Little Trick I Learnt in the Orient (extensive cultural knowledge) +3
Cakes	Take Me as You Find Me (not a strict adherent to social mores) +2
Swordsticks	Life Under Canvas (camping, hiking, survival skills) +2
Foible	Can't Leave Well Enough Alone
RP	2
Background	People like Sir Reginald are generally described as eccentric by their friends and as bonkers by everybody else. Refined, charming, a law unto himself, Sir Reginald has been most places and knows an awful lot about people of all races and creeds. He treats everyone as an equal until they do something heinous to blot their copy-book, and cares little for what other people think of his liberal behaviour. Having spent most of his life out of doors, he chafes at the restrictions of society and ignores them whenever he can. He is devoted to Bella and immensely proud of her fortitude and courage in facing adventure at his side. The Thornlees are travelling to The Cog on their way to explore the Americas, somewhere they haven't previously ventured (but were keen to see after reading Fitz Hugh Ludlow's tales of the continent).

LADY BELLA THORNLEE, ADVENTURESS

Cogs	Two and Two (teaching skills & knowledge) +3
Cakes	Heart of a Tigress (brave, stalwart & fiercely protective) +2
Swordsticks	Now That's a Knife! (hunting & knife fighting) +2
Foible	Natural Curiosity
RP	2
Background	Lady Bella rose from an inauspicious background as a taverner's daughter to become a capable and enthusiastic governess to Sir Reginald's younger siblings. There was, of course, considerable scandal when Sir Reginald married the girl (who is a good few years younger than him), but Bella's charming ways have healed many of the social rifts that were caused. She is not one to be crossed, though, and will fight tooth and nail to protect those she loves. The life of adventure suits her well and many of those who would have described her as merely tolerable prior to her nuptials have to admit that she is indeed a very attractive woman. Somewhat of a rebel, like her husband, Lady Bella has been known to wear cullottes when on expeditions, but still has the sense to conform to more traditional forms of dress where there are likely to be those with delicate sensibilities.



JACK PENDLE, YOUNG REPORTER

- Cogs** Nose for a Story
(journalism & investigative skills) +2
- Cakes** On the Up
(ambitious & charming, excellent communication skills) +3
- Swordsticks** Rough and Tumble
(excellent scrapper) +2
- Foible** Here, Take My Business Card
- RP** 2
- Background** Quite possibly what many British people would think of as the archetypal ambitious young American reporter, Jack Pendle came to England to try and make his fortune, much to the disappointment of his Scottish parents who had gone the other way for precisely the same reason. He quickly found a job with *The Graphic*, an illustrated weekly journal that also has grand ambitions. Although he'd much rather be working for something far grander, like *The Times*, Jack is quite prepared to learn his craft and serve his time. He has excellent journalistic instincts and is like a bloodhound when he gets the scent of a juicy story.

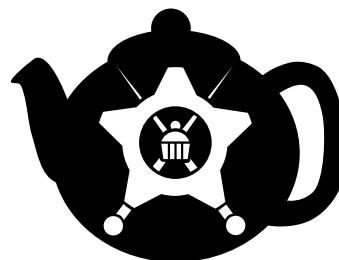
ARTHUR MADDINGSBY, BUSINESSMAN

- Cogs** Buy Low, Sell High
(business acumen) +3
- Cakes** Fool Me Once
(outwardly polite, but always suspicious) +2
- Swordsticks** In the Scrum
(former rugby player) +2
- Foible** Never Resist a Bargain
- RP** 2
- Background** There are many businessmen in the world; Mr. Maddingsby appears to just be another one. Stolid and grey, many would assume that he lacked any form of imagination what-so-ever; they would be wrong. Maddingsby is a cunning businessman and shrewd investor who has learnt from bitter experience to keep his own counsel. When an inexperienced young pup, he pretty much lost the entire family fortune in a bad business deal and swore he would never be fooled

again. As a result, he has his fingers in many pies, including a courier business and a dirigible builder. He sees The Cog as a potential gold-mine in terms of business opportunities and is travelling there to see his old friend *Herr Kapitän* Ferdinand von Werner.

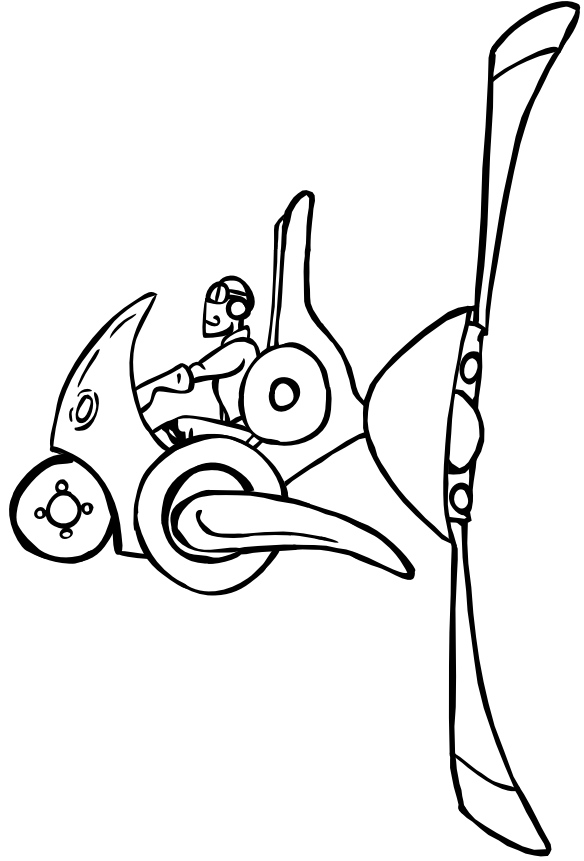
SYLVIE DELON, ARTISTE / INVENTOR

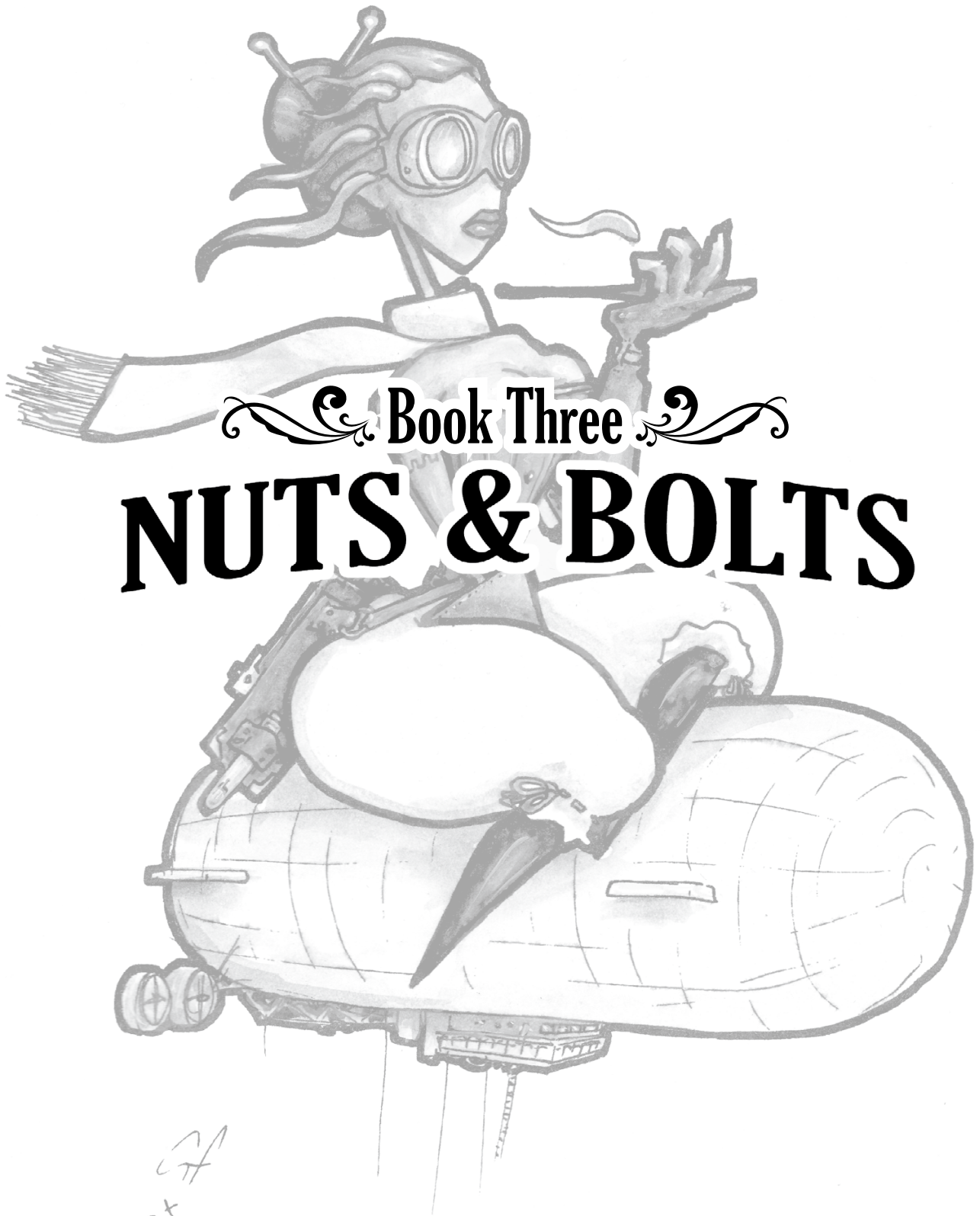
- Cogs** Ticking Along Nicely
(clockwork inventions) +3
- Cakes** Beauty and the Brain
(slightly eccentric, but pretty enough to get away with it) +2
- Swordsticks** Happy Hooper
(all forms of dancing) +2
- Foible** Very Much in Love
- RP** 2
- Background** A darling of the *Académie des Sciences*, the glorious Mlle. Delon is a true genius when it comes to creating useful little clockwork gadgets. Ahead of her time in her belief that form should follow function, her creations are elegantly simple but devilishly stylish. Serious engineers accuse her of creating twee mechanicals that serve little purpose, but her work is extremely popular, particularly with ladies, who prefer their delicacy to the often belt-and-braces approach of male inventors. She is interested in all forms of engineering and has been saving for a long time to be able to visit The Cog, even though it has meant leaving her beloved fiancée Danté back home in Paris. Ideally she wants to visit the Engineering Ring and has a letter of introduction from her mother, Élise, to Mr. Templeton Hazemoor, Chief Engineer of The Cog (with whom her mother trained many years ago).



**SAMUEL HUNTER,
POLICE DETECTIVE**

- Cogs** A Brain that Never Sleeps
(investigative skills) +3
- Cakes** Cool as a Cucumber
(calm, collected, slightly aloof) +2
- Swordsticks** Cut Above the Rest
(bare knuckle fighting) +2
- Foible** Blood is Thicker Than Water
- RP** 2
- Background** A boy from the wrong side of the tracks made good, Detective Hunter has been hand picked by his new superior officer, Inspector David MacIntyre. He distinguished himself in a particularly murky case in London and was hoping for so much more than a quiet job in what he views to be the backwater of the Her Majesty's Empire. Still, he's prepared to try and make the best of it so that he can get back to London as quickly as possible. A strong believer in family and friends, Hunter is loyal to those he thinks deserve his trust and dislikes those who seek to deceive the innocent.

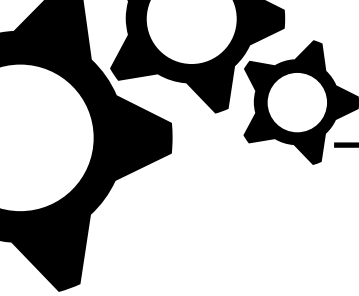




Book Three

NUTS & BOLTS

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Chapter 1

Trailblazers

The Victorian era was one of great discovery and exploration; of gargantuan engineering and scientific advancement; and of larger-than-life personalities. Many historical figures have had their personal histories tinkered with for the purposes of this game. Here we would like to present a selection of character vignettes for the Empire of Steam versions of famous (and infamous) people.

Included are those who might serve as inspiration for stories and characters; others might merely pop in for tea or be consulted regarding a particularly taxing matter (social, intellectual or scientific). Attributes have been provided for all, should you wish to use them in your games. Some are a little early or late in terms of the Victorian era, but are such interesting oddities that they have been included for completeness' sake. You will notice that they do not have Foibles or Reputation Points (although potential Foibles may be found in each description); we recommend that you decide on those most appropriate for your game, to maintain its overall balance.

HER MAJESTY, QUEEN VICTORIA (1819-1901)

Long before she became the Grandmother of Europe (so called because her children and grandchildren married into practically every royal house on the continent), Victoria was a young, beautiful and highly sheltered girl. Her mother, the Duchess of Kent, kept the princess in a state of isolation in the hope that she would become utterly dependent on her in all things. Victoria surprised everyone by refusing to do so.

When she ascended the throne at the age of 18, she relied heavily at first on her Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, and her Uncle, King Leopold I of Belgium. Rather daringly, it was Victoria who proposed to Albert of Saxe-Coburg and they were married in 1840. She adored Albert and came to rely on his political judgement as much as she had on Melbourne's.

There were many assassination attempts during her early reign, as she was not always a particularly popular monarch. When Albert died in 1861, she became a virtual recluse, shunning both the public and parliament, sequestering herself away either at Balmoral in Scotland or Osborne House on the Isle of White, further adding to her unpopularity. As time passed and the Golden Jubilee of 1887 approached her

popularity increased along with her return to a more public life, as evidenced by the crowds who turned out to see her at the celebrations.

As monarch, Victoria presided over times of great social, economic and political upheaval. Her Empire was vast and all conquering, ruling at its height approximately one quarter of the world's population. Despite her reign becoming increasingly constitutional (i.e. without direct political power), she was not shy in expressing her rather conservative and imperialistic viewpoints. She did not support women's suffrage, although she greatly supported charities aimed at improving the lot of the Poor. Unknown to many, she was a bit of a dab hand at wresting money from her courtiers in a game of cards.

For further details on Her Majesty, please see *Book One, Chapter 3, Act 3* and its relevant Timeline.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Cogs | A Fine Eye
(painting & drawing, when young) +2
<i>or</i>
A Woman of Letters
(political & social knowledge, when older)
+2 |
| Cakes | Heart on Her Sleeve
(straightforward & firm in her convictions)
+3 |
| Swordsticks | In the Saddle (riding) +2 |

CHARLES BABBAGE (1791-1871)

Born of a wealthy family, the young Charles was well educated (although frequently by private tutors due to poor health). Whilst at Cambridge University, he helped to form the Analytical Society and was a member of the Ghost Club, whose alumni investigated paranormal occurrences. Later in life, he would assist in the formation of both the Astronomical Society and the Statistical Society.

Although best remembered for his analytical engines, Babbage was a true polymath. He was a recognised master cryptographer and rumours abound that he may well have run a secret code breaking group on behalf of Her Majesty's

Government. At the opposite end of the scale, he also invented the cow-catcher for steam trains. He suffered a mental breakdown in 1827 after the deaths of his father, his wife Georgiana and two of his children.

His friendship with Ada Lovelace and the success of his engines helped him along the road to recovery. Saturday evenings were a particular highlight in the Babbage household as the cream of Europe's intelligentsia gathered there. By the time of his death, though, he was almost as well known for his judgemental and erratic behaviour as he was for his engines. He particularly disliked street musicians, absolutely hated organ grinders and even attempted to have children banned from rolling hoops! His views on commoners were equally uncompromising, referring to them simply as "the Mob".

For further details on Mr Babbage, please see *Book One, Chapter 3, Act 1* and its relevant Timeline.

Cogs A Little Bit of Everything
(extensive knowledge covering a wide variety of fields) +3

Cakes A Cut Above
(snobbish & judgemental of lower classes) +2

Swordsticks Tough Old Bird
(physical stamina) +2

SIR SAMUEL WHITE BAKER (1821-1893)

Sir Samuel's father would never have expected his son to end up as a Pasha (or Lord) and Major-General of the Ottoman Army, particularly not when he had picked out a nice, stable office job for him. However, those titles were still far in the future when young White Baker set off on his travels having decided that he simply wasn't cut out for office work.

After establishing a successful settlement in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), he moved on to supervising railway construction across the Dobrudja (a region between the River Danube and the Black Sea) and then on to Africa. It is fair to say that he was a very restless soul. He had quite a reputation as a big game hunter the world over and followed this pursuit with royalty in 1859 when hunting with Maharajah Duleep Singh in Europe.

He was also one of many who went in search of the source of the Nile and although beaten to it by Speke and Grant, the Royal Geographical Society still awarded him its gold medal for his other discoveries, such as Lake Albert (named after Albert, the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII). He even accompanied the Prince on a tour of Egypt in 1869. His military title came from his adventures suppressing the slave trade in Egypt, a task fraught with danger.

Never quite as famous as some other British explorers as a result of his rather unorthodox courtship of his second wife (which aroused Her Majesty's disapproval no matter how romantically dashing it sounded; the fact that Florence was wont to wear *trousers* when on expedition with her husband was the final straw as far as the Queen was concerned), Baker



still profited enough from his career that he could retire to an estate in Devon, where he saw out his days alongside his beloved Florence.

Cogs Well Travelled
(native knowledge & customs) +2

Cakes Restless Passions
(impulsive, brave & loyal) +2

Swordsticks Pass Me That Rifle
(guns) +3

DR JAMES BARRY (1795-1865)

Dr Barry was to all intents and purposes a fine medical man, but sadly possessed of a shrewishness that very nearly derailed his otherwise brilliant military career (and led to a duel from which Barry was lucky to emerge unscathed). He rose through the ranks, having served abroad for most of his commissions, to become Inspector of Hospitals, a position which he retired from in 1858.

Unbeknownst to all but a select few (who stumbled on the fact quite by accident and were duly sworn to secrecy), Dr Barry was actually a woman, although her exact identity is shrouded in mystery; she may have been born Miranda Stuart, or then again Margaret Ann Bulkley. Whatever her origins, she had successfully maintained her charade for over fifty years, from the moment she arrived at medical school (a position strictly forbidden to women of the time) until her femininity was discovered upon her death by the populace at large. The full honours military burial that would otherwise have been her right was immediately cancelled by the rather shame-faced authorities.

Cogs Under the Knife
(medical skills) +3

Cakes Flames of Ire
(short tempered) +2

Swordsticks Crack Shot
(pistol use) +2

GIOVANNI BATTISTA BELZONI (1778-1824)

Sometimes quoted as an inspiration for everyone's favourite adventuring archaeologist Indiana Jones, Belzoni was quite a remarkable figure. He moved to Rome from Padua at a young age to study hydraulics but was driven from the city when Napoleon's troops invaded. He arrived in England in 1803 on the run from the Netherlands. He joined the circus shortly after taking an English bride and due to his great height (by all accounts he was 6'7" tall), he became cast in the role of the strongman, leaving England on a European tour in 1812 where he performed amazing feats of strength (such as carrying twelve people at a time across a stage balanced on a specially created platform).

The discoverer of Petra, J.L. Burckhardt, advised the British consul in Egypt that Belzoni should be allowed to use his diverse skills to recover a bust of Rameses II after a contract with Egypt's ruling Pasha failed to materialise. His work in Egypt consisted of a number of mammoth engineering projects, such as clearing out the Temple of Abu Simbel, opening the tomb of Seti I and being the first to gain access to Kafre's pyramid, the second of the Great Pyramids at Giza. In the early 1820s he toured Europe again, but this time with models of his Egyptian triumphs. In 1823 he travelled to West Africa, but was taken ill in the Kingdom of Benin, where he died of dysentery (although Sir Richard Francis Burton later claimed he was murdered).

Cogs: That Belongs in a Museum
(archaeology) +2

Cakes: Just No Stopping Him
(determination) +2

Swordsticks: Strength of Ten Men
(incredibly strong) +3

SARAH BERNHARDT (1844-1923)

Born in Paris, the illegitimate daughter of a Dutch courtesan, Sarah was soon packed off to a convent to begin her education. Despite her wish to become a nun, Napoleon III's half brother, the Duke of Morny (one of her mother's clients) organised for Bernhardt to be trained as an actress at the Paris Conservatoire. The duke also managed to secure her a position with France's premier theatrical troupe, the *Comédié-Française* (although she was quickly fired for slapping a more senior actress).

Not quite following in her mother's footsteps, Bernhardt became the Belgian Prince of Ligne's mistress and had his son. Once she had moved to the Odeon Theatre in 1866, her

career really began to take off and by 1880, her reputation was such that she formed her own travelling theatre company and began to tour the world, wowing audiences everywhere. One of her most famous roles was as Marguerite in Alexandre Dumas Jr's "La Dame Aux Camélias" (the inspiration for Verdi's "La Traviatta").

Quite eccentric, and described by Dumas as an accomplished liar, Bernhardt often slept in a coffin instead of a bed. Known now as "the Divine Sarah," her beautiful, golden voice and undoubted charms were wasted on Nikola Tesla, who labelled her attempts to woo him as being an unwanted distraction from his work.

Always one to fly in the face of convention, she was one of the first women to play Hamlet and one of the earliest movie actresses. Even having her leg amputated in later life after a knee injury became gangrenous didn't stop her from performing; if she couldn't sit down during the role, she wore a wooden leg instead.

Cogs Comedy and Tragedy
(acting skills) +3

Cakes Little White Lies
(captivating but less than honest) +2

Swordsticks No Slowing Down
(stamina and perseverance) +2

ISABELLA BIRD (1831-1904)

A sickly young woman, Isabella first encountered adventure when the family doctor suggested that a long sea voyage might be good for her health. The result was a visit to America in 1854 and her first book two years later. She continued writing articles for periodicals upon her return home, later using the money she made to help Scottish crofters emigrate to America.

In 1872 she decided to travel to Australia after another bout of ill-health, then on to Hawaii and America in 1873, where she explored the Rocky Mountains. Her guide on this trip, Jim Nugent, proposed to her, though she refused his advances (probably quite wise, as he was considered something of an outlaw and was eventually murdered). Interestingly, her health was only bad when she returned to Britain, and never when abroad.

Travels in the Orient followed, then trips across India, Tibet, Persia and Turkey. She was married for six years between 1880 and 1886 to the man whose pursuit of her had precipitated her travels to Japan in the first place. She was ill for most of the marriage, her health only returning after her husband's death and the resumption of her adventures, which she now undertook as a medically trained missionary.

In 1890, she travelled with British soldiers in Afghanistan, carrying a pistol and a medicine chest from Henry Wellcome. She became the first woman to be admitted as a member of the Royal Geographical Society in 1892 and five years later undertook her last great trip, this time up the Yangtze River in China. There were other travels, right up to the time of her death, but never so far afield.

Cogs A Tale Well Told
(writing; when younger) +3
or
Pop a Bandage on It
(medical skills; when older) +3

Cakes Dilettante Turned Crusader
(famous & determined) +2

Swordsticks My Trusty Service Revolver
(guns) +2

CHARLES BLONDIN

(JEAN FRANCOIS GRAVELET, 1824-1897)

Born in France, the “Great Blondin” was a precocious child, giving his first public acrobatic performance at the age of five. Having run away from the circus, his fame was assured when, in 1859, he crossed Niagara Falls on a tight-rope; eye witnesses referred to him as a wiry, determined little man. One of his most famous feats, he was to repeat it several more times (making seventeen trips in all) with ever more outlandish embellishments, including cooking and eating an omelette mid-rope. He first appeared in London at the Crystal Palace in 1861, somersaulting on a tightrope whilst wearing stilts.

However, his high altitude stunts were not without tragedy; whilst performing in Dublin later the same year, the rope snapped, bringing down the scaffolding from which it was suspended and killing two workmen (although Blondin survived unscathed). The blame for the accident was mostly laid at the door of the rope’s manufacturer. Blondin did retire briefly, but returned to the limelight in 1880, continuing to work right up until the year before his death from diabetes.

Cogs Never a Dull Moment
(imaginative planning skills) +2

Cakes Gentilhomme
(polite, charming) +2

Swordsticks Daring Young Man
(acrobatics, funambulism) +3

SIR RICHARD FRANCIS BURTON (1821-1890)

Never one to avoid controversy, Sir Richard cut a colourful swathe through Victorian society. His writings were often sexually explicit and even his obituary commented on his “Byronic love of shocking people”. It was widely viewed that his attitude was not that of a proper Victorian gentleman, a fact which no doubt hindered his career in the long term.

A superb linguist (he spoke twenty-nine languages), diplomat, explorer and writer, he was responsible for bringing both “One Thousand and One Nights” and “Kama Sutra” to the attention of the western world. He obtained the nick-name “Ruffian Dick” during his service in the East India Company, allegedly because of his bravado and fighting prowess.

Frequently employed by the Royal Geographical Society, Burton travelled widely during the 1850s, particularly in the

Middle East and Africa. The adventure that made him famous was his trip to Mecca in 1853, something that was forbidden to non-Muslims and involved a great deal of intrigue and deception on his part (discovery would invariably have meant death).

Sadly, another expedition (that to Lake Tanganyika in 1856-58 with John Hanning Speke) nearly ruined him; Speke and his associates set out to undermine Burton’s reputation at every turn, probably through jealousy and a very different mind-set (Speke being a typical Victorian Imperialist and Burton very much in support of the native populations).

In 1869 Burton was made consul in Damascus, having entered the diplomatic corps in 1861. There he and his wife Isabel met Jane Digby el Mesrab. Burton died in 1890 of a heart attack and even his death was not without controversy; Isabel’s funeral arrangements were allegedly against his wishes and she burnt many of his writings; who knows what exciting information was lost to the flames...

Cogs Man of Many Faces
(linguistics, customs, disguise) +3

Cakes Larger Than Life
(flamboyant & adventurous) +2

Swordsticks En Garde!
(fencing) +2



MRS JANE DIGBY EL MESRAB (1807-1881)

Noted for her beautiful blue eyes, perfect figure and naturally pale, delicate complexion, Jane Elizabeth Digby lived an altogether astonishing life. Married at a young age to the Earl of Ellenborough, her wanton lifestyle led to huge scandal, innumerable affairs and many children (frequently born out of wedlock).

Known as Jenny or Aurora when at Almack's (a society hang-out for the rich between 1765 and 1863), her indiscretions soon forced her to move to Paris and then on to an affair with King Ludwig I of Bavaria (who, as you will see, was quite a busy chap!). She married a Bavarian Baron, left him for a Greek Count, had an affair with King Ludwig's son, then moved on to the chief of a band of Albanian brigands before finally fleeing to Syria and finding peace and stability with her final husband, Sheikh Medjuel el Mesrab.

She travelled widely in Syria, lived in the desert with her husband's tribe half the year and frequently rode into battle at his side. She was known to Sir Richard Burton and his wife, was fluent in many languages and took great pains to live quietly after the excesses of her youth. She died in Damascus at the age of 74, having found peace at last.

Cogs Parlez-Vous?
(fluent in many languages) +3

Cakes Gracious Hostess
(accommodating & socially at ease) +2

Swordsticks Riding High
(riding & horse mounted combat) +2

PERCY FAWCETT (1867-1925)

Another of the many alleged inspirations for Indiana Jones, Fawcett was both an archaeologist and explorer. He served for many years in Ceylon as part of the British Royal Artillery and worked in Africa for the secret service, but in 1906 the Royal Geographical Society employed him to map out the borders between Brazil and Bolivia. Appalled by the treatment of the native Indians, Fawcett always preferred to deal with them on friendly terms rather than with force. He recounted the tales of his travels to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who used them as the inspiration for "The Lost World".

Having served in the First World War, Fawcett's final expedition came in 1925, convinced as he was that there was a lost city in the depths of the Brazilian rainforest. Whether he and his son found it or not, no-one knows; the entire party disappeared and were never seen again. Despite his instructions that should they fail to return, no-one was to mount a rescue expedition it is estimated that well over one hundred people died doing just that. All sorts of rumours persist about his fate, none of which have ever been substantiated.

Cogs Here Be Giant Snakes
(cartography, surveying) +3

Cakes Twinkle in the Eye
(charismatic) +2

Swordsticks Big Bang
(artillery skills) +2

GEORGE CHETWYND GRIFFITH-JONES (1857-1906)

George Griffiths, as he became more widely known, had sailed around the world three times by the time H. G. Wells was five years old. In fact, he was a very widely travelled, self-taught young man with a keen imagination. In the real world he was a journalist, ending up as a correspondent on the Boer War (amongst other things). He was apparently obsessed with the number three, seeing as this was also the number of times he crossed the Andes. He smashed the record for travelling around the world and helped to identify the source of the River Amazon.

He also seemed to make a habit of pipping Wells to the post, always managing to publish stories in a similar vein to Wells' but always a short time earlier. Although very popular in Britain, he never achieved the same world-wide fame as Wells. This was partly due to his political views, but also because his publishers went bankrupt and he became embroiled in a long legal battle to regain control of his works.

His modern supporters believe that Griffiths is one of the true fathers of steampunk literature, seeing as his stories were always full of fantastical inventions, airships and romantic, dashing heroes and heroines.

Cogs Flights of Fancy
(reporting & writing skills) +3

Cakes Left of Centre
(strong political views) +2

Swordsticks: Jack of All Trades
(imaginative scrapper) +2

MARY KINGSLEY (1862-1900)

Confined to England as the nursemaid to her sick mother, Miss Kingsley never the less travelled widely in her imagination, acting as a research assistant to her father for his adventures with the Earl of Pembroke. When her father too fell sick, Mary had to teach herself manual skills in order to maintain their home. Both parents died within weeks of each other in 1892 and Mary decided to travel to West Africa in order to finish her father's book (although some sources claim this not to be the case). As well as collecting fish for the British Museum, she investigated cannibal tribes, fought her way through dense jungles, survived attacks by crocodiles and climbed mountains.

In the late 1890s she gave a three year lecture tour as she had become rather famous in her absence, partly as a result of her charming anecdotes. Strangely, although she spoke up for the rights of native Africans and condemned their treatment by statesmen and missionaries, she did little to advance the cause of women's emancipation, arguing against votes for women. In many respects she was like Queen Victoria in attitude; a woman of great personal power and freedom who would deny that freedom to others of her sex.

She was deeply in love with Africa, attempting to recreate its wild splendour in her London home and frequently being

seen about town with a pet monkey. Mary volunteered as a nurse in the Second Boer War and died in 1900 in South Africa of typhoid fever (which she caught from her charges).

- Cogs** Spirit of Africa
(tribal knowledge & customs) +3
- Cakes** Double Standards
(supporter of African rights, denier of women's rights) +2
- Swordsticks** Messing About in Boats
(canoeing) +2

FITZ HUGH LUDLOW (1836-1870)

Ludlow was born in New York city, the child of a remarkable father (he acted as an agent on the Underground Railroad and was a supporter of temperance). An alumnus of what would become Princeton University, he acted as an anaesthetist and song writer before becoming a hashish eater, author, trainee lawyer and explorer of the American continent. Journeying across the Central Plains, he visited the new settlement of Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Yosemite and Oregon. His writings on this trip are often cited as the inspiration for the route of the Transcontinental Railroad.

He returned to New York in 1864 and two years later, in a flurry of scandal, was divorced from Rosalie, his wife of five years. As an author, Ludlow wrote both factual and fictional works and translated articles from foreign newspapers, as well as being an editor of Vanity Fair magazine between 1858 and 1860. He ended his days as a not-so-hopeless drug addict, offering treatment and advice to other addicts, as well as writing a treatise on the treatment of opium addiction; he was also suffering from TB, dying in Europe on a trip that was supposed to help cure him of both.

- Cogs** Under the Knife
(medical skills; when younger) +3
or
Pen to Paper
(writing; when older) +3
- Cakes:** In Two Minds
(religious yet hedonistic, bigoted yet progressive) +2
- Swordsticks:** Striding Forth
(trekking, riding, hunting) +2

THE MASKELYNES

John Nevil Maskelyne (1839-1917), more commonly known as J. N., was the founder of a dynasty of stage magicians. Born in England, he initially trained as a watchmaker but soon turned to illusion and sleight-of-hand to make his living, exposing fraudulent spiritualists and writing a best selling manual on gambling along the way. Working with his friend George Cooke, a cabinet maker, Maskelyne developed many new illusions. He also found time to invent a coin



operated lock for public toilets (leading to the invention of the phrase "to spend a penny"), design the first typewriter to be produced in Britain and become an early movie star. The magician was based at the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly from 1873 – 1904. After Cooke's death in 1905, Maskelyne teamed up with another famous Victorian stage magician, David Devant.

- Cogs:** Tick-Tock
(watchmaking skills; when younger) +3
or
Nothing Up My Sleeve (magician's skills; when older) +3
- Cakes:** The Truth is Out There
(honesty, dislike of fraud) +2
- Swordsticks:** Prestidigitation (misdirection) +2

John's son Nevil (1863-1924) followed in his father's footsteps as an inventor and stage illusionist as well as working in wireless, where he was a rival of Marconi's (and was allegedly responsible for a sabotage attempt on one of Marconi's demonstrations). He was the second president of the Magic Circle after David Devant and did much to raise the profile of stage magicians, although he preferred inventing tricks to

performing them before an audience. He wrote several books with Devant, including one which listed his twenty-four rules for successful deception. Not to be mistaken for the Rev. Dr. Nevil Maskelyne, fifth Astronomer Royal, who may or may not have been an ancestor.

Cogs	Magic and Machinery (scientific & magical invention) +3
Cakes	Perfectly Presidential (popular & erudite on magic & hobbies, but intensely private otherwise) +2
Swordsticks	Hand Deceives the Eye (deception & misdirection) +2

The third generation magician was Jasper (1902 – 1973), Nevil's son. Like Blondin, he started young, appearing on stage as a stooge for David Devant when still a child. Although he lived outside of the main era of this game, he was heavily involved in mass trickery and deception during World War II as part of the "Magic Gang", although there is some controversy as to just how great his role actually was. After failing to receive wider recognition for his work, he went to Kenya and set up a driving school. The only other point of note is that he



was a member of the Ancient Order of Froth Blowers, a spoof of the Freemasons, that raised money for children's charities between 1924 and 1931.

Cogs	Now You See It... (deception & camouflage) +3
Cakes	Puffed Up Peacock (vanity) +2
Swordsticks:	Never Fired a Shot (knowledge of soldiering skills) +2

LOLA MONTEZ (?1818-1861)

Miss Eliza Rosanna Gilbert (to give Miss Montez her correct name) was born in Ireland and educated in Paris, having been raised in India and Scotland. From a young age she was recognised as a great beauty of passionate temperament, facts which infuriated her mother (hence her being passed around a variety of relatives before being shipped to finishing school). Her attempts at reinventing herself as a Spanish dancer in London in 1843 after a failed marriage did not turn out well and she fled to the Continent.

Never a shy woman, her conquests were many; having ensnared King Leopold of Belgium, she went on to become a Baroness under King Ludwig I of Bavaria (promptly causing a revolution shortly thereafter in which the King was forced to abdicate). Franz Lizst, Tsar Nicholas and Alexandre Dumas were also rumoured to have taken her as their courtesan and one lover was killed in a duel over her favours. After charges of bigamy led to a furore, further attempts to take to the stage ended in yet more disaster, including her soundly beating one critic with a horse whip when he reviewed her performance with displeasure.

Eventually, having toured Australia and America, she settled in New York where she spent her final days visiting down and out women before succumbing to complications arising from a stroke.

Cogs	Treading the Boards (acting & dancing) +2
Cakes	What Lola Wants, Lola Gets (selfishness & determination) +3
Swordsticks	I'll See You Horse-whipped (use of whips) +2

TRISTRAM SPEEDY (1836-?1911)

Captain Speedy was a military man and involved in quite a few fisticuffs across the globe, winning medals in various Indian campaigns (including the Indian Mutiny) and in New Zealand and Abyssinia. For a while, he was responsible for training the Ethiopian Army, but a falling out with the Emperor soon ended that assignment, although later on he did end up as guardian of the Emperor's son. He travelled widely in India, Malaya, Nepal and the Sudan, usually accompanied by his wife, Cornelia. Speedy was often described as

being a giant of a man, being well over six feet tall, and was frequently to be found in native Abyssinian dress. He even makes an appearance in "Flashman on the March" by George MacDonald Fraser.

Cogs Gone Native
(tribal customs, dress & language) +3

Cakes Gentle Giant
(confident & friendly) +2

Swordsticks Master at Arms
(military skills) +2

CATHERINE "SKITTLES" WALTERS (1839-1920)

Often referred to as the last of the Victorian Courtesans, Skittles was allegedly named after the pub game having threatened to lay out one customer like the proverbial pins in the aforementioned pastime. A competent horsewoman, she was frequently to be seen riding out in Hyde Park on behalf of a variety of sponsors, drawing huge crowds and setting numerous fashion trends. Like Lola Montez, she also had many a high-powered conquest, including Napoleon III's finance minister (as well as, potentially, Napoleon III himself) and Albert, the Prince of Wales (who also favoured another famous actress/courtesan Lillie Langtry).

However, unlike Lola, her discretion protected many other famous and wealthy clients. She also knew Lord Gladstone, although it would be uncharitable to think of her as one of the fallen women he was so fond of assisting. Her only real failure was her attempted wooing of Spencer Cavendish (who became the eighth Duke of Devonshire); indeed, she made rather a fool of herself by chasing him to New York at the height of the American Civil War. Skittles retired a wealthy woman, moving in lofty social circles until her death in 1920.

Cogs Demimondaine
(head for business, bod for sin) +2

Cakes Soul of Discretion
(trustworthy) +2

Swordsticks: Brougham & Bust
(riding & carriage driving skills) +3

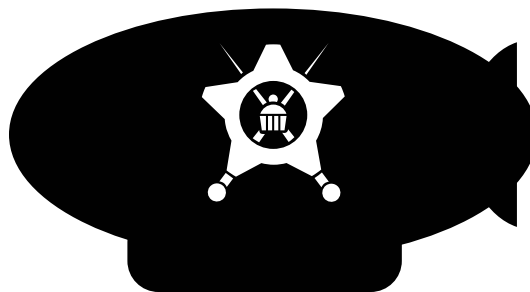
EDWARD WHYMPER (1840-1911)

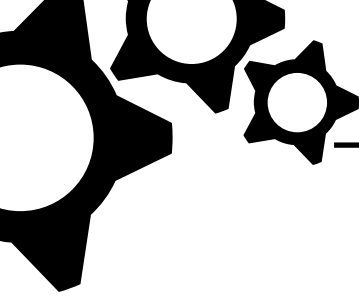
A great explorer of the Alps, Whymper was amongst the party who first ascended the Matterhorn in 1865. This particular expedition was dogged with controversy as four members of the party were killed during the descent and there were allegations that the ropes holding them had been cut (rather than snapped) when they slipped and fell. Despite being exonerated by an official enquiry, the shadow of the tragedy hung over Whymper for the rest of his career. A fossil collecting expedition to Greenland followed, as did trips to Ecuador in the 1880s and '90s to investigate the causes of altitude sickness. His paper on the subject garnered him the Patron's medal from the Royal Geographical Society and led to several improvements in barometers. He also explored the Canadian Rockies in the 1900s, as well as working as an illustrator for a variety of books and journals having taken over his father's wood engraving business.

Cogs Allow Me to Illustrate
(wood engraving, printing) +2

Cakes Haunted Man
(reticent about his past) +2

Swordsticks Ain't No Mountain High Enough
(mountaineering & exploring) +3





Chapter 2

Sample Attributes

The following chapter lists all of the Attributes mentioned in *Books One & Two*, along with those of the trailblazers and historical characters mentioned in *Book Three, Chapter 1*; they have been grouped together in related fields by Attribute type. Use this Chapter for inspiration if you're a bit stuck coming up with your own Attribute names and descriptions. If the name of a particular Attribute doesn't appeal, or doesn't quite fit your character, please feel free to change it. Some Attributes may appear in one section, but they'd be just as at home in another – we promise not to tell anyone if you decide to swap them around a bit.

COGS

THE ARTS

A Fine Eye – You are a talented painter and sketcher.

Allow Me to Illustrate – You are a skilled engraver and printer.

Capturing the Very Essence – You are a highly accurate sketch artist and painter.

Comedy and Tragedy – You have a wide range of acting skills.

Dab of Paint – You have general painting skills (this could mean painting and decorating or it could mean you're an artist who specialises in watercolours or oils).

Not Just a Pretty Face – You are a skilled actor and are good at deceiving people.

Treading the Boards – You like to think of yourself as an accomplished actor and dancer.

BUSINESS

A Head for Figures – You have management and accountancy skills.

Brains Behind the Operation – You are a skilled businessperson (and/or spy!).

Buy Low, Sell High – You are a skilled businessperson.

Demimondaine – You have a head for business and a body for sin.

Dotting the "I"s – You are well-trained in secretarial skills.

Eye on the Main Prize – You are skilled at spotting a worthwhile business opportunity and exploiting it.

Facts and Figures – You are good at appraising the worth of both businesses and merchandise.

Give Them What They Want – You have a good eye for a business opportunity.

Little Red Book – You are adept at running a boarding house.

Pencils and Paperclips – Your office management skills cannot be beaten.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered – You have an in-depth knowledge of delivery operations and the associated security required for such practices.

Sure Hand at the Rudder – You have general business skills.

CULTURE & CUSTOMS

A Little Trick I Learnt in the Orient – You have extensive cultural knowledge of the Orient.

All Mapped Out – You have a wide ranging geographical and cultural knowledge.

Armchair Traveller – You are widely read on foreign cultures.

Gone Native – You have an in-depth knowledge of tribal customs, dress and language (make sure you specify what geographical location this pertains to).

Man/Woman of Many Faces – You are a master/mistress of linguistics, customs and disguises.

Peerage Berk – You have a detailed knowledge of society gossip, scandal, and genealogy.

Spirit of Africa – You are more than passingly familiar with the knowledge and customs of African tribes.

Well Travelled – You have a good understanding of a variety of native beliefs and customs.

DECEPTION & THIEVERY

Flimflam Man – You are skilled in the arts of misdirection and deception.

Knows a Trick or Two – You have the ability to pull scams on unsuspecting marks, and have knowledge of a variety of illegal activities.

Nothing Up My Sleeve – You are adept in the stage magician's art.

Now You See It – You are skilled in the arts of deception and camouflage.

Stand and Deliver – You are adept at stealing things and knowing what they're worth.

Worth a Pretty Penny – You are adept at appraising and stealing things.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

All Up Here, Sir! – You have a superb memory for facts and figures.

Best Education Money Can Buy – Money bought you an excellent, if general, education.

Bookworm – You have a detailed knowledge of manuscripts and catalogues.

I'm Sure I Read That in a Book Somewhere! – You are very good at remembering esoteric/practical knowledge from books.

Rogue's Gallery – You have an excellent memory for names and faces.

HISTORY & POLITICS

A Woman/Man of Letters – Your knowledge of politics and social matters is unrivalled.

Dynastic Dynamo – You have an in-depth political knowledge of India and the Empire.

Keeping it in the Family – You have political and diplomatic knowledge and skills, having been trained from an early age in the family business of diplomacy.

The Good Old Days – You have an in-depth knowledge of European history and politics.

Wheels Within Wheels – You have an extensive knowledge of diplomatic and political matters.

LITERARY

A Tale Well Told – You are an imaginative writer.

Flights of Fancy – You are a talented journalist but prefer creative writing.

Living in the Past – You are an expert in Medieval art and literature.

Nose for a Story – You have pretty sharp journalism and investigative skills.

Pen to Paper – You know how to get words onto paper in an entertaining manner.

MEDICAL

All Patched Up – You have been trained in a wide variety of field medical and surgical skills.

Pop a Bandage on It – You are a good first aider although not professionally medically qualified.

Under the Knife – You are an excellent surgeon.

MILITARY

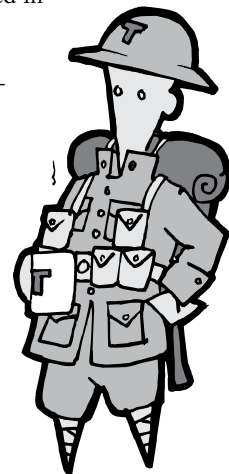
Battlefield Thinker – You are trained in military planning and tactics.

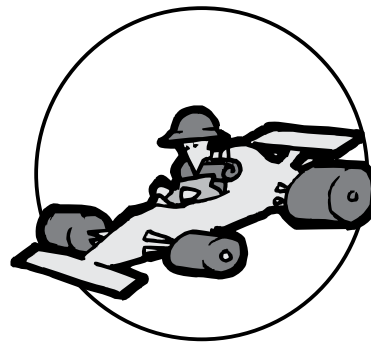
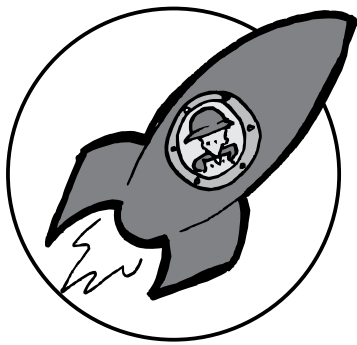
Squaddie – You have a general knowledge of army history and tactics.

MISCELLANEOUS

A Little Bit of Everything – You have an extensive knowledge of a wide variety of fields.

By the Book – You have a thorough knowledge of your Ministry's rules and regulations.





I Have a Plan – You are good at planning and organising, be it people or things.

Light-fingered – You are very good at thievery and burglary.

Never a Dull Moment – You are possessed of imaginative planning skills.

Off Piste – You have learned how to survive & track in hostile environments.

Parlez-Vous? – You are fluent in many languages.

Quick on the Uptake – You are observant and quick to learn.

Unflappable – You are calmly competent in any situation, always knowing what to do for the best.

PROFESSIONAL

A Brain That Never Sleeps – You are a skilled investigator.

A Rich Seam – After years of work, you have an in-depth knowledge of mining management.

Apathetic Advocate – Through training, you have acquired a good knowledge of the legal system.

'Ello, 'Ello, 'Ello – You are trained in all the up-to-the-minute policing skills.

Here be Giant Snakes – Your talent lies in cartography and surveying.

I Spy With My Little Eye – You are a skilled detective and interrogator.

Long Arm of the Law – You have either natural or acquired investigative skills.

That Belongs in a Museum – You have been trained (or are self-taught) in all the latest archaeological skills.

The Thin Blue Line – You have been trained in policing and investigative skills.

Two and Two – You are a trained teacher and educator.

SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

Bit of a Bodger – You are skilled in tinkering and repairing things e.g. fixing machinery or mending a leaky tap. Doesn't cover designing and building an amazing device from scratch.

Build 'Owt – You can build any type of technological device, large or small.

Getting into Gear – You are a skilled mechanical engineer.

Hit it With a Hammer – You are trained in mining mechanical engineering skills.

Magic and Machinery – You have a knack for inventing scientific gadgets and magical tricks.

Man/Woman of Science – You have a range of scientific skills (including observation, running experiments, handling chemicals and recording results, as well as scientific knowledge).

Man/Woman With a Shed – You have developed skills that allow you to invent and build items and gadgets.

Man/Woman With a Spanner – You are a trained mechanical engineer.

Not as Dumb as He Looks – Despite what others might think, you have engineering and tinkering skills (including designing and building devices from scratch).

Not Just Pretty Little Holes – You are at the forefront of computer programming.

Ticking Along Nicely – You are skilled at inventing clockwork devices and mechanisms.

Tick-Tock – You are a skilled watchmaker and repairer.

THE TRADES

Boxing Clever – You know how to handle stock and manage a warehouse.

Gills and Firkins – You have general licensee skills and the knowledge required to run a public house.

Inn Coming – You are highly versed in running a hotel.

Mole Man – You have an understanding of mining and the accompanying practical skills.

More Tea and Cake, Vicar? – You have superb range of cookery skills.

Stacked – You are skilled in the safe handling and management of cargo.

Treat Her Like a Lady – You are trained in the arts of setting, stoking, and boiler management.

VEHICLES

Freedom of the Skies – You are skilled at piloting and navigation.

Head in the Clouds – You have been trained in how to pilot light air vehicles.

Hoist the Mainbrace – You are trained in the skills necessary to sail large waterborne vessels.

Master/Mistress of the Mercurial – You have piloting skills (which may be for a boat or air vehicle, or both).

Pedal to the Metal – You can drive any vehicle, motorised or not.

CAKES

AMBITIOUS & DETERMINED

Dilettante Turned Crusader – You use your fame and determination to get what you want.

Just No Stopping You – You won't let anything stand in the way of getting your heart's desire.

Knows Her/His Own Mind – You are independent and determined.

Manipulative Minx – Sweet and innocent? Nope, not really.

On the Up – Whilst you may be ambitious, you are not cut-throat.

What Lola Wants, Lola Gets – You are deeply selfish and determined to get your own way.

ARROGANCE & VANITY

A Cut Above – You are snobbish and judgemental when it come to the lower social orders.

Bombastic Buffoon – You are arrogant and condescending to your social inferiors.

Centre of Attention – You are spoilt, vain, and very self-confident.

Puffed Up Peacock – You are immensely vain.

CHARM

Bit of a Scoundrel – You are charming and persuasive, but not necessarily moral.

Crowd-pleaser – You are a charming showman or woman.

Dainty but Dangerous – Whilst you are most definitely charming, you're also as hard as nails.

Dashing Rogue – You are charming, but most definitely immoral.

Gentilhomme – Your very foreignness only adds to your great charm and politeness.

I Feel as if I've Known You for Years – You are disarmingly charming.

Jolly Jack Tar – You are lively, flirty, and a little cheeky (but not offensively so).

Not What I Was Expecting – You are polite, genteel, and charming despite your apparent exoticness.

Scrubs Up Well – You are surprisingly charming, given your usual appearance.

Smashing Do! – You always know what to say.

Smooth as Silk – You ooze charm without being oily.

The Middle Ground – You interact well with workers and management on an equal footing.

Twinkle in the Eye – That little glint makes you terribly charismatic.

Winning Smile – You are in possession of a charming fame/notoriety.

CONFIDENCE

Bluff and Bluster – You are loud, confident, and a tad rough at the seams.

Feisty Filly – You are supremely self-confident and self-assured.

Gentle Giant – You might be big and confident, but you're also very friendly.

Heart on Your Sleeve – You are straightforward and firm in your convictions.

Honest, Open Face – You manage to inspire confidence and trust in whoever you deal with.

Larger than Life – You are flamboyant and adventurous.

Man/Woman of Means – You are positively brimming with confidence and wealth.

CALM & COLLECTED

Butter Wouldn't Melt – You are one cool customer, appearing to be so prim and proper.

Cool as a Cucumber – You are calm, collected, and ever-so-slightly aloof.

Gracious Hostess/Host – You are always accommodating to your guests and socially at ease.

Supremely Serene – You are always calm and efficient, no matter what.

Under Pressure – You are adept at keeping cool under difficult circumstances.

Velvet Glove – You are calm, diplomatic, and soothing at all times.

GOOD & KIND

Rough Diamond – You might be socially graceless but you're good at heart.

Salt of the Earth – You are polite, friendly, and kind, even though you may be of humble origins.

Sucker for a Sob Story – You are kind, naïve, and rather gullible.

Sweet Natured Girl – You are innocent, friendly and kind.

Vand Chhakna – You are generous, kind, and pious.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ah, Sir, Your Book Has Arrived – You have a wide variety of contacts, personal and business related.

Beauty and the Brain – You are slightly eccentric, but pretty/handsome enough to get away with it.

Everything in its Place – You are highly organised and methodical.

Excellent Judge of Character – You are exactly what it says you are.

Flames of Ire – You have a very short fuse.

Foreman of Works – You possess an aura of authority and are well-versed in man management skills.

Grease the Wheel – You are the sole of diplomacy.

Haunted Man/Woman – You are very reticent about your past.

Heart of a Tiger/Tigress – You are brave, stalwart, and fiercely protective of your friends and family

Just Another Face in the Crowd – You can blend into any background.

Knows His Place – You are very deferential to your perceived social superiors.

Know Thine Enemy – You are an excellent judge of character and understand people's motivations.

Left of Centre – You have strong political views.

Little White Lies – Although you are captivating, you are not entirely honest.

Nose to the Grindstone – You have always been hard working, serious and very practical.

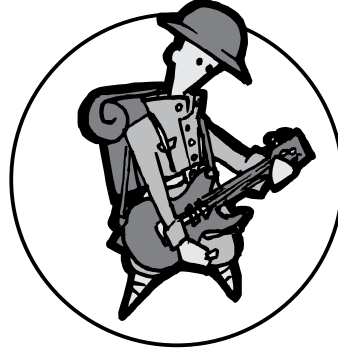
Old Mother Hen – You are fussy and maternalistic

Oo, Look - Shiny Things! – You are keen and eager, but a little obsessive.

Perspicacious Planner – You are very organised and methodical.

Pillar of the Community – You are well known and respected within your area.

Puzzled Frown – Although you are always polite, your mind frequently seems to be somewhere else entirely.



Rare Exotic Bloom – You have a captivating beauty and sense of humour.

Restless Passions – You are impulsive, brave and loyal.

Rough as a Badger's... – You are rather uncouth and uncultured

Servant of the People – You know your place...

Sharp as a Knife – You are widely judged to be too smart by half.

Snot-nosed Urchin – You are filthily unkempt and frightfully common.

Soul of Discretion – You know how to keep a secret.

Such a Familiar Face – Everyone is sure they've met you somewhere before...

Take Me as You Find Me – You are not a strict adherent to the current social mores.

The Truth is Out There – You are scrupulously honest and despise fraud in all its forms.

Tug of the Forelock – You are always polite and deferential to your elders and betters.

Upper Crust – Unlike many, you have received a thorough and well grounded education.

Wind Blown – You are terribly indecisive.

SHY & RESERVED

Drifting – You are emotionally detached and reserved, with no apparent ambition.

Shy and Retiring – You are quiet, reserved, and wary of strangers.

Shy, Retiring Type – What it says.

Stiff Upper Lip – You never relax, and as a result you appear socially stunted.

Strong, Silent Type – You have a limited understanding of English and therefore tend to hold your peace.

Tongue-tied – You are shy (either in all situations, in the company of strangers or large crowds, or when having to perform in front of an audience).

Yes, Sir, No, Sir – You are socially barely noticeable.

SPLIT PERSONALITY

Blinded by the Light – You have a tendency towards awkwardness when out of your usual social sphere.

Buttoned Up – You are formal and detached in the presence of officers, but more relaxed with your comrades in arms.

Divine Diva – You are witty, charming and captivating, but prone to temper tantrums when you don't get your own way.

Double Standards – You are something of a hypocrite.

Fool Me Once – You are outwardly polite, but always deeply suspicious of everyone.

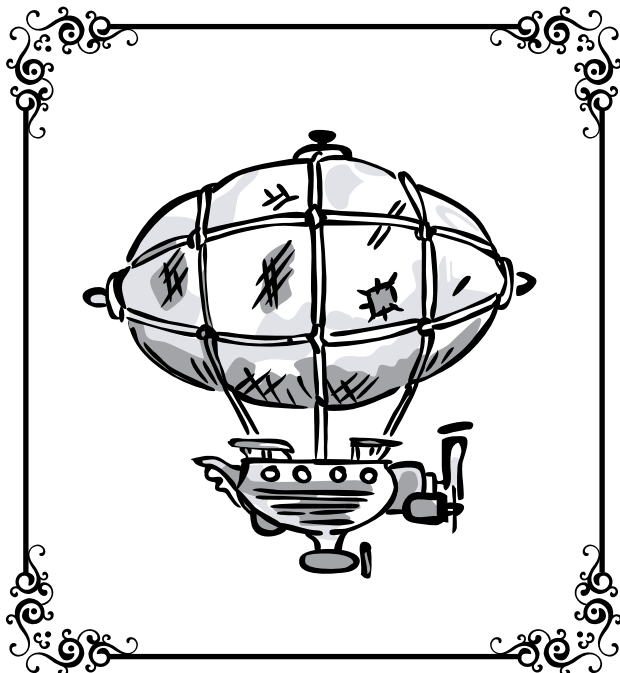
If Looks Could Kill – You are perfectly charming and polite, until someone crosses you.

In Two Minds – You are religious yet hedonistic; bigoted yet oddly progressive.

Look Both Ways – You are two-faced: outwardly friendly, inwardly conniving.

Perfectly Presidential – You are popular and erudite on your favourite topic, but intensely private otherwise.

You Rub My Back – You are highly charming when you want something, but otherwise can be rather indifferent.



SWORDSTICKS

AGILITY & RUNNING

Cambridge/College Blue – You are an all-round sportsman and athlete.

Cat-like Reflexes – You are agile, active and athletic.

Daring Young Man – You are adept at acrobatics and funambulism.

Fast on Your Feet – You are surprisingly agile.

Go the Distance – You are very good at running.

Greased Lightning – You are very quick on your feet.

Hot Pursuit – You are athletic, fast and difficult to shake.

No Longer in Your Prime – You used to be an athletics champion, but you're getting on a bit now.

Slippery as an Eel – You are fast on your feet and able to dodge well.

Twinkle Toes – You are athletic and pretty nippy when it comes to running.

ARTILLERY & GUNS

Bagged A Biggun / Big Guns – You have the ability to wield and maintain large calibre firearms (a particular weapon does not have to be specified).

Big Bang – You know how to handle artillery weapons.

Crack Shot – You are highly skilled when it comes to pistols and revolvers.

My Trusty Service Revolver – You never leave home without it.

Never Fired a Shot – You know how guns work, and you're fairly certain you could get them to do the shooty thing if the need ever arose.

Pass Me That Rifle – You are particularly adept at firing and maintaining rifles and other large firearms.

Pot-shot – You have had lots of practice using firearms, particularly shotguns.

Ready, Aim, Fire! – You are trained in the use and maintenance of artillery weapons.

DANCING

Happy Hooper – You are a graceful dancer, no matter what the style.

Quick, Quick, Slow – You are an excellent ballroom dancer.

Soft Shoe Shuffle – You are an elegant dancer and very light on your feet.

Trip the Light Fantastic – You greatly enjoy dancing.

FIGHTING (BLADES)

Cold Hard Steel – You are adept at knife-fighting.

Cutting Truth – You have been trained in the art of sword fighting using the traditional curved kirpan.

En Garde! – You are trained in the art of fencing.

Flashing Blade – You are an excellent swordsman.

Handy with a Blade – You know how to handle a knife.

Now That's a Knife – You have experience of using knives for hunting and fighting.

Parry, Riposte – You are possessed of the art of fighting with swords (a particular weapon does not have to be specified).

Swash and Buckle – You are trained in the art of fencing, with a tendency to get a little fancy.

Swashing My Buckle – You are a flamboyant sword fighter (and not above fighting dirty if it's called for).

The Pen is Not Mightier – You are well-versed in the arts of fencing and duelling.

FIGHTING (MISCELLANEOUS)

A Damn Good Thrashing – You are skilled in the art of combat with fists & walking sticks.

Hatpin at the Ready – You have the unlikely ability to defend yourself with whatever small, sharp weapons come to hand.

How Dare You Talk to a Lady Like That! – You often take people by surprise with your ability to brawl with unexpected weaponry.

Rat-a-tat-tat – You are trained in aerial combat.

Sneaky Blighter – You rely on underhanded fighting tactics (including concealed and unexpected weaponry).

FIGHTING (UP CLOSE & PERSONAL)

Cut Above the Rest – You are adept at bare-knuckle fighting.

Dirty Scrapper – You fight like a girl: dirtily. No move is too underhand.

Feel My Boot Up Yer... – You are adept in the field of manhandling techniques.

Fisticuffs – You know how to defend yourself (and attack) in hand to hand combat.

Forearms You Could Crack Coconuts On – When it comes to a scrap, you prefer brawling and bare-knuckle fighting.

I'll See You Horse-whipped – You certainly know how to handle a whip.

Jack of All Trades – You are an imaginative scrapper.

Light the Blue Touch-paper – You have an explosive temper, which makes you rather handy with your fists (boxing).

Never Saw That One Coming – Although you prefer not to fight, you know how to use your fists when the time comes.

Pick and Shovel – If it comes to a fight, you'll be brawling with your work tools.

Pugilistic Tendencies – You are quite the bare-knuckle boxer.

Queensbury Rules – You are trained in the noble art of boxing.

Rolling Pin of Doom – You are more than handy with kitchen objects when it comes to a scrap.

Rough and Tumble – If it comes to a fight, there's nothing like a good old-fashioned brawl.

Strong-arm Tactics – When it comes to fighting, you like to use intimidation against weaker foes.

Strong Arm of the Law – You know how to take a felon down in hand-to-hand combat.

HORSE & CARRIAGE

Brougham & Bust – You have a talent for riding and driving carriages of every shape and description.

Hussar! – You have riding, mounted combat, and sabre skills.

In the Pink – You are good at riding and country sports.

In the Saddle – You might as well have been born in it when it comes to riding.

Riding High – Not only are you a skilled rider, you are also adept at fighting from horseback.

MILITARY

Fix Bayonets – You have been trained in the appropriate infantry combat skills.

Master at Arms – You are intimately acquainted with a variety of military skills.

Military Man – Guns, swords, cannons, etc. – you know what to do with them.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ain't No Mountain High Enough – You are never happier than when half way up (or down) a mountain.

Bull's Eye – You are skilled at archery.

Crawling Along – You are an excellent swimmer.

Defender of the Clan – You avoid getting in to fights, unless someone near and dear to you is being threatened.

Hand Deceives the Eye – You are very good at physically deceiving and misdirecting people.

Life Under Canvas – You are experienced in hiking, camping, and surviving in the wilderness.

Never Saw That One Coming – You prefer to avoid

fighting whenever possible, but that's not to say you can't protect yourself when you have to.

Prestidigitation – You are very good at misdirecting people.

Striding Forth – You enjoy riding, trekking and hunting.

Whatever Means Necessary – You prefer subterfuge to open conflict, but can hold your own when needed.

SPORTS

Fifteen Love – You are a talented tennis player.

In the Scrum – You are a rugby player.

Jolly Hockey Sticks – You played field hockey at school.

Kick About – You are an Association Football and rugby player.

Leg Before Cricket – You are quite the batsman.

Sticky Wicket – You are a skilled all-round cricketer.

STRENGTH & STAMINA

Amazing Strength! – You are able to perform stupendous feats of physical strength.

Big and Beefy – You are quite a size (and have the strength to go with it!).

Bit of Elbow Grease – You are blessed with great stamina and perseverance.

Invigorating Walks in the Open Air – You have extremely good leg muscles and boundless stamina.

No Slowing Down – Despite everything (or, perhaps, because of it), you have immense stamina and perseverance.

Strength of Ten Men – You are incredibly strong.

Tough Old Bird/Goat – You are possessed of great physical stamina through long years of endurance.

SAILING

Master/Mistress of the Maritime – You are adept at sailing small and large boats/ships.

Messing About in Boats – You know how to handle a canoe/kayak.

Salt Runs Through His/Her Veins – You enjoy, and are skilled at, sailing.

EITHER / OR

Life on the Ocean Wave – *Cogs*: You are well versed in naval procedures and tactics; *Swordsticks*: You excel at sailing.





Thanks



Thanks go, as ever, to my lovely husband, Richard, for designing the dice mechanic. I don't do mechanics-y stuff very well but he quite enjoys it (which is just as well, really). He's also quite useful for chatting to about general background-y stuff, proof-reading, tea-making and digitally inking things. It was his idea about using the napkins for character sheets, so blame him when you lose your character to a particularly vicious tea spillage attack (or need something to wrap your cake in, so you can take it home for later).

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This book is dedicated to the memory of my Dad, Derek Wilson, technical consultant, friend, and quiet inspiration. His love of engineering, history, and steam obviously rubbed off on me somewhere along the line.



COGS, CAKES & SWORDSTICKS

Character Sheet

NAME

COGS

CAKES

SWORDSTICKS

FOIBLE

REPUTATION POINTS

BACKGROUND



COGS, CAKES & SWORDSTICKS

Character Sheet

NAME

COGS

CAKES

SWORDSTICKS

FOIBLE

REPUTATION POINTS

BACKGROUND





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