

Castle Falkenstein



HIGH ADVENTURE IN THE STEAM AGE®

Castle Falkenstein



ADVENTURES IN THE AGE OF STEAM

Castle Falkenstein



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Dedicated: To Cody, because you're the finest thing I've ever had a hand in creating. And to Mom (Cody's "Grandy"), because I promised.

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Not Your Typical Roleplaying Game

A word of warning: *Castle Falkenstein* is organized a bit differently from other roleplaying games. Instead of starting off with the Rules, we've organized this book so that you begin with the world itself, as described by our hero through his stories and pictures. **Background Articles** and **Sidebar**s are also mixed in with the storyline to illustrate and expand on interesting facts about the *Castle Falkenstein* world. This also allows you to immerse yourself in the world without distracting rules and charts. The best way to think of *Castle Falkenstein* is as a novel that allows you to write your own sequels.

But if you really *have* to know how to play the Game *immediately*, you can skip the story and just jump right in. The Rules of the Game are all in the parchment-style pages starting in the back of the book on page 129. Everything you'll need to play is in this section, organized by topic.

This may seem a bit strange at first, but it's actually designed to make using *Castle Falkenstein* easier. Everything you'll need to run a Victorian Adventure Entertainment will be right at hand, not scattered between bits of background or buried where you have to hunt it up. In addition, this section has its own detailed Index for easy reference, once again to make it easy to get at the mechanics.

It Started With The Package—



It was early one Sunday morning. I wandered out to my front porch to get the paper and tripped over a heavy oblong object. A package.

Wrapped in thick green leaves and tied with an elaborate web of gold string (I had it analyzed and sure enough, it was really gold). Inside was a tale of swashbuckling action: a battered notebook packed full of wonderfully bizarre fantasy chronicling a world of "steampunk" superscience, spies and sorcerers, Faerie Lords and Ladies, daring heroics and true romance.

The best part was, I knew the hero personally.

What you hold in your hands is the last known trace of my friend Thomas Edward Olam: a thick wad of yellow legal pad notes, antique vellum sheets and Bristol board drawings are all that remains of a brilliant computer game artist who vanished over two years ago while on a supposedly "uneventful" European vacation.

On these pages, Tom has given us more than just a journal of his adventures. He's recorded an entire world, his clever artist's eye evoking his impressions in glorious color drawings and fanciful sketches, while his mind fills in the details with his wry and insightful comments about everything that goes on around him. Very few people could yarn about a world of dinosaurian Dragons, Dwarf engineers, mad scientists, and dueling steampunk Empires and have it all come out making sense; Tom does. (Heck, he even makes a game out of it!) And his gift for observation gives us an undeniably real sense of another place, another time, centering around a strange and mystical fortress raised by Faerie Magick and the will of a mad king: *Castle Falkenstein*.

Most of what you'll be reading in the following manuscript comes from Tom's letter to me, a nearly forty-page account of his adventures in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, written with his typically terrible handwriting in a battered steno notebook. The rest of Tom's package contained another notebook full of Tom's observations on *New Europa*—I took the liberty of inserting some of these notes on particular topics as they came up in the letter, to better illuminate certain subjects—and an improbably lurid Victorian novel (written by Tom, I guess) titled *An American Artist in Victoria's Court*. Most of the illustrations come from the thick sheaf of color paintings and sketches Tom included with his letter, as well as some character sketches provided by a mutual friend and some period artwork I dug up that depicted ideas or things common both in our history and that of New Europa.

Is this really my missing friend writing back from beyond the "Faerie Veil"? I don't know. But he asked me to publish his journal, so I have.

But enough about my part in this. The tale is Tom's, so I'm going to get out of the way now and let him tell it.

Mike Pondsmith
San Francisco, 1994

Dear Mike,

I'm not dead. Now that we've gotten *that* cleared up. I know, I know. You're probably sitting there reading this letter and thinking, *But what the heck happened? We thought you were kidnapped, dead or worse.* Believe me, the real truth is hard for even me to believe—and I lived through it.

Over two years ago, I was sorcerously shanghaied from Earth into an alternate universe that seems to be one part *Lord of the Rings* and two parts Jules Verne science fiction, with a little *Prisoner of Zenda* thrown in for good measure. It's a place that's everything the Victorian Age *should* have been and more: a reality where High Magick lives side by side with weird inventions out of an Industrial Revolution on drugs. Every day, steampunk supertech meets Dwarfish engineering, and in *this* place, that's normal.

Since that time, I have saved nations, put kings on thrones, toppled Empires and romanced the most beautiful woman on four continents. My best friends are a sorceror who claims to be a member of the Illuminati, the swashbuckling head of the Royal Secret Service, and the High King of the Faerie. I have met Queen Victoria, Abraham Lincoln and Captain Nemo. Last week, I got into a long conversation with Sherlock Holmes.

Tonight I had dinner with a Dragon. I was *not* the main course.

I know you won't believe any of this. I wouldn't either. I'm not even sure this letter will reach you, considering how treacherous the Faerie Ways are between Home and this place. But you gotta listen. This is for *real*.

There's a whole other world just this side of the door ... And the door's a lot thinner than you'd want to think ...

The Story In A Nutshell

One of the things that used to drive us crazy about Tom when he was working at HyperTech Games, Inc. was that he could start a story and wander around the block for *hours* before he got to the point. So for those who don't want to wade through *all* of his notes, here's what's going on (as far as I can tell):

Tom was shanghaied by two wizards from an alternate Victorian world called *New Europa*. The wizards, including a Faerie High Lord named **Auberon**, used a spell of Summonation to find a secret weapon to restore their **Crown Prince Ludwig of Bayern** (aka Bavaria) to his rightful throne. By wording the Summons as "Find us something to help us succeed," they had no idea what they would get in the process. So the magic went out into the Faerie Veil between dimensions and returned with Tom. They didn't know what he was good for, but they decided to keep him anyway because he *might* be useful.

Betrayed by a spy from within, the conspirators were forced (with Tom's help) to rush the Prince to the capital, defeat all the assassins sent against them, and throw out the Evil Regent (who ran the country and was betraying Bayern to its hostile neighbor, Prussia). With a lot of action, romance and adventure along the way.

But Tom's real reason for being Summoned was only revealed later, when it turned out that one of the books he'd brought from our world had mystical importance in his new one. Using his book, the group was able to build a secret weapon that allowed them to defeat Iron Chancellor Bismarck's invading armies.



Suddenly, the floor
opened up and
swallowed me...

Spellnapped!

I was on vacation—the vacation I’d been talking about for months at work, driving the rest of you crazy. Two weeks away from the Games Division of HyperTech, Inc., with no monitors beaming cathode rays at my face, no art directors screaming about deadlines, and best of all, two weeks of peace from my project leader and his never ending quest for video game perfection.

While I was travelling through Germany, I decided to catch a tour of one of the major tourist landmarks, *Neuschwanstein* castle. It’s the archetype for probably every romantic fairy-tale castle ever created; I *know* they modeled the Disneyland castle after it, and I’m pretty sure that about half the fantasy fortresses that hit our Art Director’s desk are direct steals. Besides, it’s got a romantic cachet to it that’s hard to beat—the last mad king in a long line of loonies drags several megatons of concrete and marble up the side of a mountain, and builds himself a one-man amusement park where he can listen to Wagnerian opera all day. Then, before he can complete his dream castle, he’s declared insane by his scheming counselors, locked up, and dies under circumstances that could only be described as “mysterious.”

So there I was, standing in the Castle’s great *Meistersinger’s Hall*, marveling at the whole rococo brilliance of the place. They don’t allow photographs, but since no one said anything about artists, I got out my sketchbook and became so busy that I hardly even noticed that the tour had moved on without me. I wasn’t worried; tours came through every few minutes, and I could always join the next one. Instead, I concentrated on drawing.

Big mistake.

I didn’t notice the smell of ozone at first. Or the slight buildup of static electricity. Maybe my first clue was the sudden explosion of multicolored light around me. Then the floor opened up.

Brilliant rainbow lights shot skyward, while colorful ball lightning crackled, fizzed and bounced around the room. A screaming wind roared in my ears like all the vacuum cleaners in the world, and my Nikes skittered and slid out from underneath me. My backpack hit the floor next to me; I scrambled to grab it—anything to stop myself from being sucked down into the howling maelstrom—

Really big mistake.

I really should have gone for one of the pillars along the wall. The next thing I knew, I was tumbling headlong down a spinning, whirling tunnel of light. I could hear something screaming.

Me.

I’d been Spellnapped.

Another World

You won't believe how *strange* this place is! The world I've come to know as "New Europa" is a land of steam-powered vehicles, gunpowder weapons, clockwork mechanisms and renegade inventors. But it's also a world where magicians are debonair members of secret societies and lodges with arcane plans for world domination; where the Wild Hunt of Faerie rides the moonlight in hussar's uniforms, Dragons occasionally walk the streets as urbane gentlemen, Dwarfs are burly engineers and inventors, and the nightmare forces of the Unseelie Court are everywhere (including my bedroom closet). It's a blend of Grimm Brothers fantasy, Jules Verne invention, and Sherlockian mystery, where swashbuckling, larger-than-life action, duels, daring rescues, heroic feats, wondrous (and anachronistic) inventions, High Romance and High Magick are the everyday; one part *Lord of the Rings*, one part *Prisoner of Zenda*, and one part *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*.

In other words, this place is *weird*.

And It Isn't Always Historical Either

While New Europa is superficially similar to the Europe of the Victorian Age, it's definitely not the same as our own history (although there is a London, Paris, Vienna, etc.). While there are many analogs to real historical characters and people, they are not necessarily the same characters I've read about in history books. Personalities from all over Victorian fantasy and science fiction seem to be woven into the fabric of New Europa; I've personally met characters from books, films and even fairy tales, living side by side with their creators!

I Get To Travel ...

In the last few years (Falkenstein time) since I was snatched, my adventures have taken me all over the

"Steam Age" globe: from the mysterious Russian Empire and its anarchists, mages and mystics; to gay, mad Second Empire Paris with its wild parties and glittering social scene; to the industrialized war machine of Count von Bismarck's Prussia (with its weird and wonderfully bizarre "high-tech" 1900's inventions); to the mysterious (and very sorcerous) "Dragon Emperors" of the Far East. I've even visited the sunken Faerie cities of Eire, and the flying carpet fantasy lands of the Ottoman Empire.

...And I Have a Day Job

I've also taken part in intrigues and adventure all over the Great Powers of the "Steam Age", exploring uncharted realms, battling Evil Wizards and arcane Sorcerous Brotherhoods, thwarting master criminals planning the greatest heists of all time, romancing daring adventuresses and playing the dashing, heroic swordsman dueling with pistol and saber against dastardly villains.

It beats drawing video games, I can tell ya.

And 2,000 Rooms of My Own!

To top it all off, I live in a castle: an amazing Faerie-crafted fortress called *Castle Falkenstein*. Raised by pure sorcery in a single night and shaped into being on the ruins of an old fortress (that in turn was built on the site of an ancient temple), Falkenstein is rumored to be a gateway to many other worlds and times. Huge, beautiful and unbelievable, it's a place of magic and mystery: It has rooms that change shape and location, secret passages that come and go, resident ghosts, and even a few portals into other realities, just the sort of thing you'd expect when a "mad" king and an elf-lord with a sense of humor collaborate. I still lose my room sometimes.

But you want to know what bothers me the most? I think I'm starting to get *used* to this place..



Morrolan & Auberon

I opened my eyes cautiously. From the view through my slitted lids, it didn't take long to realize I was in big trouble. For one thing, all my clothing had big, charred rents in it. To top it off, the room I awoke in had all the proper fittings for a really nice dungeon. Big iron chains festooned the moldering, mossy, stone walls, dripping water trickled slowly from the ceiling, and thick straw scattered on the cold, damp floor deadened all sound. I even thought I saw a rat. But what really worried me was the fact that I was lying on a pedestal in the middle of a vast chalk pentagram.

There were two other people nearby in the shadows; one taller than the other. The shorter one said, "Damnation. I've never had that quite happen before." His companion snorted. "Aye, you've never cast a Summoning in a Faerie circle before either," he replied. "Let me see that book a moment, Master Morrolan." There was a sound of heavy bindings being bent back, and a distracted shuffling of heavy papers. "I see," the one who wasn't Morrolan finally said. "A general Summonation, aye?" Morrolan shuffled closer; I could see his shadow merge with the larger one. "Exactly," he replied in crisp, clear, British-accented tones. "There was no way to discern what we were looking for. Since the principles of Magical Resonance stated that—" "Hang your Resonance theorizing," interrupted the other one. "It's all sorcerer's cant and useless now. We've gone and done the deed; now we need to figure out what the bloody spell's accomplished." "Damn your eyes, Auberon," exploded the Morrolan. "It's not the spell's fault. We might have known better than to mix it with Faerie Glamours and wild magic. Next time—"

"Hsst!" interrupted Auberon suddenly. "Can't you see? Our catch is awake!" Damn! I thought. That's my cue to get the heck out of here! Gathering my feet under me, I got ready to bolt, as the larger of the two cloaked shapes strode out of the darkness to where I was. I raised a fist; he raised an open hand. I froze in my tracks, mind racing and my body stubbornly refusing to do anything. Auberon slowly walked into the light of the candles around me, and terror began to yammer in my paralyzed body. The too slender hands, the severely sculpted face all spoke of an alien beauty that was too awful to describe.

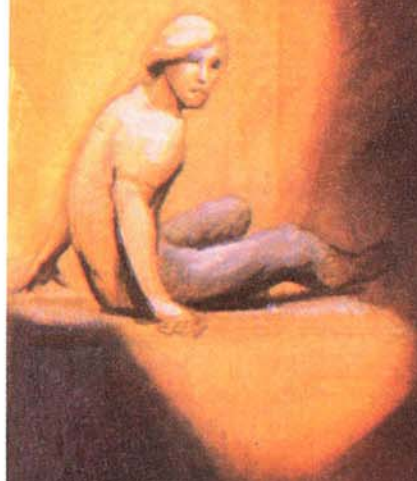
"Ah, so it's awake ye are?" he smiled. "Well, that's sure enough dealt with anow." He reached out with a fist full of blazing fire, touched my forehead, and the lights went out again.



My kidnappers were named Morrolan and Auberon, two inhabitants of the alternate Earth which I had been shanghied to; the place I now call New Europa*. My kidnapping was the result of a highly experimental spell which the two had performed in order to summon something to help their King—who, to my amazement, turned out to be the original Mad King Ludwig of Bavaria!—in his quest to liberate his nation. As Morrolan has since put it; "We were hoping, old man, to secure a secret weapon or Infernal Device for His Majesty; instead, we got you. Not that we're all that disappointed, but we didn't need a fourth for whist at the time."

Master Grey Morrolan is a Wizard, a practitioner of Magick and the Arcane Arts. As I soon learned, in the world of New Europa, Sorcery is a real thing: codified, studied and used like high energy physics is in our world. But Sorcery is still pretty rare, the province of highly trained wizards who belong to secretive Orders, Brotherhoods and Lodges of Magick. As a Sorcerer, Morrolan is one of the best, a veritable Stephen Hawking of the Arcane, and it seems fitting somehow that the Order he belongs to is the legendary

*Editor's Note: Tom seems to use the term New Europa to mean the actual continent, while he uses the term world of Castle Falkenstein to describe the universe New Europa is located in.



Illuminated Brotherhood of Bayern—yes, the Illuminati are alive and well here and a practicing magical Lodge secretly operating all over the world. Dry, witty, and Terribly British, Morrolan is one of the Illuminatus' best Adepts, a sort of wizardly James Bond in the body of a David Niven. He's probably the best friend I've made here.

Then there's Auberon—Lord Auberon Valerix, High King of the Faerie and Lord of the Seelie Court (there are two groups of Faerie—the other is the Unseelie Court, a race of human-hating Faerie Lords). The Faerie (not fairies) are a race of non-human, magick-using beings who came to New Europa sometime during its Ice Ages. While the Faerie can appear in almost any form, they often take the aspect of tall, willowy humanoids similar to the “elves” of Germanic legends. They can also take the forms of brownies, leprechauns, goblins, banshees and the like. The Faerie are anything but the cute little pixies you read about in fairy tales back home: here, a “Faerie Tale” is often much closer to a horror novel than a bedtime story!

Auberon is quite a character; darkly handsome, a dashing swordsman and enigmatic politician, he breaks hearts and heads with equal aplomb. He affects a rather broad Irish accent and is fond of red-haired women and whiskey. He and Morrolan have known each other for years, and often team up to accomplish their skull-duggery and sorcerous scheming.

When I appeared in their pentagram, both Morrolan and the Faerie King were pretty nonplussed; I wasn't a great warrior (I'm a decent paintball player at best), I didn't have a secret weapon on me, and I couldn't perform any powerful Magicks. But the signs all seemed to indicate that I would be good for something, so they refused to send me back until they discovered what my purpose was.

Of course, the true reason why I had been Summoned to the world of *Castle Falkenstein* was far stranger than any of us could imagine.



Morrolan and Auberon. Up to no good as usual ...



Castle Falkenstein

“Then Auberon raised his arms and shouted, ‘Now it begins!’ Blue light shot from his hands, and the entire fortress rocked as if struck by earthquake. Then, slowly, one by one, as if lifted by invisible giant’s hands, the very stones of the keep began to rise into the air. They circled and spiralled around Auberon like drunken birds, while the blue lightning crashed and the wind howled. They seemed to multiply themselves even as we watched, rising, shaping, stacking into place like child’s blocks. Then Auberon brought his hands down in a grand sweep, and a million metric tonnes of stone crashed to earth with a deafening detonation that echoed off the furthest mountains. Dropped, exactly as you see today, complete and whole; an entire new castle on the ruins of the old! Furniture and all!

—Col. Fritz von Tarlenhiem, *Remembrances*



Castle Falkenstein

Castle Falkenstein. Amazing. Timeless. Endless. Raised by the sorcery of a Faerie Lord, created from the imagination of a mad king, it towers over the silent dark forests and sapphire lakes below, spearing into the brilliant dawn from the top of its mountaintop fastness. It is a place of immense mystery, of great power, brought into being on the foundations of a medieval robber baron's fortress, clad in smooth, warm stone and the stuff of dreams; a place where knights joust and lords and ladies play.

History

But the Castle is far, far older than most people imagine. Even before the original castle was raised, a Roman border fortress stood on the summit of the mountain. Before that, the *Falkenburg*—Falcon's Mountain—was the site of an ancient temple of unknown origin; the standing stones still make up part of the central keep today. And the Dwarfs know of a time when the crag of Falkenstein was a gateway into Faerie itself, perhaps the first doorway into the New Europa of the Ice Ages. Their legends talk of caves below the summit, far deeper than any dungeon, where Time stops and even the most powerful Dragons fear to tread. The sorcery of this citadel goes far into the core of the Earth, and grips the wellsprings of Magick with raw, red talons.

Mad King's Vision

I know what mad King Ludwig *intended* Falkenstein to be. I've seen the original drawings: vivid watercolor sketches created by the great stage designer Christian Jenk, whose hand also brought *Neuschwanstein* into vision. As the King saw it, Falkenstein was to be his greatest castle: a Neo-Gothic splendor fit for a robber lord himself; a place where his fantasies of a bygone age could exist in perfect solitude. But when crossed with the power of the Sons of Danu, Ludwig's mad vision became greater than its creator could imagine. I wouldn't put it past the wily Elflood to use the power of this ancient place to shape a secure fortress for Magick itself: a sanctum of Sorcery that could stand

against the forces of Progress arrayed against it. It is said by some of the staff that when Auberon returned the King to his throne, he made his friend a promise: that as long as Ludwig reigned, Falkenstein would ever be a place of wonder; it would always be larger and more amazing than even a mad king could imagine it. So far, the Faerie King's promise stands unbroken.

Beyond One Reality

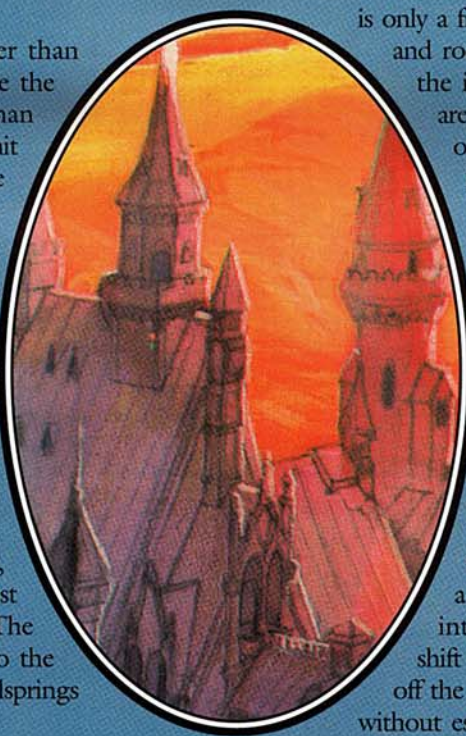
I'd hoped to show you a map of the entire structure of *Falkenstein*, but what *I* know of the Castle

is only a fraction of its infinite galleries, halls and rooms. Most of the main Keep and the immediate towers surrounding it are well known, but there are dozens of branching levels and outbuildings, spires, minarets, guardhouses and parapets scattered all over the mountaintop. It is said that when Auberon raised the Castle from the ruins of the old keep, he wove into it all the power of the Faerie Veil itself, and that Falkenstein reaches not only through this dimension, but into others as well. One thing is true: Falkenstein is indeed mutable; there are wondrous rooms that appear and disappear without a trace, secret passages that open into other realities, doorways that shift without warning. Those who stray off the well-known passages of the Castle without escort sometimes never come back;

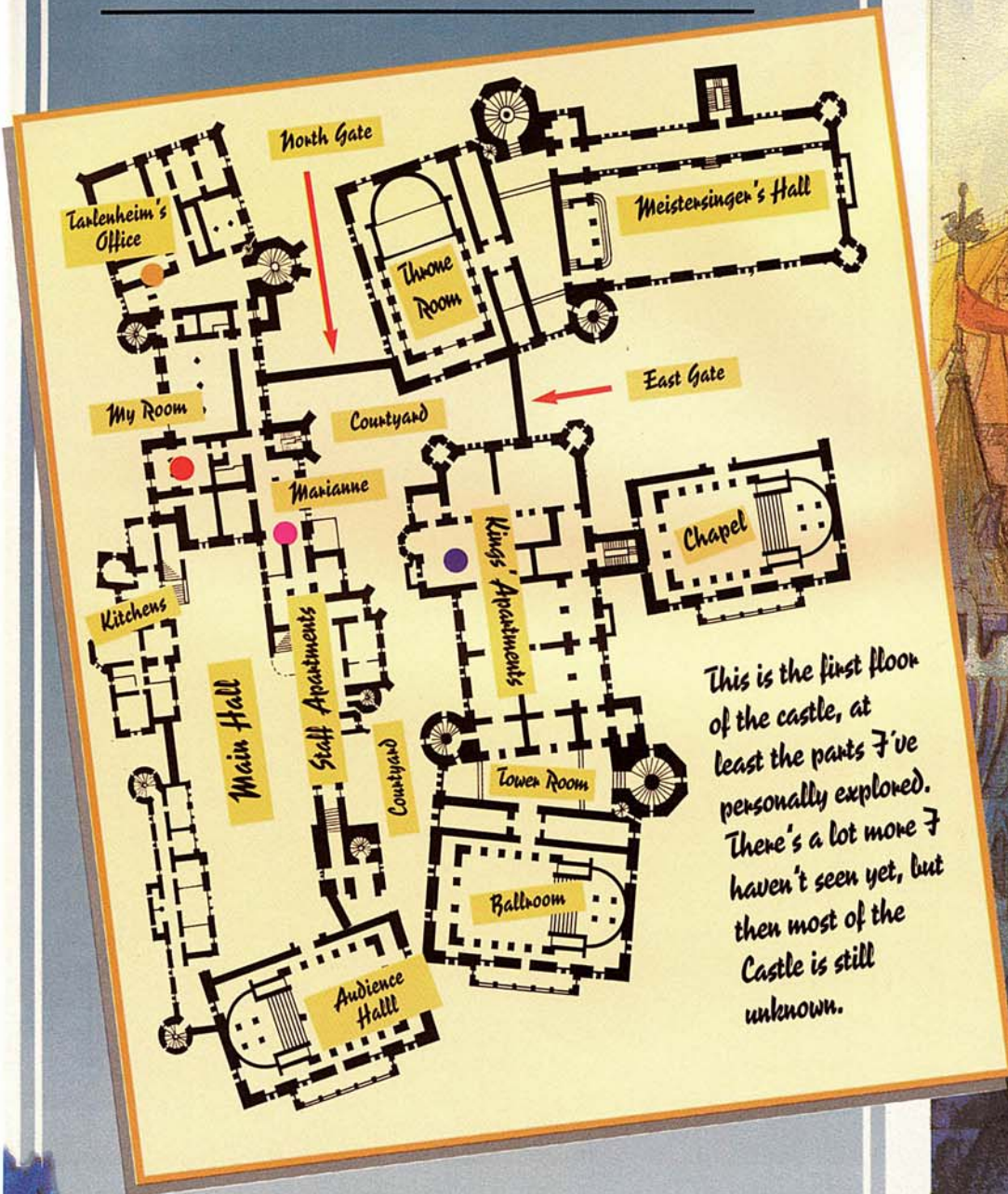
complete strangers have been known to wander in from distant regions, speaking in tongues no one knows, wearing clothes from alien times and places.

Falkenstein is King Ludwig's home; he rarely entertains visitors there, preferring to hold court in Old München or at his lesser palaces. Occasionally, great state events such as Balls and treaty signings are held at the Castle, but the day-to-day business of running Bayern is done at the King's *Residenz* in the Capital.

Marianne, Colonel Tarlenheim, Morrolan, Rhyme, and myself are the few who actually live within the immense fortress. "For you have all truly earned this place in the clouds," said Ludwig once. "You are Falkenstein's first and greatest defenders." I'm not sure about *that*, but the Castle *has* become my home.



Tom's Map of The Known Portions of the Castle



Master of the Eight Seas?

One of the first things that weirded me out when I saw a map of this place was the huge sea that runs right down the middle of the New European continent. The **Inner Sea**, as it's called (in various languages by the nations along its borders), is about half again the size of Lake Superior in the United States. Since it's a salt-water body, it is technically a sea even though at its widest point it's not much more than three hundred miles across.

Now comes the next question, the one I had when I first saw the map: How the heck did a sea end up in the middle of what ought to be Flanders? Even assuming the Inner Sea was simply a flooded version of the Rhine Valley, it still didn't explain the fact that it's thousands of feet deep in some places.

So I went downstairs and asked Morrolan, my handy font of information. The answer I got (should I choose to believe it) was typically Falkensteinian.

As the legend goes, somewhere back in the mists of New European pre-history, a tall Faerie Lord, blazing with light, descended to the top of a high alpen peak, summoned tremendous power and smote the Earth asunder. A vast rift opened between the mountains and the Nord Sea, which rushed in to fill the gap. And so the Inner Sea was created.

A tall Faerie Lord? Aw, hell. I don't *wanna* believe it ...

There are times when this world makes me totally crazy. This is one of them.

Bayern



Castle Falkenstein is located in the mountains of a small Middle-New European country called **Bayern** (also known as Bavaria to us English speakers). At the time I arrived, it had been ruled for several years by an "evil" Regent overseeing the insane King Otto. My arrival was meant to change that by helping get King Ludwig on the throne to replace his younger brother. Since most of my adventures have happened here, it's worth some description.

I could just repeat the facts about the Kingdom of Bayern (in fact, later in this letter I will) as described in the *1851 Illustrated Atlas and Modern History of the World*, but right now, I want to give you a feel for the place I'm living in. If ever there was a "fairy tale" kingdom, this is it. The entire place is generally made up of rolling, grassy hills, covered with sleepy black and white cows and rustic farmhouses. Most of Bayern's towns are tiny gingerbread villages right out of a picture postcard, with whitewashed walls, wooden cross beams and window boxes spilling over with geraniums. There's always a village church with a kindly old pastor, and a friendly inn where you can get a good, hearty meal and an ornately decorated stein of the best beer in the world to wash it down with. The villagers are friendly and stalwart, with round red faces and cheerful dispositions; unless they think you're a vampire (or something worse, like an Anarchist), they'll welcome you into their homes, feed you and help you out when you're in trouble. And the village girls are wholesome, healthy and good-looking in a milkmaid kind of way.

Rural Bayern is also **Faerie** country; the "Kindly Ones" like the deep dark woods and the clean, well-kept farms of the local peasants. It's not uncommon to encounter a Brownie sweeping out your room in the inn, or catch a Goblin playing tricks on the family pet. Pixies dance in the fields during moonlit nights, and the *Weisse Damen* (a local nature Faerie) often come to the edge of the forest to tend to growing crops and straying children.

To the south, Bayern rises through foothills and valleys until it reaches the towering, snow-capped Southern Alps. Here, you can find the largest clans of **Dragons**, whose pterodactylic forms can sometimes be seen soaring on the thermals. **Trolls** and **Giants** also lurk in the high crags, coming out to attack lone travellers, or staking out the passes to extract tribute. (You knew troll bridges had to come from somewhere.) But the most well-known inhabitants of the Alps are the **Dwarfs**; with their huge cities dug deep into the sides of the mountains, and their underground factories belching steam into the sky on cold winter mornings.

The cities of Bayern are equally picturesque, especially the Capital, **Old München** (or Munich) with its tall, elaborate brick apartment buildings and bustling shops crowded along the narrow cobblestone streets. Museums, theaters and cafes provide entertainment, and great somber Universities and Libraries provide education and knowledge. The streets are thronged with a mix of horses, wagons, carriages, "automotives" (a kind of steam vehicle), and busy city folk going about their daily lives.

Bayern—a typical country in the very atypical world of *Castle Falkenstein*; part Faerie tale, part Victoriana, and completely, uniquely Steam Age.



Marianne. I did this just before we were about to ride out to tackle the Regent's guards. The sketch doesn't do her justice at all...

Marianne

Then there's my lovely Marianne (or the Countess Marianne Theresa Desirée, as she is seldom known). A French expatriate living in Bayern, Marianne was the next person I met when I awoke from Auberon's sleep spell. As cook, chambermaid and nurse for the garrison forces occupying Falkenstein, Marianne had been given the responsibility of keeping me out of trouble. Although I first dismissed her as a cute bit of chambermaid "fluff", I soon learned that first impressions can be dangerously wrong. You see, unknown to even Morrolan, Marianne was also hiding out from one of the Regent's pet Prussian "military advisors", who had made the near-fatal mistake of trying to ravish her against her will. I later learned that this "cute chambermaid fluff" was responsible for having shish-kebab'ed at least thirty men in duels all over New Europa.

Where do I begin to describe Marianne? First of all, she's gorgeous; I like to describe her as what you get when you give a fashion model the reflexes of a cat and the fighting instincts of a rabid badger. She also has a cute little French accent and a flirtatious command of English that's sometimes comical beyond belief.

Second, she's competent. Very, very competent. Early on, when her astounding beauty led to young swains bothering her at every step, Marianne realized that until she was able to take care of herself, she wasn't going to get a moment's peace. Trained by her father (a one-time fencing master), she soon became adept at riding, hunting, and dueling. Especially dueling: in practice bouts with her brothers, she could beat any two of them. The turning point in Marianne's life came at sixteen, when the son of a local Parisian noble tried to rape her at knife point and she disemboweled him for his pains. The noble had connections at Court: the Countess was branded a murderess and fled France for her life.

The next few years were spent traveling the Continent with a host of enemies on her trail; inevitably an admirer would take liberties and she'd slice him up into itsy-bitsy pieces, or her old enemy would send assassins out to kill her. Finally the Countessa had to accept that she had a skill and was uncommonly good at it. So she became an Adventuress: a one-woman bodyguard and troubleshooter for hire. Eventually, she gained enough money and such reputation that she decided to settle down in Old München and retire. That is, until an unfortunate incident with Baron von Riker, the Regent's right-hand man.

As chambermaid-in-hiding, Marianne was responsible for making sure I got fed, clothed (my own outfit was badly charred by Morrolan's Summonation Spell) and guided to wherever I had to go in the Castle. Later, when we embarked upon our adventures in New Europa, her sword skills and quick wits were instrumental in restoring the King to his throne and keeping us all alive.

While Marianne likes me (she's an outrageous flirt), so far we've been dancing around the idea of a long-term romance. We're obviously both interested, but we both also know that sooner or later I may have to return to my own reality. (Besides, with her romantic history, who can blame her for being gunshy?) So the dance goes on, and our fiery, on-again, off-again relationship never gets settled.

Damn. I *hate* that part.



Lady, Adventuress, Demimondaine

Marianne was the first **Adventuress** I'd ever met. Up to that time, I'd always assumed an Adventuress was a kind of femme fatale who used her wiles to control a horde of admiring wealthy gentlemen. But as Marianne has corrected me, that position is filled aptly in this world by a **Demimondaine** (who here seems to enjoy a status much closer to a grand courtesan or mistress than a lady of the evening). Adventuresses live by their swords and their wits, and beauty rarely plays into it. In fact, to judge from some of Marianne's fighting buddies, I'm pretty fortunate that she's as good looking as she is. Or at least that she doesn't have a lot more scars.

The Weaker Sex? Right. Sure.

Which brings up a few interesting things about the lot of the "weaker" sex in this Neo-Victorian world I live in. Although the majority of ladies I've met here have been content to be wives, mothers and aristocrats, there doesn't appear to be any serious limitations to a woman's ambitions in the world of *Falkenstein*. There are female Engineers (of all types), Scientists (Mad or just plain Irritable), and Anarchists. I have also met a few woman Journalists, Detectives and Gentlewoman Thieves. And although I haven't encountered any yet, I expect that a female Mastermind is going to show up in the news any day now. After all, as Catherine the Great proved (and Empress Eugenie of France is proving right now), wanting to rule the world is not just a dream for the boys. In most countries, women own property, can vote and take up almost any occupation they choose—women's emancipation long before we ever arrived at it back home. There's even access to birth control (so-called "French letters" and such).

Another Contradiction— & Why

This is one of those contradictory situations I keep running into here (along with the fact that historical and fictional personalities both exist side by side in the *Falkensteinian* world—more on this later). I expected in a "Victorian" universe that women would have the same generally lower status they did in our 1800's. But they don't. I tend to attribute this to two things: one, Faerie women often enjoy pursuing adventurous occupations; and two, the Magickal Arts seem to be stronger among females than in males. Condescending to either of these types of ladies could prove to be dangerous (if not fatal) at the very least.

Besides, can you imagine trying to boss Queen Victoria (or any of her strong-willed daughters) around?

Performers & Arbiters of Style

However, certain occupations seem to draw more women into them. The best Theatrical Performers all seem to be female; people like the Divine Sarah Bernhardt and Lola Montez have followings that span entire continents; they're the superstars of the day. Many a young girl dreams of becoming a great Opera Diva, dancer or concert performer, touring the Continent and Abroad, being showered with applause and adulation wherever she goes.

And lest we forget, the position of a Noble or Gentlewoman also carries a lot more clout than the male equivalent; these are the people who set the Style in Fashion, Art, Literature and Polite Society. And if that seems trivial to you, let me point out that about half the real business of New Europa seems to get conducted at Balls, Soirées, Salons and Dinner Parties. If you get cut from the social scene, you can *forget* making a living as a Diplomat, Rogue, Secret Agent or Thief. One scandal, a single word, and these Social Lionesses can end your rise to the top *fast*.

And Speaking of Scandals ...

Moving back for a moment to the topic of Demimondaines, I was sorta surprised to see how much clout these ladies have in New European society. The greatest of them are celebrities in their own right. Powerful men vie for their favors, the fashionable copy their more daring styles of dress and mannerisms, and the newspapers love to chronicle their adventures (some things never change; even in a place without supermarkets, we have supermarket tabloids). Even more "proper" ladies will occasionally find themselves in a grand lady's debt; with their access to powerful patrons and contacts to the shadier side of society, Demimondaines are in a position to make things happen.

So ...

... If you think New European women are all sitting around doing their embroidery and waiting for the Lord and Master of the House to return from the City, you'd better think again. Swords or Calculation Engines in hand, *these* women are right out there side by side with the menfolk.

For more on Falkenstein Characters, see pg. 145

Colonel Tarlenheim and I talking over a bottle of port. A tough old bird, he's saved my neck more than a couple of times!

The circular inset is a copy of the Bayernese Cavalry's symbol, embossed into the hilts of their sabers and also worn on their gunbelts.

Colonel Tarlenheim

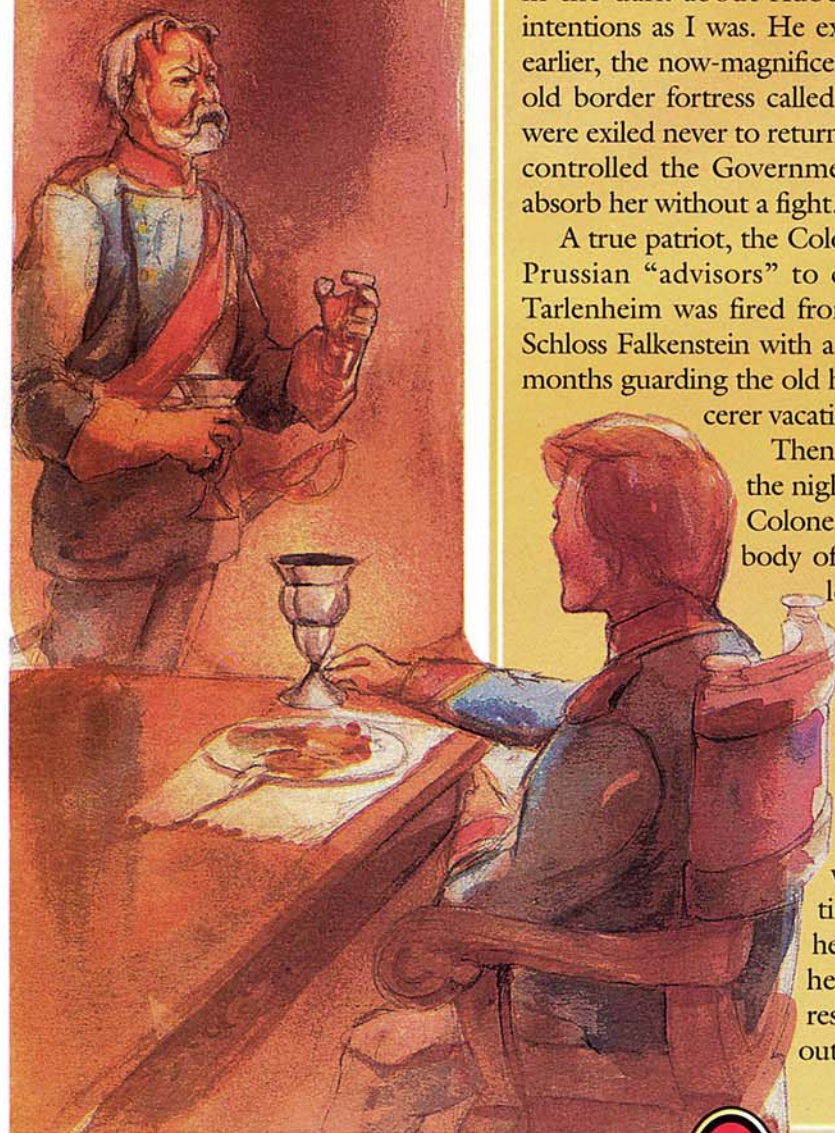
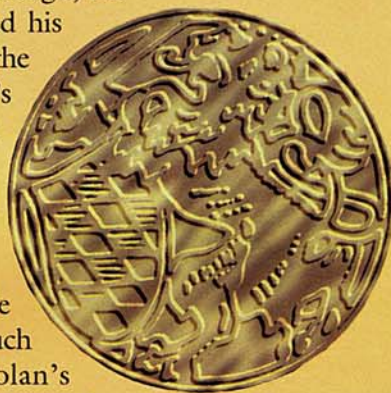
The Garrison Commander of *Castle Falkenstein*, I think the term "old war dog" was created for Colonel Rudolph von Tarlenheim (the next person I met here). A career military man from a long line of career officers (his great-grandfather fought the Duke of Marlborough, his father fought Napoleon and his son Fritz is an aide de camp to the ruler of the neighboring kingdom of Ruritania). He's served both as Commander in Chief of the Bayernese Guard and as the Head of His Majesty's Secret Service: rough, gruff, and a hell of a fighter; yet courtly to the ladies and kind to pets and small children.

When I was first transported to Castle Falkenstein, Colonel Tarlenheim was as much in the dark about Auberon and Morrolan's intentions as I was. He explained that only two days earlier, the now-magnificent Castle had been a pile of moldering stones, an old border fortress called *Alt Schloss Falkenstein*, where disgraced soldiers were exiled never to return. The Kingdom was in a dire state: An evil Regent controlled the Government and appeared ready to let Bayern's enemies absorb her without a fight.

A true patriot, the Colonel was the first to object to the Regent allowing Prussian "advisors" to cross the borders into Bayern. For his pains, Tarlenheim was fired from the Bayernese Secret Service and sent to Alt Schloss Falkenstein with a few dozen loyal troops, where he spent the long months guarding the old heap of stones and playing chess with a British sorcerer vacationing in the nearby village. Guess who?

Then Faerie Lord Auberon showed up in the middle of the night with a lot of din, interrupting Morrolan and the Colonel's quiet chess game and carrying the unconscious body of a cloaked man. The man turned out to be the long missing (at least to New Europa) Crown Prince Ludwig, who had vanished in a mysterious yachting accident several years before and was heir to the Throne. Without any further explanation, the Faerie Lord began to rebuild the Castle. Instantly. With Magick.

Save for the meddling of Lord Auberon and the sorcerer Morrolan, Colonel Tarlenheim would have probably spent the rest of his life rotting in the ruins of the old Castle. But with the help of the rest of us, (and a lot of swordplay and heroic action to boot) he eventually managed to restore his King to the Throne and toss the Regent out on his ear.



Soldier, Sailor, Tinkerer... Wizard?

Okay, so there I was, trapped in a world I had no business being in, with no return ticket. Since Morrolan regretfully refused to send me back until my True Purpose had manifested itself, I had to keep busy somehow. So what were my options?

Luckily for me, I soon found there's a lot of possibilities for an enterprising person in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*.

Take Up Arms ...

Colonel Tarlenheim is a soldier, a fine old profession that encompasses a lot of types. There are **Hussars**, cavalry officers with dash, daring and dazzling saber and horsemanship skills; **Artillerymen**, who man the huge cannons used for battlefield warfare (like the 275cm Verne Cannons that guard France); **Scouts**, **Guards** and even **Engineers** (a good billet to score if you're a Dwarf). If you're looking for a life of adventure, rough comradeship in the barracks, and a chance to raise hell when you're off duty, the serviceman's life could be lots of fun. Especially if you like getting decked out in a cool uniform (see pg. 119 for more on military style).

... Run Away and Join The Navy

Not all military men are groundpounders; the Empires of this world have extensive **Navies** as well. If you ever had the urge to stride the quarterdeck of a huge vane-sailer and feel her surge through the waves as her great fan-masts drive her ahead of the storm, the navies of France and Austria would be the place to make your fortune in. If you're a bit more technologically minded, the great steam ironclads of Britain and Prussia are always looking for smart engineers and gunners.

As for Bayern, if you're looking for the open seas in this nearly landlocked country, you're out of luck. But there's always the brand new **Aeronavy**, with its gigantic aerocruisers, a purely Falkensteinian hybrid of Zeppelin and battleship, propelled by the arcane energies of a Sorcerous Engine (more on *those* later).

And if you don't take orders well, there's always the career of an Adventurer or a Soldier of Fortune, selling your warrior skills and finding action wherever it lies.

Or Try Something More Civilized?

But there's more to making a living in New Europa than swinging a sword. I've met **Diplomats**, for example, who steer the course of great events and

engage in delicate diplomacies that determine the fates of Nations. If you like intrigue, glamorous parties and hardball negotiation, you could easily find a place in an Imperial Diplomatic Corps.

Or if you like hands-on intrigue more than you do attending Court balls, try your luck at being a **Secret Agent**. That's more or less what I've become: a sort of roving troubleshooter for the Kingdom of Bayern, working under the Colonel, and specializing in cases that involve high (for 1870) technology or the depredations of the Unseelie. There are lots of groups that use Secret Agents, and not all of them are governments.

Or Creative?

If making things work is your forte, you might consider the career of a **Steam Engineer**, building the huge motors and running the hardware that powers this great Age of Steam. If you don't want to get your hands greasy working on a ship's engine or the motors of a gigantic Prussian Landfortress, there's always the up and coming new profession of **Calculation Engineer**, using advanced mechanical Babbage engines to create *Artificial Intellects* or the Sorcerous Engine-generated visions of *Virtual Realism*.

People take up all kinds of positions here. Charles Dickens and Mark Twain both started out as **Journalists**, and they've confessed to me that with *Automatic Recorders* and *Telegraphic Signal Recorders* (pg.52), the possibilities for a young reporter starting out are better than ever. "Hell, I'd get myself hooked up with one of those consarned inventor fellas and make myself his personal agent," Twain's mused thoughtfully on occasion. But personally, I'd rather *be* an **Inventor** than write about one.

Inventing isn't a bad option if you're good with your hands and have a great idea; the Steam Age is also an Age of Invention and everybody's coming up with new things to improve Mankind's Lot. Or perhaps being a **Scientist** (Mad or not), delving into places Where Man Was Not Meant To Go. Or sample the ultimate in creativity: a **Wizard** of the Arcane Arts, defending your Order against rival sorcerous groups as you promote the true way of Power.

Soldier, Sailor, Tinkerer, Tailor, Wizard, Writer, Anarchist, Thief. I haven't even touched on half of the occupations one can get involved in. Too bad I've only got *one* life to live.

For more on Falkenstein Characters, see pg. 145

Rhyme Enginemaster. A little watercolor sketch that really captures his grumpy nature, I think. You know how some people are just bad tempered on the outside? As this sketch shows, Rhyme is bad-tempered to the bone!

Rhyme: Dwarf Mad Scientist

Yes, "Virginia," I really *do* know a Mad Scientist. What's worse is, he's a Dwarf. A real Dwarf, and one of the other important inhabitants of *Castle Falkenstein*.

Rhyme Enginemaster is the local handyman around the Castle: He fixes the pipes, tinkers with the roof, and makes sure the entire structure doesn't fall off into the chasm below the mountaintop. Why a magickal castle needs a handyman is something I've never been able to figure out, but when I arrived, Rhyme was already on the job, mostly complaining about how Auberon's magickal renovation job had probably screwed up the sewer system of the original *Alt Falkenstein* (it hadn't).

But that's only Rhyme's regular occupation. His true avocation is Science—Big Science with a Capital "S"; Science that really does use big lightning-throwing Jacob's ladders, huge revolving gears, gigantic knife switches, steam pumps and all the other trappings of bad Frankenstein movies. While he hasn't tried to create a monster yet, Rhyme's inventive handiwork can be found all over Castle Falkenstein, from the clever turbine system that turns the roasting spit in the kitchen, to the complex mirror system that pipes daylight into the windowless second floor Library. Although he's a tiny bit unusual in that he's a Dwarf obsessed with Invention, Rhyme is actually pretty typical of a New European native. Science is everywhere here, that same kind of weird-tech kit bashing that creates ironclad giant robots, clockwork computers, steam powered helicopters and submarines run by Electricity, the Third Force of the Universe. A Dwarfish Edison isn't going to stand out all that much in that kind of environment.

Rhyme's workshop covers one entire level of the basement of Castle Falkenstein, a retreat full of obscure parts, bubbling retorts, grinding gears and sparking electrical circuitry. Visiting there, you really wonder why he hasn't blown the whole place off the mountaintop yet. But King Ludwig seems to enjoy Rhyme's tinkering and gives him free reign to modify the running parts of the Castle as much as the irritable Dwarf sees fit. After all, who else but Rhyme could have made the King the mechanical swan-boat that he tools around Lake Falkensee in?

Short (four foot ten), grumpy and bristle-bearded, Rhyme clumps around the Castle in his heavy work boots, alternately fixing things or redesigning them in a feverish fit of creative madness. The only time he's remotely pleasant is when he's drinking beer or tearing something apart with a wrench. Rhyme also has no sense of personal property; everything exists to be either fixed, improved or made into parts. When I arrived here, he promptly "appropriated" my wristwatch and tried to rebuild it. Other things he "borrowed" from me have had even more dire results (as I'll explain in due time).

I have to say I'm not looking forward to Rhyme's next invention. After all, we still haven't repaired the hole in the roof from the last time.

About Dwarfs

Rhyme was the first Dwarf I met, but he wasn't the last. At last count, I think I have about two dozen Dwarfish friends now, scattered from Eire to Russia. All of them seem to share the same basic characteristics: grumpy, emotional, fond of gadgets and all exclusively male (I'll get back to that in a minute). First, I need to clear up a few misconceptions you probably have about Dwarfs in general.

Where They Live

Dwarfs are among the most numerous of the Faerie races of New Europa. Although they are technically Greater Faerie they are of such importance to New Europa that they are normally treated as a separate group altogether. Unlike other Faerie, Dwarfs can't use magick, shapeshift, fly, or cast Glamours. This may be due to their closer ties to the material world; in any case, their "grounded" nature makes them immune to the effects of Cold Iron (which is an advantage when working with humans and the machines Dwarfs are so fond of), fire, and magick.

True Dwarfs live only in continental New Europa: in the mountainsides and hill country of the Germanic states, the northern wilds of Scandanavia, or the upper alpen regions of Italia. They *do* like to live underground and most of the mountains and caves throughout New Europa are riddled with their tunnels and workshops.

What They Really Do

But Dwarfs aren't miners. They leave the mucking round in the mud to Kobolds and other types of Seelie. Dwarfs are craftsmen. They make things: really wonderful, complex and impossible things. Clockwork wings. Magical Engines. Incredible alloys and machines. Immensely strong, fond of beer, and compulsive tinkerers, Dwarfs have made themselves a niche in human society as consummate engineers, artificers, craftsmen and businessmen. You're more likely to see a Dwarf wearing an engineer's coverall and muttering darkly that "these engines just can't take it anymore ..." than wearing plate armor and swearing an oath "on his grandfather's beard."

Also contrary to expectations, not all Dwarfs are really short. (Okay, I've never met one taller than five-five but I've also never met one shorter than four feet). Dwarfs all have the same build, though: heavy-set, with massive shoulders and huge hands; all of them are nearly as wide as they are tall. Most are

bearded, but some like to sport enormous goatees or waxed handlebar mustaches, an affectation picked up from working with humans for so long. The only well known Dwarf peculiarity I've ever heard about (besides the love of beer) is their feet; they are inordinately embarrassed by their appendages (which resemble those of ducks or chickens) and take great pains to cover them with natty shoes or huge workboots. So don't ever tease a Dwarf about his feet; it may be the last thing you do!

What They Look Like

Contrary to J.R.R. Tolkien (and most fantasy novelists), Dwarfs don't dress like a bunch of Hollywood viking extras. I've never met a Dwarf who carried a rune-covered war axe, and I don't think I ever will. No Dwarf in New Europa that I've ever met wore furs, chainmail or horned helmets. Most seem to be inordinately fond of three-piece suits with pocket-watches, or engineer's coveralls stuffed with pockets and wrenches. Dwarfs are also enamored of tall opera hats, something I'd blame on their lack of height, except that they don't think of themselves as short to begin with. As for war axes and hammers, if there's a hammer on a Dwarf's person, it's used to flatten nails. The engineering-minded ones are fond of beating things up with the largest wrench they can lay hand to, but most use pistols and sabers like everyone else.

And Lastly, Dwarfen Females

This finally brings me (in a roundabout way) to the subject of Dwarfen females. Remember a raging controversy in fantasy lit as to whether female dwarfs had beards? The answer—*what* female dwarfs? When a Dwarf falls in love, he marries a willing female from one of the other Faerie races, like a Naiad, White Lady or Russalkie. The offspring always take after their parents: all the males turn out short and heavy-set like their Dwarfish fathers, while all the females turn out like their willowy Faerie mothers. Dad raises the boys under the mountains in his Dwarfhold, the slender, beautiful females go off to live with their mothers; and everybody gets together throughout the year in big family gatherings that drive distracted human male observers to wonder, "What on earth could *she* (a beautiful Naiad or Selkie) see in him (a short, bristly-bearded Dwarf engineer)?" It figures.

☞ For more on Dwarfs, see pg. 172 ☜

King Ludwig. A sketch of him at a concert. Okay, maybe he's a bit stuffy and a little too "heroic" sometimes. But he's still a great King and (at least in this world), a skillful leader too.

Mad King

I also work for a Mad King. Of course, so does everyone I know. King Ludwig the Second is the King of Bayern, the last in a long line of kings from the illustrious Wittlesbachs of Southern Germany. He's got relatives all over New Europa: the Wittlesbachs are famed for producing beautiful Princesses and handsome Princes who have married into all the best Royal Houses. As my sketch shows, Ludwig has all of these qualities. He's good looking, clever and very charming in a slightly formal, "Student Prince" kind of way. He's also the most important person in Castle Falkenstein: the Boss.

But King Ludwig is also the main reason I'm here in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*. It seems that several years before I got grabbed, the then Crown Prince was on a trip to the Grecian isles, where he planned to study the ancient ruins (Ludwig is a big architecture fan, as you might have noticed). A storm suddenly came up out of nowhere, and by the time the search parties reached the scene, his yacht the *Swan Prince* was a shattered wreck.

The body was never found.

It had always been rumored that there was foul play afoot in the accident; evil sorcerers from the Order of the Golden Dawn were implicated, as were Secret Agents of the Prussian Throne. Several Bayernese Secret Service investigations were launched to find the culprits, but to no avail. Finally the entire nation sadly submitted to the inevitable and when old King Max died, settled for his mad son Otto under the Regency of the Chancellor, the shifty Count Hohenloe.

Then Auberon showed up from nowhere with the unconscious body of Crown Prince Ludwig. According to Morrolan, the Faerie King claimed that Ludwig's yacht had been sunk by members of the evil Unseelie Court (the rival group of Faerie who hate all mortals) and that it had taken Auberon several years to locate where the kidnapped Prince was being held and to release him.

But Morrolan and I don't exactly buy the Faerie King's glib explanations. For one thing, King Ludwig should be about twenty; the guy we know looks about thirty. Auberon explains this away by saying the King aged prematurely while trapped in the Faerie Realms. But that doesn't explain other tiny slips, facts Ludwig should know but doesn't, references to things like telephones (there are none here), or to his castles like Neuschwanstein and Linderhof that haven't yet been constructed. Once, he even mentioned an opera by Richard Wagner which hasn't even been *written* in this reality.

So Morrolan and I have a theory of our own. Auberon couldn't find the real king, so for some reason of his own, substituted a look-alike Ludwig from another universe in a bizarre version of interdimensional *Prisoner of Zenda*. Then they Spellnapped me to be their secret weapon.

With the help of Colonel Tarlenheim, Marianne, myself and the Falkenstein Guard, we did manage to fight our way into Old München, oust the Regent and put the King on his Throne (more on this later). But sometimes we both privately wonder: Did we crown the right king? Why was it so important that we crown him?

And what was Auberon's *real* plan?



Ludwig The Second

King Ludwig the Second: the last of a long line of Bayernese rulers going back to the Holy Roman Empire. Famous for building beautiful castles, sponsoring the composer Richard Wagner, and for being utterly, totally bonkers.

Here's an example. Back home, in 1866, young King Ludwig II, having been on the throne for a scant two years, was faced with the first big crisis of his career: whether to back Bismarck's plan to attack Austria or stand against the Iron Chancellor. Young Ludwig's solution was to duck the bullet; he let his cabinet decide (fight Bismarck) and spent the war hiding out, shooting off fireworks and threatening to abdicate. Hardly proper behavior for the ruler of the second largest Germanic state. His subsequent career didn't improve from this inauspicious beginning.

But in New Europa ...

The Ludwig I know isn't that guy. There's an air about him that speaks of a lot more experience, more steadiness. He dismisses my questions about his historical past with a characteristic, "Ach. That was another life, Master Olam. I have lived it, and I am better now." His manner is quiet, controlled, even steely, as if he's keeping something reined in all the time. If he is indeed (as Morrolan suspects) an alternate Ludwig brought from another time and reality by the High Lord of Faerie, it could be that he's gone through all this before and is making darned sure he doesn't mess up again. And so far, he's faced down our enemies without a flinch and done us all proud.

Crazy? Try Eccentric, Maybe.

Is Ludwig crazy like he was in our history? I don't really know. Certainly the guy I work for isn't crazy; eccentric may be as far as he gets. In some ways, he reminds me of Elvis Presley: a penchant for junk food and rich desserts, night owl habits (Ludwig often goes riding for miles late at night, accompanied only by a handful of the Guard), and generous to a fault (he once gave a lowly shepherd an expensive pocketwatch just because the boy didn't know what time it was,

much like the King of Memphis used to give away Caddillacs). But in unguarded moments, both Ludwig and Auberon have said things that have led me to think the King may have been a lot loonier during some point in his past; this all ties again into Morrolan's pet theories. Maybe Auberon fixed him and made him uncrazy again. Who can tell?

Otto and Others

Ludwig's brother Otto is *definitely* crazy (he barks like a dog and runs around naked). His grandfather seems sane enough, but has a dotty

thing for an exotic dancer named Lola Montez. So maybe it runs in the family line, the so-called "Curse of the Wittlesbachs." I'm not sure; there are plenty of hardheaded, boringly sane family members as well, like his Uncle Max. To best understand the King, you might take a look at his nearest cousin, Empress Elizabeth of Austria (affectionately known as "Cousin Sisi"). In Elizabeth are all the classic Ludwigian traits: a hatred of enclosing rules and regulations, a love of the outdoors, a dislike of Court and Cabinet, and a passion for privacy. Elizabeth exercises her Wittlesbach streak by gallivanting wildly all over New Europa on strange adventures: She's tied herself to the mast of her yacht during a storm, gone on expeditions to India, and studied

eastern mysticism—strange behavior indeed for an Empress, but not all that unusual in this extended family of dreamer-philosopher kings. It's not surprising that "Sisi", of all the people Ludwig knows, understands him best. It's also somewhat ominous that on their first meeting, she said, "You've *changed* ... somehow ... Perhaps you have grown."

I *still* wonder about that.

Ludwig remains a recluse, with a passion for architecture on the Winchester Mystery House scale, and a tendency to to be a night owl. So far, at least, the weird obsessions and bizzare habits of the *historical* Ludwig haven't emerged yet. And in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, he's become a fine King indeed.



Who is This Man & Why Do His Neighbors Hate Him?

Otto von Bismarck. Mastermind of the Prussian Invasion? Brilliant strategist and political tactician? The Metternich of the Age? Or just the Evil Overlord of the new Germanic Industrial State?

Let's clear one thing up from the start: Otto von Bismarck *isn't* evil. Ruthless, treacherous and very, very dangerous, yes. But *not* evil. I've met Evil, in the person of the Unseelie Adversary. Otto is just a guy with a Big Plan to unify all Central Europa, and who doesn't plan to let *anything* get in his way.

Young Bismarck

Bismarck started out as a mere mid-ranked Prussian noble (they call them *Junkers* of all things!). As a member of the ruling class of a warlike society, he learned at an early age that might makes right and more might makes you even righter. It's an outlook he's cultivated ever since.

Bored by the idea of a military officer's strict life, young Bismarck studied political administration instead; he spent most of the time drunk or in duels (very appropriate for a Prussian collegiate) earning him the nickname of *der tolle* (wild) *Bismarck*. Yet he passed his exams easily and was soon moving up the diplomatic ladder until he again grew bored and decided to return to the family estates, where he languished for a few years.

Bismarck didn't really start to shine until he got involved in Prussian politics. With his arrogant, forceful manner and bearlike physique, he easily ran right over most of his political opponents. Those he couldn't cow, he dueled. Although he fell out of favor during the revolutions of 1848, he soon regained power and became the main force behind the Prussian throne; it was while trying to convince his sovereign to accept the crown of Emperor that Otto first got the idea of Empire by conquest.

The Unseelie Step in

By 1860, now-Chancellor Bismarck was well on his way to running the entire Prussian Government. As some have said: "In Berlin, the King reigns, but Bismarck rules." It was then that the Lord of the

Unseelie took a notice of this rising young star and began to secretly give him aid in the form of spies, technological information, and a lot of sorcerous help. Unseelie agents took up positions throughout the Government, encouraging the Chancellor's policies wherever useful, and eliminating opposition in very unpleasant (and often fatal) ways. With the Dark Court and the Iron Chancellor working as a team, the

Prussian army expanded to phenomenal size, the new *Landwehr Fortresses* began to roll off the assembly plants in Dusseldorf, and the entire nation was poised to leap into action at a moment's notice.

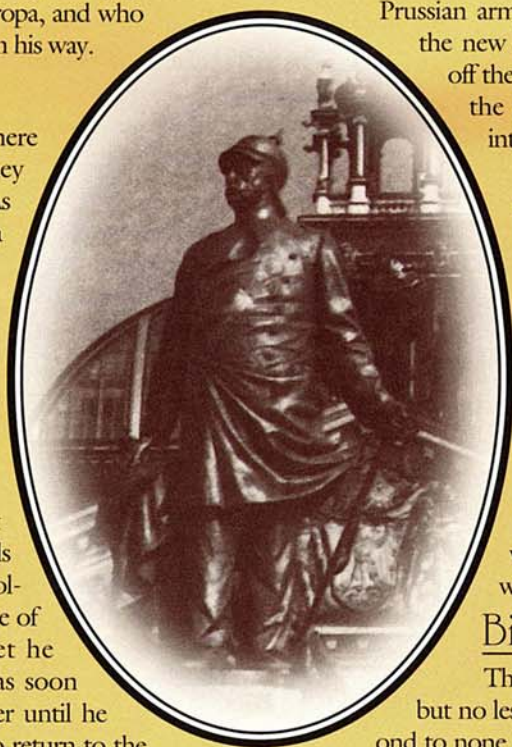
That moment came in 1863, when the Prussians (backed by Austrian troops) rolled their primitive Fortresses over the Danish border and conquered the tiny provinces of Sleswig and Holstein. A Continent-wide war was only narrowly averted by deft British diplomacy, but the results were that Prussia kept the two provinces anyway. And the rest of New Europa began to nervously fortify its borders against the well-armed and pugnacious upstarts.

Bismarck Now

The Bismarck of today is older, wiser, but no less ruthless. With a spy network second to none in the world, a technological advance

ten years ahead of Britain and almost twenty years ahead of everyone else, and the Unseelie Host to call upon to do his supernatural dirty work, the Iron Chancellor is feared with good reason by his immediate neighbors (who expect a panzer corps to show up on their borders at any moment), and is warily respected by larger and more distant Empires of the Continent. The wily Bismarck is willing to dabble in treachery, assassination, blackmail: whatever it takes to get the job done.

Limited by his country's resources, the Bismarck of *my* world was interested only in unifying the German states. But the Bismarck of New Europa has a lot more to work with and a lot more ambition. In his mind, if a unified Germany is good, then a unified New Europa (under Prussian rule) can only be better. And this, of course, feeds right into the Unseelie Lord's plan to subjugate all Humanity by turning it against itself.



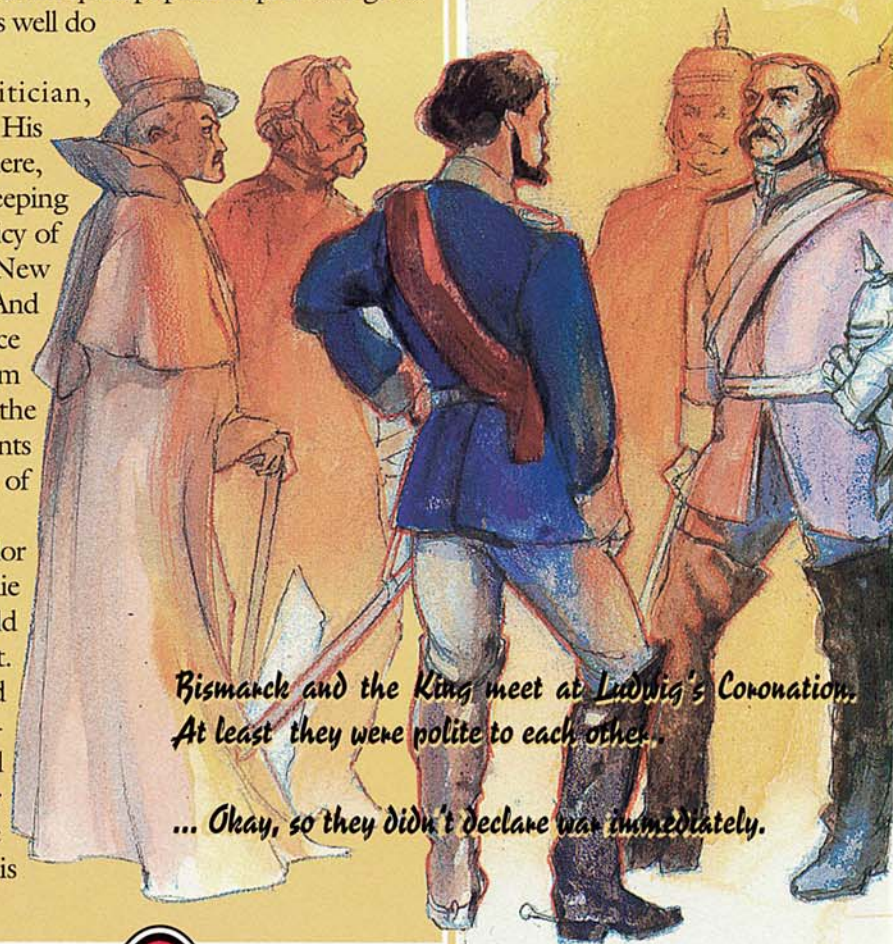
The Iron Chancellor

If, as I've noticed in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, almost everybody seems to have a Nemesis, then King Ludwig's is **Otto von Bismarck**, Chancellor of Prussia (Bayern's aggressive northern neighbor) and the architect of his nation's vaunting imperial ambitions. Since Bismarck's goal is to absorb all of his immediate neighbors (and then the rest of the Continent) into a Greater German Empire, it's obvious that sooner or later the Prussians are going to have to take over Bayern. Everyone in New Europa suspects that Bismarck was the mastermind behind the Regent, and Colonel Tarlenheim believes he may have also had a hand in Crown Prince Ludwig's disappearance in that mysterious "yachting accident" several years ago. So, as you can guess, there's little love lost between the self-proclaimed "Iron Chancellor" and the King of the Wittlesbachs.

Most *sensible* people are afraid of Bismarck, and not just because of his political agenda. He's even a bit scary in person. It doesn't hurt that the Iron Chancellor is over six feet tall, built like a bear, and has a quiet, ominous voice and a fierce bristling walrus moustache to match. Or that, thanks to a hunting injury sustained in his wild youth, his left arm has been replaced with a menacing iron and clockwork contraption with a bone-crushing handshake and a bunch of built-in gadgets that would make James Bond envious (a small Derringer is only one of its surprises). Yet, for all of this, Bismarck can also be quite charming. He's well-educated, extremely astute, and has a gift for flattering the ladies that makes him quite popular at parties. I guess if you're going to be the bad guy, you might as well do it with style.

But Bismarck is also a ruthless politician, Machiavellian schemer and deadly opponent. His hand-picked Secret Service agents are everywhere, secretly advancing his nefarious plans and keeping tabs on his opposition. As Chancellor, his policy of "Blood and Iron" aggression terrifies all New Europa with the specter of its first world war. And in Prussia, the Hollernzollern King's presence hasn't stopped the wily Iron Chancellor from abolishing freedom of the press, rendering the Parliament impotent, putting secret police agents on every street corner, and promoting a series of wars that threaten to involve all New Europa.

But the most dangerous aspect of Chancellor Bismarck is his close alliance with the Unseelie Court, a group of renegade Faerie who would like nothing better than to wipe Humanity out. For although the Unseelie have helped Bismarck in the past with advanced technology, Faerie spies and lots of advice, their real intent is to use the indomitable Chancellor and his unstoppable armies to conquer the world, then enslave all Mankind through his puppet Empire of Blood and Iron.



*Bismarck and the King meet at Ludwig's Coronation.
At least they were polite to each other.*

... Okay, so they didn't declare war immediately.

The Unseelie Court & The Adversary

If Bismarck sounds bad, what's backing him up is even uglier. Literally.

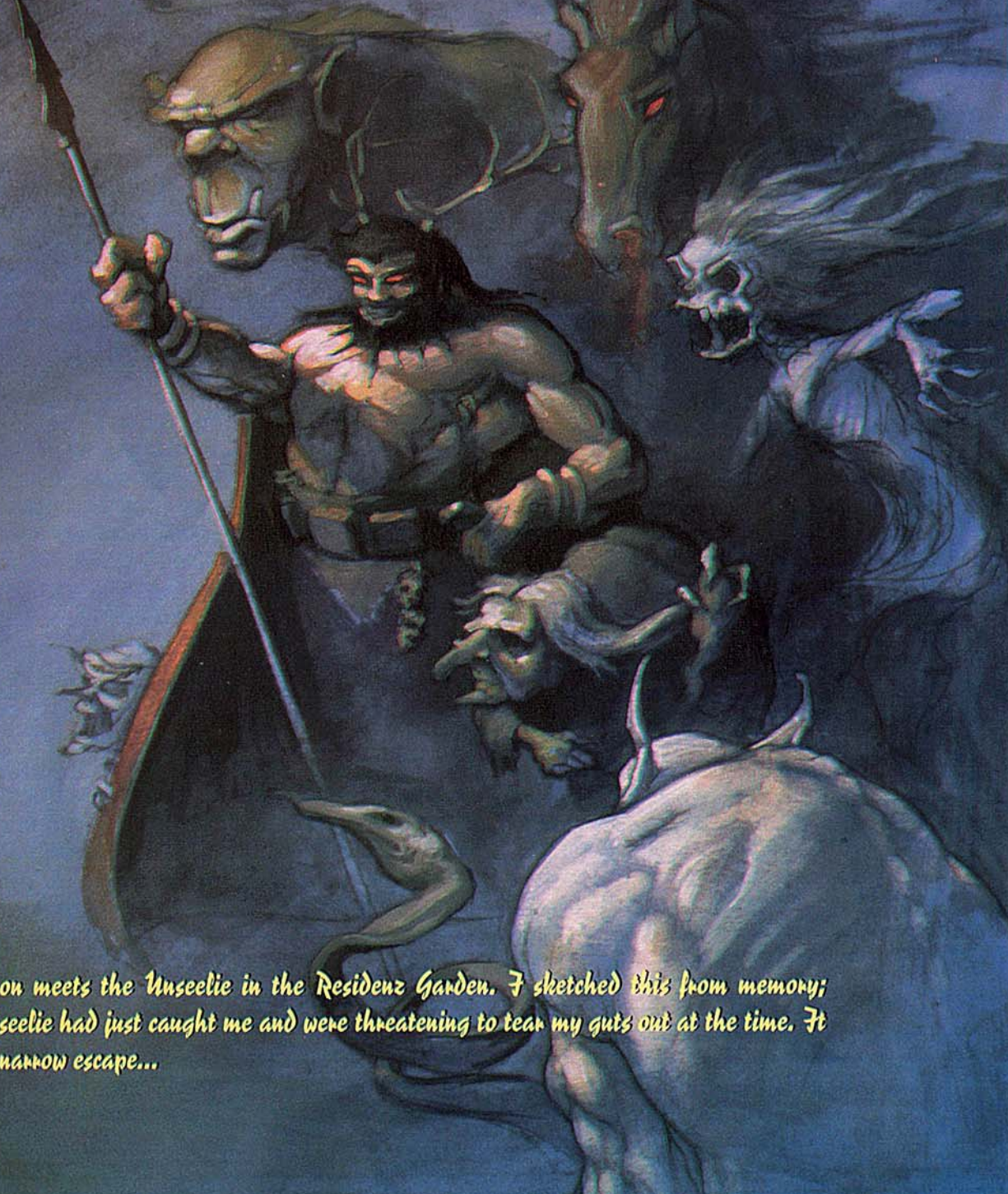
When the Faerie Host first entered the world of *Castle Falkenstein* thousands of years ago, they had already visited many worlds in which there were mortals. And in each of these worlds, the leaders of the Host fought among themselves to decide just what to do with the "natives" they found living there. Over the millenia, a policy split rose between two camps of the Faerie: one which favored living in a dangerously playful co-existence with Humanity, and the other which favored killing or enslaving the entire race of Man. Lord Auberon's Seelie Court made up the former group. The Unseelie Court were the other.

The Unseelie Court is made up of the stuff of nightmares; they're where most of the legends of monsters, vampires and ghouls arose in human mythology. Horrific in aspect and twisted of shape (Morrolan's fancy words), these unspeakably evil Faerie literally exist to terrorize and torture humans wherever they find them. On the other hand, the Seelie Court (and Auberon in particular) are sentimentally fond of humans and often do everything in their power to stop their malefic relatives. In fact, Auberon has told me of entire bloody wars that have been fought to determine which side would control a particular world coveted by the Faerie.



But in this world, Lord Auberon used a clever bit of trickery and managed to deceive the Lord of the Unseelie (also known as the Adversary) into signing a peace treaty. Called the Compact, it forbids open warfare between Human, Seelie and Unseelie. Since the Faerie can never break a promise without forfeiting their lives, the Adversary and his foul crew have been restrained from getting on their flying demon stallions and wiping us all out. So far.

But all Auberon's plotting can't stop the Unseelie from tricking humans into destroying themselves; or from breaking the Compact on their own. So the Adversary works behind the scenes, offering sorcerous help, advanced technology stolen from other dimensions, and coaching to whatever madman or tyrant he thinks can be twisted to serve the Unseelie's ends. And right now, his chief and unwitting understudy is Otto von Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor.



Auberon meets the Unseelie in the Residenz Garden. I sketched this from memory; the Unseelie had just caught me and were threatening to tear my guts out at the time. It was a narrow escape...

A World View

Just a fast overview of all the nations of the *Castle Falkenstein* world:

- **America:** Broken into three nations: the United States, The Twenty Nations Confederation, and the Bear Flag Empire.
- **Austria-Hungary:** The Old Habsburg Empire, mainly a diplomatic power.
- **Bayern (Germany):** Peaceable trading and diplomatic nation.
- **Britain:** Maritime Empire, most powerful nation around. Colonies in India, China, Canada.
- **China:** Ruled by the First Dragon Emperors (who really *are* Dragons) and holding off Imperial New Europa.
- **France:** The Second Empire, a huge military and social power with colonies in Indochine and Africka.
- **Ireland:** Oppressed British state currently in rebellion.
- **Italy:** North controlled by Austria, the South feuding Papal states.
- **Japan:** Isolated, ruled by Dragon Emperors and Samurai descendents.
- **Netherlands:** Powerful trading state, but threatened by Prussia.
- **Poland:** Part absorbed by Russia, part by Prussia.
- **Prussia (Germany):** Powerful military and industrial nation bent on conquest.
- **Rhineland (Germany):** Scattered petty kingdoms and principalities.
- **Russia:** Feudalistic Empire with slight veneer of sophistication. A real secret police state.
- **Scotland:** British state, but with industrial clout.
- **Spain:** A decadent has-been, fighting to see who rules the remains.
- **Switzerland:** Neutral mountain state and economic capital.
- **Turkey:** The "sick man of New Europa." An aged power, ripe for conquest by the other Empires.

To Rule The World!

Bismarck wants to rule the world. So do the Unseelie, through Bismarck. But they're not alone. A lot of people want to rule the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, so many that this time has been dubbed the **Imperial Age** by some local historians. In this world, politics are dominated by six mighty Empires and a host of smaller contenders hoping to get the upper hand. Everyone else is a colony, a protectorate or just too small to count.

The **British Empire** is the largest of all in physical scope, sprawling from the British Isles all the way to India and Hong Kong. Theirs is a mercantile Empire of shopkeepers and traders, but it hasn't stopped them from forming the most powerful navy on Earth and conquering wherever they go. They are the current top dog in the race for World Empire.

The next biggest contender is the **Second Empire** of France, heirs to the Napoleonic legend, with colonies in Algiers, Egypt, and the Southeast Dragon Empires. Clever Napoleon the Third wants to live up to his name, and his grandiose adventuring causes no end of trouble for the other Empires. But, with the best army on the Continent, he can usually get away with it.

The **Russian Empire** sprawls all over Central Asia and extends into New Europa as well. Most of this Empire is made up of oppressed peasants, tyrannical nobles, and a Tsar with more Secret Police than a dog has fleas. The Tsar trusts no one and hates everyone, so he rarely meddles in Continental politics. Russia is the sleeping bear no one wants to wake up.

The **Austrian Empire** inherited most of Europe from the Holy Roman Emperors and has lost bits and pieces of it ever since. They rule Northern Italy, Hungary and festering parts of the decaying Ottoman Empire, like Serbia and the Balkans. The Austrians like to meddle in the affairs of other Empires (badly) and dream of a return to power.

The **Ottoman Empire** has been dubbed "the sick man of New Europa," and lives up to its reputation. Ruled by a crafty but insane Sultan and his sorcerously powerful Viziers, it teeters on the edge of revolution from within and invasion from without. Too weak to expand, it just rots.

America in the *Falkensteinian* world is really three nations: the **United States of America**, which covers all the states east of the Mississippi and parts of New Mexico and Texas; the **Bear Flag Empire**, created when California, Nevada, Washington and Oregon split off and created their own nation under the rulership of the benevolent and probably loony Emperor Norton the First; and the **Twenty Nations Confederation**, formed when Indian tribes of the Northeast, Midwest, and Great Plains united in a shamanistic alliance in 1830 and drove the white man eastward. After a disastrous but short Civil War, the United States is currently too weak to do anything but muscle around on Central and South America.

So stands the Imperial Age. With all this international brinkmanship and Empire building going on, I don't think *anyone's* really surprised that Otto von Bismarck wants to take a shot at the title.

Nations of New Europa

THE KINGDOM OF BAYERN (BAVARIA)



Population: About 4.5 million • **Government:** Hereditary Monarchy with Parliament, Chancellery • **Alliances:** France, Austria, Bear Flag Empire (America) • **Enemies:** Prussia • **Position:** A small nation with the most advanced combination of technology and magic in the world.

The largest of the states of the South German Confederation formed at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The government is a hereditary monarchy ruled by the ancient Wittelsbach line (which has branches all over New Europa), with a national assembly that handles constitutional matters.

Bayern (known to English speakers as Bavaria), is mostly made up of rolling, hilly grasslands, with towering mountains to the southeast. Much of the countryside is heavily forested, and dotted with lakes and rivers throughout.

There are roughly about four and a half million people in Bayern; most are of German descent, Roman Catholic and well-educated (there are several fine universities and schools in almost every village): They tend to be cheerful, sentimental and hardworking. Most of the population is rural; Bayernese villages invariably look like something out of a postcard, with lots of white-plastered, woodbeamed cottages cluttered with window-boxes of geraniums, small rustic churches, and ornately carved beer gardens and inns surrounding a central market square.

München (also known as Munich) is the capitol and seat of the government. During the reign of King Ludwig's grandfather, Ludwig I (who in this cosmology actually ran off with Lola Montez), the capitol was almost entirely rebuilt in the sweeping Neo-Grecian styles of the early 1800's, and is world famous for its fine architecture. There are several fine palaces, including *Nymphenberg*, *Schloss Berg* and *Schloss Herrensee*. Theatres and restaurants abound, and a relatively modern railway station has recently been constructed. The Capitol is also home to a world renowned University and the Alte Pinothek, a huge art gallery sponsored by King Ludwig I with one of the largest rare art collections on the Continent. The Kings of Bayern have traditionally lived in the *Residenz*, a large, georgian-style palace in the center of Munich, adjacent to the *Englischer Garten*, a gigantic park designed in the style of the Victorian gardens of Britain.

München is considered to be one of the finest cities in all New Europa; a place of culture, refinement and learning perhaps second only to Paris and London. And it's a great tourist town too.

If Germany has to get united someday, I'd rather put my money on a lot of cheerful cosmopolitans than an army of jack-booted conquerors. But maybe that's why I like living here.

THE AUSTRIAN-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE



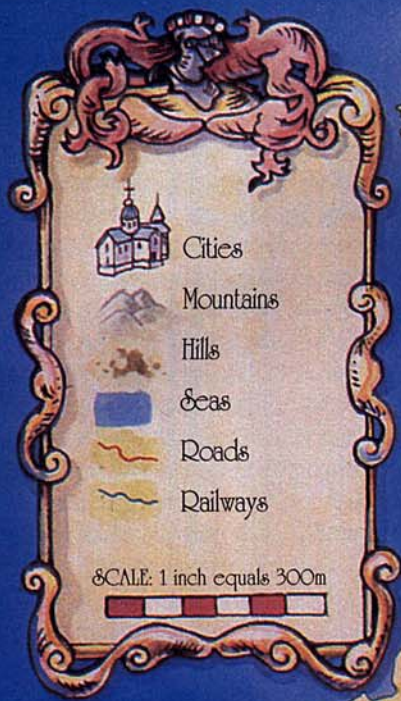
Population: About 48 million • **Government:** Imperial Monarchy & extensive civil service • **Alliances:** Bayern, France • **Enemies:** Russia, Prussia (recently) • **Position:** Aging, out of touch, but still a vital international center.

The oldest and most diverse of the Empires, Austria is a strange mix of opposites: baroque and modern, progressive and stagnant. The government is an absolute monarchy, ruled by grandfatherly Emperor Franz Joseph, a stodgy, pleasant ruler who reminds you of an absent-minded uncle who's just wandered in from the rain. Yet underlying his sprawling Empire is a vast web of spies, secret police and one of the best diplomatic corps in New Europa when it comes to subtle, nuanced intrigue.

New Europeans always assumed that the Austrians would stomp the Prussians in a war; instead, the battle of *Königsberg* revealed the Austrian army to be hopelessly antiquated. Their Hungarian subjects didn't improve matters by trying to revolt last year, and the Empire also has had to deal with the Serbs, Croats and Turks under their influence. Since the Austrians couldn't match the Prussians in industrial capability or sheer military power, they pulled back from any claims on their old German possessions and concentrated on their other interests to the east. Personally, I think their meddling in the affairs of the Balkans is going to buy them a world of hurt someday.

The Hungarian part of the Empire is rolling, central grassland, with the huge sweep of the Alps rising to the southwest and spectacular mountains, rivers and high alpen lakes eastward. The people are a polyglot: Turks, Germans, Jews, Magyars, Slavs, Armenians; you name it. Everyone seems to get along pretty well; the Empire is a model of cosmopolitan culture, with an easygoing, very accepting style.

The major cities are Prague (with a famous University), Cracow, Budapest and Vienna (also called Wein) on the banks of the Danube. Vienna is one of the nicest capitols in New Europa; much of it has recently been rebuilt with fine new civic monuments like the *Ringstrasse* that circles the city. The coffee-houses and restaurants are comfortable, gay and filled with travellers, writers, musicians and students; the entire city has that sense of coziness the locals call *gemütlichkeit*. If you don't mind the undercurrent of intrigue, secret agency, and diplomatic disaster that permeates the air, Vienna is a wonderful place for rich desserts, masked balls, strolls under the lights of the grand Prater amusement park, and long walks in the legendary Vienna Woods (with or without waltz accompaniment). I just hope the Empire doesn't stumble into another Prussian war, because from what I see, they're going to lose.



ATLANTIC OCEAN

MEDITERRANEAN SEA





The Land of New Europa

SWEDEN

STOCKHOLM

BALTIC SEA

MOSKOV

RUSSIA

PRUSSIA

Drague

Nuremberg

Buda Pest

VIENNA

AUSTRIA

Bratislava

Zagreb

Belgrade

Bucharest

Varna

BLACK SEA

Sofia

Sofia

CONSTANTINOPLE

TURKEY

Istanbul

ATHENS

Naples

Palermo



Nations of New Europa II

THE SECOND EMPIRE (FRANCE)



Population: About 45 million • **Government:** Imperial Monarchy with Directors & Ministers • **Alliances:** Bayern, Italy • **Enemies:** Britain, Russia, Prussia (recently) • **Position:** Glittering social center of New Europa, with serious military clout.

I love France. Not just because it produced Marianne. It's also a great place to visit, and I've done so a lot in the past few years. Right now, the French are the big wheels on the Continent: They've got a great army, great cities, and the greatest art, music, cooking and fashion in New Europa. More than anything else, they have style (they call this *élan*, which even sounds stylish). France is mostly rolling hills, valleys, pastureland and small, dense forests, rising to the Alps and Pyrennees to the south and the Cevennes and Vosges ranges to the northwest and east. The major cities are Paris (of course), Marseille (a big harbor town), Lyon, Nice (on the Riviera) and Bordeaux (the heart of the wine country). The Second Empire also has foreign colonies, in Algiers, Martinique, St. Pierre and large parts of the Pacific islands; all exotic places that make great vacation spots.

The French are witty, argumentative and very, very clever. While they don't have anywhere near the industrial capacity of Prussia or England, they do know how to live; the cafes, theaters, shops and museums are always bustling with crowds. Right now, things are particularly gay: The self-styled Emperor Napoleon III (nephew of old Bonaparte), has remodeled Paris into an architectural masterpiece. He also throws lavish Expositions and parties, and has done a lot to make France the place to see and be seen in. If Bayern is full of stately palaces and picturesque Alpine villages, France is full of fancy apartments, wide boulevards, rambling stone estates and glittering clubs. The food is incomparable, and the fashionable set always entertaining. Beautiful damosels stroll the boulevard in the latest Worth gowns, handsome gentlemen exchange bon mots and duel in the shadow of the Louvre, lovers stroll the moonlit Seine. Too bad the Eiffel Tower won't be built for another eighteen years.

Napoleon III's biggest accomplishment, however, isn't his social graces; he has also had the foresight to appoint an obscure French writer named **Jules Verne** as his Minister of Science. If French technology borders on the fantastical, it also packs a lot of clout—for every Landfortress Bismarck has, the French have their giant Verne Cannon, aimed by Babbage Calculation Engines (yes, Napoleon also financed the renegade computer theorist), ready to hurl 275cm explosive shells on Berlin. Prussia may have the armor, but La Belle France has her finger on the intercontinental ballistic trigger, which makes her a formidable ally not to be discounted.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE (BRITAIN)



Population: About 30 million • **Government:** Imperial Monarchy with Parliament • **Alliances:** Prussia • **Enemies:** Russia, Bayern (recently), Austria •

Position: The most powerful economic power on earth, with a vast Empire that reaches 'round the world.

There will always be an England—at least until the French figure out a way to build a bridge over the Channel. England is a rolling countryside of green hills, marshy swamps and steep highlands; I remember reading in the *1851 Illustrated Atlas & Modern History of the World* that "England has the finest climate in the world." This sort of sums up the British Empire for me: They like it the way it is and are sure you will too. I enjoy the British, but I'm driven crazy by the fact that they're immensely stubborn and are positive that Industrial Progress is the only way to go.

Britain has no industrial equal in the *Falkenstein* world save Prussia (which packs more into less space) and possibly America (another story). Her ships ply the seven seas, carrying goods to and from her far flung colonies, while her warships (unarguably the best in the world with their ironclad deckings and modern rifled cannon), keep her envious neighbors at bay. Education is universal, all adult males have the vote, and prosperity is evident in the bustling shops and wealthy suburbs. Handsome cabs clatter through the foggy cobbled streets, Gilbert and Sullivan are starting to play the West End, and the whole English world looks like a production of *My Fair Lady* come to life.

But there's a darker side. Britain is probably the closest thing to real "steampunk" I've encountered yet. Her industrial mill towns are squalid sewers packed with the desperately poor, criminal riff-raff, and random violence. The Steam Age came too soon for the British, permanently warping them from an agricultural society to a dangerously out of control technological one. And since her Consort Prince Albert died, the Queen has been leaving policy to a succession of her Ministers, most of whom are committed to Progress at any cost. Technology is increasingly used to control the masses (Britain was first to use Babbage Engines to track its citizens, especially in rebellious Ireland), and many new inventions are getting tested on the backs of helpless factory workers. It wasn't that long ago that the Duke of Wellington put down the Luddites. I'd hate to imagine what would have happened if he'd had steam-powered tanks.

This isn't to say I don't like England. I love the open fields and great estates, garden parties and Ascot race invitations from my Peerage friends (knowing the Crown Prince doesn't hurt). But in England's techno-obsession I see the Modern Age suicidally hurtling at us.

Nations of New Europa III



PRUSSIA

Population: 18 million • **Government:** Militaristic Empire with parliament •

Alliances: England • **Enemies:** Bayern,

Austria (recently) • **Position:** Military and industrial powerhouse, with an itch to conquer its neighbors.

Prussia is the largest Germanic state. Most of the country is wide open plain, with mountain ranges to the southwest. Canals and rivers link its heavily industrialized cities and harbors on both the Inner Sea and the Baltic. The country is heavily populated (more than England); the people are well-educated (six universities), tidy, extremely organized, but a bit on the headstrong side. Principal cities are Berlin (located on the happy-sounding river Spree), Danzick (a big commercial center), Dusseldorf (iron production center), Cologne and Konigsberg.

Until recently, the Prussians were famed for producing General Blücher, who, with the Duke of Wellington, beat Napoleon at Waterloo. They've expanded their success, building up their military until it is as large as any in New Europa. This, combined with advancements in arms technology like the *Landwehr* fortresses, heavy industrialization (the Prussian industrial machine makes the factories of England look tame by comparison), and Minister Bismarck's aggressive foreign policy of *Blood and Iron*, has made Prussia the bogeyman of New Europa. Most New Europeans look at Prussia the way they're going to look at Germany in 1914 and at Hitler's Reich (if history runs the same course). So far, however, Bismarck has only managed to forcibly annex two itty-bitty neighboring provinces (Sleswig and Holstein). I really hate to tell my New European friends they'll be facing this all again in another forty years or so.

Berlin, with a population of around 400,000, is the exact polar opposite of Old München. While the Bayemese capital is light, airy and distinctly Greco-Roman in style, Berlin is constructed in what I call the early Brutalist style. Most government buildings are squat, huge and magnificently ugly, with a lot of stone and statues. Most of the populace lives in ranks of squarish apartment blocks. The royal palace itself is ornately furnished inside but presents a harsh, fortresslike look to the outside: not surprising for a city surrounded by a wall and fifteen gates.

Perpetual warfare has left its mark on the Prussians, and it shows in the heavy militaristic outlook (you're nothing in this country if you don't have a rank) and the emphasis on strutting bravado. The beer halls and Universities are filled with dueling student clubs sporting facial scars, flashy uniforms and arrogant airs. A *Star Trek* Klingon would feel right at home.

Me, I like the Prussians, as long as they don't gang up into armies. And in principle, I agree with Bismarck: Germany needs to be united under one government. I just think it shouldn't be his.



THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

Population: 62 million • **Government:** Imperial Monarchy; extensive secret police.

Occasional ministers, serving at the Tsar's whim. • **Alliances:** None. Russia trusts no one. • **Enemies:** Almost everyone at one time or another. • **Position:** Spooky, superstitious, ruled by autocrats and powerful nature spirits.

The Russian Empire spans from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean, although what is known as *Russia in New Europa* only reaches east to the Ourralian Mountains. Most of Russia is wild, dark forests and barren steppes swept by frozen winds; a strange place, where serfs huddle in their rude huts gnawing turnips and Cossacks burn villages. Over this vast sweep of primitive feudalism stands the absolute power of the Tsar: master of his Empire, backed by ruthless, all-pervasive Secret Police and the largest (a million conscripts) army in New Europa.

The deep, dark forests of Russia are rarely penetrated by Man, and it is here that the various Faerie nature spirits are at their strongest. The Leshye (a kind of forest Faerie king) rule thousands of miles of open territory with an imperial disregard for the Tsar's laws. On the steppes, the wolves howl and the ghosts wail, making travel at night almost impossible. And what few train lines exist are constantly being torn up by enraged Leshye who resent human intrusions on "their" kingdoms. Here, superstition and religion go hand in hand; if the Holy Cross won't keep the creatures of the night away, maybe a few charms and a wreath of garlic will. It's no accident that the Russians have the highest population of vampires on the continent.

Major cities of Russia are Moscov (the former capital), Petersburg (the current capital after the tyrant Peter the Great dragged a few million serfs and nobles out onto some frigid islands on the Neva River to found his own city), Kiev and the port cities of Sevastapol and Odessa. The Russian people are a fusion of Slavs, Scands, Turks and what not, comprising over a hundred nations and forty languages. Their cities reflect this with exotic Middle-Eastern towers and minarets, onion domes, and monolithic buildings with carved bas reliefs. But these are not cities to stroll in; even the glittering, beautiful capital has a dark, chilly and uncomfortable aura.

The Russia of 1870 is strangely similar to the Russia of the 1980's: secret police, despots and a huge army with dreams of territorial conquest. Since repelling Napoleon's fatal invasion in 1812, the Empire has been content to engage in small wars such as its push into the Crimean in 1854. Even these have been thwarted by the rest of New Europa in actions such as the foolish *Charge of the Light Brigade*. But it's anyone's guess where the Russian Empire will end up next, or even if the Tsars will come to the bloody end they did in our world.

History With A Falkensteinian

Twist

When you mix High Fantasy with Low Reality, you're bound to get a headache.

So many times I've relied on my rather sketchy background in history (*after all, I am a college gradoo-ate*) to get myself out of a scrape, only to find I wasn't right after all. Sometimes it's my poor memory. But more often as not, it's the fact that the world of New Europa *isn't* historical Victorian Earth; it just *resembles* it in a lot of ways. I put this down to the subtle (and not so subtle) effects of having magick and non-humans around. Not to mention characters we would think of as fictional!

For example: What's the effect of having flying horsemen going to do to the Charge of the Light Brigade? (Actually, very little; the 7th Irish Lancers were on a patrol to the west at the time.) Or Dwarfs who can create metals and inventions literally decades ahead of their time? When the Emperors of Asia really are Dragons, how do you deal with the Boxer Rebellion?

In short, here's a word of caution to the historically minded. Think of this place as being something like home, but with some wild variations. You won't find true historical synchronicity in the *Falkenstein* world. But you will find disturbing parallels and strange tangents that combine the known and the unknown.

The Falkenstein World is a Weird Place...

It's weird because it's a perfect fusion of the Victorian Age I know and a magickal reality. The contradictions inherent in mixing the two really floored me the first few months I was here. Only here could Magick become part of tactical warfare. Only here could Dragons run businesses and Dwarfs become engineering consultants. Only in this universe could Queen Victoria actually use necromancers to communicate with the spirit of her long dead (and much beloved) Consort, Prince Albert. Contradictions between history and the fantastic are what I face every day in the Falkensteinian world; you never know when magickal weirdness and real history will meet, shake hands, and come out buddies.

All throughout Falkensteinian history, there are these strange little twists that make you realize this isn't just an alternate version of the Victorian Age. Imagine a half-Faerie, half-French admiral who covered Napoleon's retreat over the Inner Sea after the disastrous Battle of the Nations at Leipzig. Or a Chinese Dragon Emperor who taught Marco Polo about celestial mechanics. Or even Babylonian Dwarfs who raised the ziggurats of King Gilgamesh and helped him fight the demons of Ur. These are just a few examples of how the existence of other humanoid races have influenced the outcomes of great events.

But you don't even need Dwarfs and Dragons to warp reality. Only a few years ago, a travelling Brother of the Order of St. Boniface used sorcery to save the life of Abraham Lincoln. Healed, the Great Emancipator went on to oversee the Civil War Reconstruction period and heal the wounds of a divided nation. And who knows what the machinations of the Illuminati and other similar secret societies have done to the course of history in this world?

I guess what I'm trying to say is that if you think of the world of Falkenstein as a re-enactment of our own history, you're going to be in for some rude (and possibly fatal) surprises.

One of the best ways to get a feeling for the way history and fantasy mix in this world is to hit the streets on a summer's afternoon. A few minutes of strolling will lead you to encounter all kinds of things familiar and not. Once you've seen Dwarf mechanics working on the Prince of Wales' steam car in the middle of the street, while Mark Twain, a humanoid Dragon, two Pixies and a Goblin look on and offer advice, you'll know this isn't like anything you've read about in the history books.

Along that line, most of my pages and pages of notes are an attempt to describe the world of the Steam Age to you from my own perspective [I inserted the notes in where they seemed most appropriate—Mike]. I'm gonna ramble a bit, but bear with me. I think you're going to really enjoy this trip into this weird (and unexpected) world of anachronisms.

History of An Alternate World

You really can't understand the *Falkenstein* world until you know something about history here. Most New European history is remarkably similar to our own. But imagine if magick had been real, Faeries had run amok harassing peasants, Dragons had demanded tribute from the Chinese, and Dwarfs had established trade with the Sumerians.

This timeline covers the unusual instead of the mundane facts (which you can look up in any good history book). But if you want different, just take a look at the highlights of the last 200,000 years in New Europa!

76 Million BC—The Age of Dinosaurs. Gigantic asteroid strikes Earth, killing off Dinosaurs. *Pterodactylus Archaica*, with an ability to use magick, escapes extinction, evolving into *Pterodraconis Sapiens* (Dragons).

15,000BC—The Ice Age. Primitive Cro-Magnons enter New Europa, displace Neanderthals. Cro-Magnon becomes a tasty change of pace from mastadon for *Pterodraconis* dragons.

12,000BC—The Faerie Arrival. The Faerie enter the world of Castle Falkenstein from a rift under the Castle. Dwarfs renounce their Faerie abilities in exchange for the ability to create. Non-humans spread over New Europa.

11,000BC—The Nightfall War. The godlike Faerie Tuatha De Danu and the evil Formorian giants wage a pyrrhic war in ancient Eire. The Tuatha win, but both sides are forced to take human mates to rebuild their civilizations.

10,000BC—The First Compact. Auberon of the Seelie tricks the Lord of the Unseelie into signing a peace treaty between Faerie and Mankind.

4000BC—Dawn of Civilization. Sumerians and Hittites erect the first cities in Mesopotamia. To them, the Faerie are demons to be avoided. Dwarfs strike deal with King Gilgamesh: Dwarfish craftsmanship for barley-mash beer, the beginning of a long history of human-Dwarfish cooperation.

3000BC—Rise of the Egyptians. The Unseelie appear as animal-headed gods to gain control of Nile civilization. Concepts of Egyptian magick established. Dwarfs teach Egyptians pyramid building and are immortalized as Bes, a half-Dwarfish lion god.

2000BC—Fall of Babylon. The Unseelie back the warlike Assyrians; the Seelie teach the Babylonians writing, laws, and astrology. Unnoticed, the Israelites arrive with the Ark of the Covenant and establish a new civilization.

800BC—Golden Age of Greece. Disguised as gods, both Seelie and Unseelie mate with many mortals, strengthening human Magickal talents. A minor skirmish between the Courts is recorded by Homer as the War of the Gods. Aristotle's *Treatise on Paranormal Cosmology* leads to discovery of modern Magick.

220BC—Rise of the Dragon Empires. Seven great clan-lords of *Pterodraconis Sapiens* travel east. Empires in China, Nihon, Koreyo and southern Asia are established.

31 BC—Imperial Rome. The Romans realize the Faerie are not gods and use sorcery and Cold Iron against them. The

Seelie push the barbarians to attack Rome while the Unseelie promote blood sports and orgies. The result is the fall of the Empire.

400AD—The Dark Ages. Faerie renegades given free reign to molest Mankind. Babies stolen, crops ruined, villages tormented. But the Faerie have not reckoned on the Medieval Church, which teaches Aristotle to its clerics and drives the Faerie back to the woods.

800—Rise of Islam. The Islamic Empire masters the arts of sorcery, mathematics, astronomy, and calligraphy. Translated into Arabic, Aristotle and Ptolemy are highly influential. Soon Islam has developed its own magicks, giving rise to tales of djinni, wizards, mystical carpets and magick lamps.

1090—The Crusades. As Crusaders battle Islam, information about Arab sorcery fuels new interest in the Art. Pope Innocencia rules magick as a gift given from God, as long as those with the Gift use it within the auspices of the Church.

1450—The Renaissance. Inspired by Aristotle's *Treatise*, Leonardo daVinci writes his *Notebook On Constructa Automata* describing Sorcerous Engines. The Church orders all copies destroyed. Marco Polo journeys East and is held by the Dragon Emperors for 25 years before being released.

1490—Age of Discovery. Columbus discovers the Americas. Spanish conquistadores wipe out the native Mayan, Aztec and Incan civilizations. Aztec blood sorcery is used to curse Spanish, leading to the Inquisition.

1588—Age of Exploration. English "seadogs", led by Sir Walter Raleigh and Irish-Selkie admiral Liam O'Connagh, defeat the Spanish Armada in a desperate sea battle. England's victory leads to an explosion of New World colonization.

1600—The Enlightenment. A great wave of scientific and philosophic knowledge sweeps the world. The Empires of New Europa begin to take their current forms. The High Faerie leave the deep woods and begin to mix openly with humans.

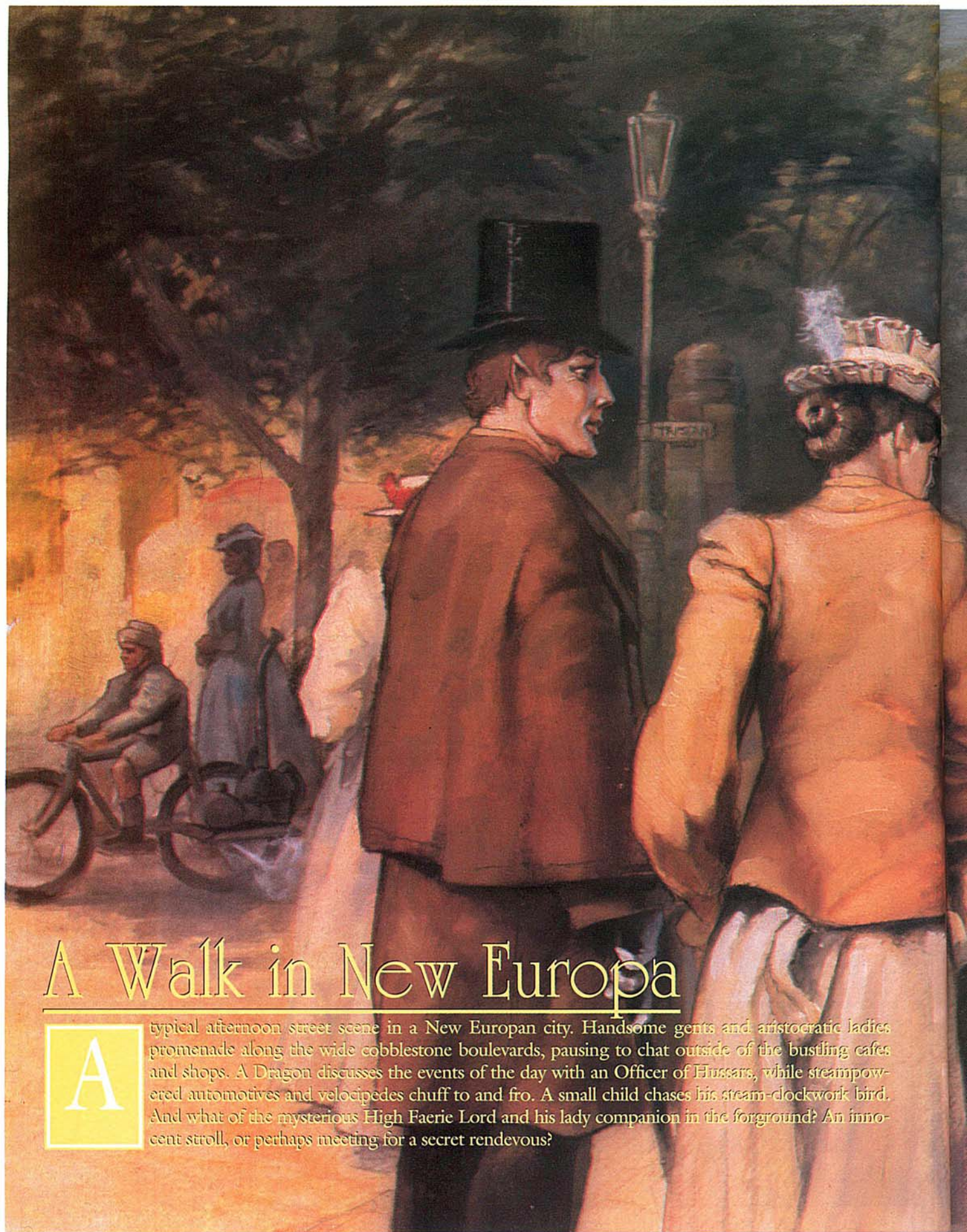
1776—War of American Independence. American colonists rebel against British taxation and manage to overthrow British. American Indians gather together the start of the Iroquois Shamanistic Confederation.

1790—The Age of Napoleon. The Corsican conquers New Europa with his new tactics of warfare, aided in his quest by Templar magick and Dwarfish artillery. Only a horrendously bitter winter conjured by Russia's Leshye stop his advance.

1814—The Indian Alliance. Using their shamanistic powers, the Indians halt white expansion over the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. With most Talented sorcerers wiped out by Cotton Mather's witch hunters in the 1600's, the Colonials are helpless.

1815—The Battle of Waterloo. With Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, a great age of Imperial expansion begins. The Congress of Vienna establishes the current Continental system of alliances and national boundaries.

1866—The Battle of Königseig. Bayernese forces face off against the armies of the ambitious Prussian Chancellor von Bismarck and his Unseelie allies.



A Walk in New Europa

A typical afternoon street scene in a New European city. Handsome gents and aristocratic ladies promenade along the wide cobblestone boulevards, pausing to chat outside of the bustling cafes and shops. A Dragon discusses the events of the day with an Officer of Hussars, while steam-powered automotives and velocipedes chuff to and fro. A small child chases his steam-clockwork bird. And what of the mysterious High Faerie Lord and his lady companion in the foreground? An innocent stroll, or perhaps meeting for a secret rendezvous?



A View From the Steam Age

For most people, daily life in the Steam Age, while not extravagant, is far better than it was only a century ago. Food is plentiful, plagues few, and manufactured goods far cheaper than those produced by handcraft. Theaters, museums, lectures, exhibitions, family picnics in public parks (like Vienna's *Prater* or München's *Englischer Garten*) and entertainment halls provide lots of entertainment, while the new universities and schools have created a literacy boom unknown before in human history.

Even the poor are no longer serfs tied to the land, and have the option of travelling to the cities to seek their fortunes. Life isn't easy, but it is improving in all but the most technologically obsessed nations, with their new slums and crowded industrial milltowns.

An Age of Steam

It is an Age of Invention, of Creativity and Industry, of Empires and Expansion. But most of all, it is an Age of Steam. Steam powers ships, factories, automotives, even giant automatons. Steam is the atomic power of the 1800's with electricity taking the place of fusion power (theoretical, hard to use, maybe not feasible in the long run) in most places. Clockworks are still common for small applications, but only when you can't get a boiler and a stack to fit!

Medicine

Medically, things are just out of the Dark Ages. Carbolic sprayers are currently used to create antiseptic environments, but doctors still wear their street clothes into surgery. Anaesthetics like morphine and opium exist, but antibiotics are unknown. Galvanic and magnetic therapy machines, cure-all potions and other quack creations are still everywhere, making medicine a chancy business best avoided whenever possible.

Weapons & Warfare

Weapons have advanced to the breech-loading rifle and revolver stages, although these weapons are so unreliable that the sword is still an important

means of defense. Rifled cannon and repeating Gatling-style machineguns are by far the most common battlefield weapons.

While simple submarines prowl the shallows and advanced turbine-powered dreadnoughts rule the high seas, the most sophisticated battle vehicles are the strange LandFortress "megatanks" of the Prussian army. These invincible armored fortresses have made the aggressive northerners feared throughout New Europa.

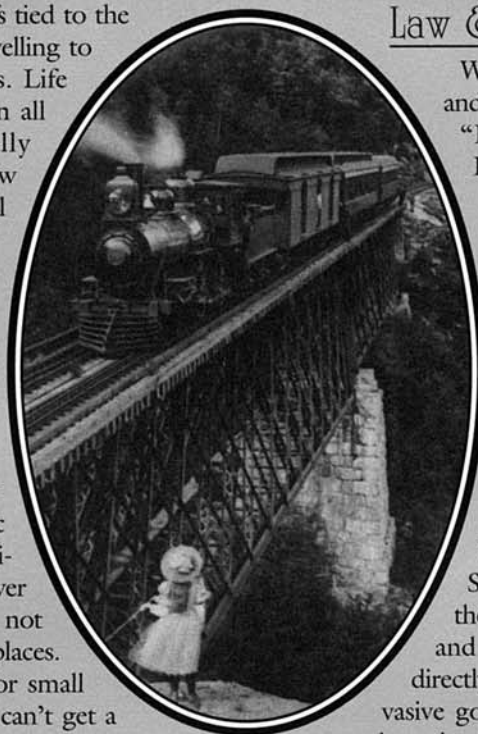
Law & Order

While London has Scotland Yard and its Metropolitan Police (known as "Peelers" after their founder, Sir Robert Peel), most municipalities depend on locally hired constables or militia to keep the peace. Law enforcement is similar to the City Guard of medieval times: a bunch of guys with guns or clubs who drag you off to jail when they catch you doing something wrong. In France, Napoleon III has established the *Sûreté* to oversee important crimes, particularly those concerning international plots; the United States has its own Secret Service for the same problems. In Russia, Austria and Prussia, the local gendarmes are directly overseen by powerful and all pervasive government Secret Police. Like the modern day FBI, these groups are more concerned with ferreting out treason and plots against the entire nation rather than stopping mere thieves.

There isn't much in the way of real criminology in 1870; people like Holmes are just starting to apply deductive reasoning to crime, and things like fingerprint labs and forensics are still a ways off. The constable on the beat relies on his instincts, exhaustive footwork and a web of informers and spies scattered throughout his local area for his results. They aren't too picky about how they get their information either; a bribe or a boot to the ribs are equally acceptable.

Crime and Punishment

Justice is equally swift and brutal: Juries are primarily an English invention; in France, a Tribunal of



A View From the Steam Age

judges decides your fate; in most other nations, the judge hears your case (or maybe allows a lawyer to plead for you), and decides guilt, innocence and sentence. Assault against anyone but a noble is still considered a minor crime in most nations (except Bayern); crimes of property like theft are treated most harshly. Hanging, the guillotine, exile, transportation (to Australia or Devil's Island) or lengthy imprisonment in horrible prisons are common sentences, meted out with no real rhyme or reason other than the opinion of the judges. Rule of thumb: Don't commit crimes. If you must, don't get caught. If you're caught, make sure it's for beating up a commoner, not for stealing his property.

Communications

Before the late 1830's, the fastest way to get information from place to place was the horse-powered postal services. Letters were picked up once a day in rural areas, and up to ten times a day in major cities, carried to a central office, and shipped via fast carriage or postal rider to distant locations. The other alternative was to locate a Practicing Sorcerer and hire him to cast a *Divination* spell to send your message or a *Dimensional Movement* spell to physically send your letter to its destination.

Non-magically, the most reliable method of rapid communication is the telegraph (the telephone has not yet been invented, although I hear Bell is working on it right now). Telegraph lines connect the Empires by land; submarine cables span the Channel, and, recently, the Atlantean (not Atlantic) Ocean. The invention of the Telegraphic Signal Recorder (pg. 52) allows for rapid transmission of pictures, and the Telegraphic Calculation Transmitter (an 1870's version of the modem recently invented by Lord Byron's daughter, Lady Ada Lovelace) has made "data" transmission a possibility as well.

Information & Media

With cheap printing and explosive literacy, newspapers are extremely common in New Europa. There are over 400 newspapers in London alone, and almost as many in Vienna, München and Paris. The most important ones are the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Times* (London), *Le Moniteur* and *Le Figaro* (Paris), *Süddeutsche Presse* (Bayern), and the *Wiener Tagblatt* and *Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna). All except the *Times* and the *Süddeutsche Presse* have some kind of govern-

ment censorship applied to them from time to time; most (except the *Times*) are liberal, radical and heavily influenced by the leading intellectual elite.

There are also hundreds of regular magazines catering to hundreds of topics: *Vanity Fair* (the *People* of its day), *Popular Invention* and *The Strand Mystery Magazine* are just a few examples. Books are also relatively cheap and public libraries are available (for a small fee) in every major city. Most modern nations have Universities in the capital cities and schools in all but the smallest towns (literacy is at an all time high). Lectures and seminars are popular, as are museums, exhibitions and improvement courses.

Travel

Once again, steam rules the 1800's. Between cities, steam trains run at speeds of up to 75 mph, but are less useful for distances closer to home. Steamships and small steam launches ply rivers and seas, while steam liners (like the *Great Eastern*) and fast sailing vane-clippers cross the widest oceans. Air travel is virtually unknown; there are a few free balloons, but nothing more. Count Zeppelin is working on his first airships, and the airplane and glider are decades away. For the most part, travel in the world of *Castle Falkenstein* is by horse, either horseback or in a carriage. It's slow, but it sure beats walking.

Magick

While it exists, Magick (or the *Art* as it's called here) is not all that common, at least not enough to create a large impact on society. Mages are much like high level scientists: You hear about them, but you don't often meet one. While there are some magical Artefacts about, these are also rare indeed, as are practicing mages who can be hired for a fee. Most wizards are part of an Order or Lodge, which means that their actual activities are secretive and hidden from the view of others. After all, most people back home don't know anything about the Masons either, and they aren't even real wizards! (At least where I come from!)

The Steam Age in Summary

Life in the Steam Age. It's a weird fusion of primitive technology and social sophistication; a Golden Age when duels are fought by gaslight and nations conquered by the power of Electricity. It's a grand and glorious time indeed, a time of possibilities and new challenges.

Real & Unreal?

If you can find it in Victorian literature (or even literature set in the Victorian time period), chances are you'll encounter it on the streets of New Europa one afternoon. Really.

Morrolan attributes this to his pet *Theory of Magical Resonance*, which states that there are only a limited number of possibilities in universes of a similar kind, and that depending on the laws of Magic and Physics, everything manifests itself as either fact or fiction.

For example, you couldn't have people mentally projecting themselves to "Barsoom" in a non-magical reality, because that violates the laws of physics. But if you had magic, it would allow for such things. Likewise, thanks to a few reality tweaks in the *Falkenstein* universe and the aid of Dwarfish engineering, you can actually build some of Jules Verne's more outlandish devices like the *Nautilus* or the *Colombiad Cannon*. Are there subtle changes in the laws of physics here that I just haven't noticed? I'd expect so, if only to allow magical creatures like Dragons to run loose.

So far, I haven't encountered a situation where a real person in my old reality doesn't exist here. But I would expect that certain physical events might change history accordingly. We'll see.

Meanwhile, thanks to Magical Resonance (or whatever), the universe over here still continues to function, more or less integrating real and unreal in even-handed doses.

... A World Where Fact & Fiction Meet ...



You never know *who* you're going to run into on a New European street corner. My first shock came shortly after I arrived, when I walked into the drawing room of Castle Falkenstein and met Mad King Ludwig face to face. But he was only the first of many, many strange and impossible meetings.

You see, in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, the line between fact and fiction has become unaccountably blurred; characters who once were safely tucked away in the pages of Victorian (and not so Victorian) literature often drop by the house for a visit. For example, I have at one time or another in the last few years met most of the heroes and villains of Jules Verne's science fiction novels. Here, they are actual living, breathing people, and Verne is just an opportunistic science writer who serialized their adventures. (I recall Phileas Fogg, at a dinner party, commenting that, yes, the Frenchman had scandalously overdramatized Fogg's round-the-world trip, but then, that was the sort of thing you'd expect from a *French* journalist.) Verne's fiction is not the only example; I have personally met Rudolph Rassendyll from *The Prisoner of Zenda* (I helped him break out of a jail in Moscow), Alice from *Wonderland* (with Lewis Carroll) and fought Count Dracula in the Carpathians. And of course, there's always Holmes (whom I've encountered on numerous occasions).

It wouldn't bother me so much if the characters existed in this world but not their authors—I could handle that. What really bothers me is that the Falkensteinian universe has made such a handy accommodation with reality to allow both to live side by side. I can even see it in action sometimes; I was once at a lecture on Evolution when I overheard two men quietly debating the topic in the seats ahead. It turned out that one was Arthur Conan Doyle and the other Doctor John Watson, lately returned from Afghanistan.

Falkensteinian reality also accommodates facts that ought to be mutually exclusive. Captain John Carter really does seem to go to Mars when he mentally/physically projects himself through the ether. But last year, Sussex was overrun by gigantic tripodal war robots controlled by three-legged Martians who came via giant rocket shells. Is Barsoom Mars? Are the tripodal aliens Martians? Or are both places really someplace different that just happened to be called Mars by accident? I won't know until someone invents a rocket ship and goes there, and with my luck, that'll be Buck Rogers.

On the other hand, there are a lot of advantages to this strange blending of fiction and history. After all, if you have to stop Professor Moriarty, wouldn't you rather have Sherlock Holmes, Sir Richard Burton and Captain Nemo to help?

Selected Personages of the Steam Age

You may notice a few people in this section who would be considered fictional (at best) in our own world. Why the cosmology of *Castle Falkenstein* seems to gleefully mix the real and unreal together is something I never have been able to explain. In some cases, perhaps the writers of so-called fiction have merely related a real tale they heard about their "characters." Or maybe it's just that the line between real and unreal here is a lot more flexible. In any case, here are just a very few of the people who make the news in my adopted homeworld. Notes in *Italics* are of books the character may have been mentioned in back home; others can usually be found in any good encyclopedia (although you can expect a few weird Steam Age twists to crop up here and there).

Charles Babbage: Cambridge Professor of mathematics and creator of the first mechanical "computer," the *Babbage Calculation Engine*. While no technology in our 1800's could produce his device, it was child's play for the Dwarfs, who even improved the design. Currently chief of the Lyceé Analytique in Paris, working for Science Minister Jules Verne.

Alexander G. Bell: Inventor. Born in Scotland and immigrated to the United States. Fascinated by sound and in teaching the deaf, he is currently working on inventing the telephone in Boston.

Sarah Bernhardt: Half-Faerie French actress who will one day be one of the most famous celebrities of the day. Right now making her debut on the Paris stage, she is beginning to establish the reputation which will make her a worldwide legend.

Elizabeth & Robert Browning: Poetic couple best known for *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, a book of love sonnets Elizabeth wrote for her husband Robert (with whom she eloped in 1846). Elizabeth is surprisingly youthful, thanks to dabbling in Spiritualism and an unconscious ability to use the Art.

Sir Francis Richard Burton: Famed Explorer and co-discoverer of the source of the Nile. Burton is

part British secret agent, part sorceror (specializing in Middle-Eastern and Tantric magics), and all-around adventurer. He is currently travelling around the world with his equally daring wife Isabel.

Lewis Carroll: Mathematics lecturer at Oxford and delver into the nature of the Faerie Veil. His "children's book" *Alice in Wonderland* is actually a textbook for describing the alternate realities his studies have taken him (and possibly Alice) to. Currently working on the sequel, *Alice Through the Looking Glass*.

Capt. John Carter: Civil War captain and Warlord. Carter possesses an uncanny ability to psychically project himself (and others) physically to another world, called Barsoom (Mars?), where he is the warlike king of a great civilization. See Edgar Rice Burroughs/*The Warlord of Mars*.

Charles Darwin: Scientist and writer, his *Origin of Species* (based on his voyage as a naturalist on the HMS Beagle in 1836) is the foundation of the evolutionary fever sweeping the Victorian world. He is currently working on his opus, *The Descent of Man*, which also details some curious theories on the origins of the Faerie and Dwarfish races.

Charles Dickens: Famed British popular novelist and lion of letters, his books (*Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, etc.) are serialized in newspapers all over New Europa. Also a publisher and theatrical producer.

Dickens is aging and in ill health; he may not survive the year.

Benjamin Disraeli: Novelist, statesman, and ex-Prime Minister of England. A canny, savvy orator and negotiator, he is the political equal of Bismarck and the architect of much of Victoria's expanding Empire. One of Queen Victoria's most trusted advisors.

Count Vlad Dracula: Transylvanian aristocrat and vampire lord, probably descended from the legendary Vlad the Impaler of the Dark Ages. Dracula is the most powerful of a series of bad Faerie-Human crossbreeds (possibly between a Glastig and a mortal) that require



Selected Personages of the Steam Age

mortal blood to survive. Driven by his bloodlust (and pursued by his indefatigable nemesis Dr. Abraham van Helsing), the Count travels all over the Continent. See Bram Stoker/*Dracula*.

Thomas Edison: American inventor of the phonograph, light bulb, mimeograph, wax paper, stock ticker and motion picture camera. The Inventor's inventor, even the Dwarfs hold him in awe. Amazing, prolific and hard-headed, he is currently operating a firm of consulting engineers and inventors in New York.

Prince Edward (Bertie): British Crown Prince and Bon Vivant. Thwarted from useful work by his mother, Queen Victoria, Prince Edward has become the social lion of British society. His exclusive Marlborough House Set is the equivalent of the 1800's "beautiful people": anyone who is anyone is a member (or wants to be).

Phileas Fogg: World traveller and writer, who recently completed a round the world trip in an astounding eighty days. Rumors about the handsome and mysterious Mr. Fogg abound: He is suspected of being a Faerie lord, a master thief, a clever clockwork automaton, or possibly even an alien spy from another world! See Jules Verne/*Around the World in 80 Days*.

Dr. Victor Frankenstein: Mad scientist and creator of artificial life. A medical doctor educated in Switzerland, Frankenstein fell into studying the occult sciences and became obsessed with creating a perfect living android from the parts of dead bodies. Although his first creation ended in tragedy, he has survived to try again. See Mary Shelley/*Frankenstein*.

Ulysses S. Grant: Famous Union general who defeated General Lee of the Confederacy, and later the Commanding General of the Western Expeditionary Forces against the Indian Nations. Currently President of the United States, he followed Lincoln's successful two-term Administration.

Sherlock Holmes: The Great Detective is in his early twenties. Holmes has just graduated from Oxford

and has set up shop as a consulting detective; the fame and recognition that he will have later will not come along until he meets Dr. Watson, his biographer. See A. Conan Doyle/*The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.

Aldous Huxley: British biologist and foremost exponent of Darwin's Theory of Evolution, he is a well-known lecturer and savant on matters of science. Huxley is smart, knowledgeable, and committed to Progress at any cost.

The Invisible Man: An obscure chemical scientist named Griffin, who has developed an invisibility potion and used it upon himself. Unable to return to normal, he has become a deranged and dangerously unpredictable criminal. See H.G. Wells/*The Invisible Man*.

Lord Kelvin (William Thomson): Mathematician and physicist, currently teaching at Glasgow University. Lord Kelvin is possibly the greatest authority on physics, electricity and magnetism in New Europa, and a major theorist on the subject of Engine Magick. He is also a member of the Second Compact.

Abraham Lincoln: Recent President of the United States, he presided over the devastating Civil War. Besides holding the Union together, he also freed the slaves. In 1865, he was shot by an assassin; the country held a four-day vigil while doctors (and a visiting clerical sorcerer from the Order of St. Boniface) battled to save his life. Recovered, he managed to steer the nation through a difficult Reconstruction during his second term.

Lady Ada Lovelace: Daughter of Lord Byron and assistant to the aged Charles Babbage, Lady Lovelace is the first computer programmer (she is also a master cryptographer as well). Ada has also become quite involved with the Mystic Lodge of the Temple of Ra, a pro-superscience sorcerer's group.

Ludwig the First: Grandfather to the current ruler of Bayern and another great builder (his design for the city of München is considered to be an architectural marvel). In 1848, he fell under the spell of



Selected Personages of the Steam Age

exotic dancer Lola Montez, and was forced by an angry populace to abdicate. He has since married Montez and become a noted traveller and patron of the arts.

Karl Marx: Political agitator and founder of Communism, he has just finished the first volume of his famous *Das Kapital* (1867). One of the most feared men in New Europa, he is also the head of the secretive Anarchist Brotherhood, which he founded to clear the way for his Communist utopia.

Lola Montez: Exotic dancer and adventuress, Lola was the cause of the downfall of King Ludwig I of Bayern. Fleeing before the mobs, she unsuccessfully toured Europe and America for some time before returning (penniless) to wed King Ludwig I.

Professor Moriarty: Criminal mastermind and head of the World Crime League, an organization of evildoers and villains. Moriarty's great nemesis, Sherlock Holmes, is not yet at the height of his powers; the evil Professor is currently opposed only by Captain Nemo and his sometime ally, the mysterious Phileas Fogg. See A. Conan Doyle/*Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*

Captain Nemo: Inventor and aquanaut. A scientific genius and engineer, Nemo is the creator of the extraordinary *Nautilus* submarine. Nemo originally set out to destroy all warfare on the high seas; however, his experiences with Dr. Verne (writing as Pierre Aronax), and others have convinced him to use his knowledge to fight those who promote warfare from behind the scenes (like the World Crime League). See Jules Verne/*20,000 Leagues Under The Sea*.

Emperor Norton I: Once considered a harmless lunatic, the colorful local San Francisco personality was elected Emperor by popular acclaim when California became the Bear Flag Republic/Empire in 1869.

Dr. Richard Owen: Paleontologist and dinosaur hunter (in fact, he invented the word). Owen is a brilliant zoologist who correctly deduced the existence of the giant reptiles (although his reconstructions for the 1854 Crystal Palace exhibition were quite inaccurate). Curator of Natural History for the British Museum.

Rudolf Rassendyl: English gentleman and look-alike to the King of the Germanic duchy of Ruritania, Rassendyl was instrumental in foiling a Bismarckian plot to incorporate the duchy by kidnapping its ruler and installing his pro-Prussian half-brother on the throne. See Alexander Hope/*The Prisoner of Zenda*.

Robur the Conqueror: Airship designer and world conqueror, Robur has concentrated his efforts

towards developing powered flight rather than lighter than air machines. His mighty *Albatross* is actually a tremendous helicopter nearly two hundred feet long, held aloft by electrically powered airscrews. A virtual aerial pirate, Robur is often allied with the World Crime League. See Jules Verne/*Master of the Air*.

The Time Traveller: Mysterious creator of the Time Machine, his exact identity is not known. Possibly an engineer or wizard who developed a Sorcerous Temporal Engine independent of the Leonardo Notebook. He is known to appear at critical moments to give aid or thwart enemies, possibly in an attempt to influence a far distant future only he knows about. See H.G. Wells/*The Time Machine*.

Mark Twain: Writer, newspaperman and bon vivant, he is well known for his humorous and satirical writings. Currently Ambassador at Large for the Bear Flag Empire and personal friend of Emperor Norton I of California, he is travelling New Europa collecting anecdotes for his book *Innocents Abroad*.

Dr. Abraham van Helsing: Dutch vampire hunter and student of the occult, van Helsing has spent the last decade tracking the elusive and evil Count Dracula across New Europa. His one goal is to utterly eradicate vampirism from the world, starting with the Count. See Bram Stoker/*Dracula*.

Dr. Jules Verne: Science fiction writer and Minister of Science for Napoleon III, who was inspired by Verne's articles. Verne is not as much an engineer as a general scientist and visionary: the Dr. Asimov of the 1870's. His fertile imagination comes up with the principles, while his huge teams of government scientists execute his plans.

Queen Victoria: Queen of England and so powerful they named an Age after her. Immensely stubborn, autocratic and singleminded, she commands much of the world through a combination of savvy Ministers and extensive family relationships (almost every crowned head in Europe is related to her through blood or marriage). Heavily influenced by the Steam Lords of Britain.

Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin: Inventor of the rigid lighter-than-airship, von Zeppelin served as a Union officer during the American Civil War, where his lifelong obsession with lighter-than-air craft started. He has recently returned to Prussia, where he has become head of Bismarck's fledgling *Luftwaffen* airship corps.

For more on Personages, see pg. 169



...Of High Intrigue

The world of *Castle Falkenstein* is also a place with a lot of Secret Organizations.

For some reason, the very air of this place just calls out for conspiracy. The Wizards are all organized in secret cabals. The Anarchists are all meeting in underground cells. The Masterminds all have hidden bases, Master Plans and complex passwords. And no self-respecting Empire in this age of international intrigue would settle for anything less than a fully-financed Secret Service complete with Secret Command Centres cleverly disguised as common storefronts, innocent steam vehicles that transform into submersibles or gyrocopters, and lots and lots of gadgets. Even the normally stodgy Freemasons act like something out of *The Man From Uncle*.

A Steam Ager's passion for secret meetings and dangerous liaisons is almost as pervasive as his lust for Big Science and fascinating new inventions. When these three addictions can be brought together in one place (as in a Secret Organization dedicated to using its *Infernal Fear Transmission Engine* to overthrow the British Empire), you've got one happy Steam Ager. I've gotten so used to entering rooms through hidden panels that I now tend to ignore the doors. (Although my favorite is still the secret entrance to an Anarchist cell in London: You entered this cafe, sat down at a particular table, and the whole thing, table and all, sank into the basement meeting room on a built-in elevator!)

My first encounter with a real Falkensteinian Secret Agent came shortly after I was spellnapped here. It seems that in all the fuss about magically raising the Castle and restoring Ludwig to his throne, no one noticed a lone Guardsman sneaking off to the stables to saddle up a fast horse. By the time anyone knew we'd been betrayed, "Lieutenant Rupert Hauptman" was twenty miles down the München Road carrying word to the Regent that the King was back in Bayern. Thanks to Hauptman, we were forced to rush Ludwig to the Capital as fast as possible before Count Hohenloe was able to send out a party of assassins to eliminate him (and it still took two gun battles and a sword fight in the middle of the King's Residenz* to undo what one spy had done with a mere telegram).

With all this skullduggery and sneaking around, I've gotten pretty used to having notes slipped to me at Diplomatic Balls, intercepting couriers and stealing their letters of transit, and meeting cloaked figures late at night in out-of-the-way places (that always seem to be discovered by the bad guys just after I arrive). I also now know enough to always inspect any innocent-looking cane, umbrella, hat, reticule (purse), shoe or other common item that might be holding a sword, gun, poison dart, or secret explosive pellet hidden within. I've even come to expect that a beautiful damsel in trouble may also be a double agent, that there is always a secret panel into a locked room, and that every neglected briefcase contains a Secret of World Shaking Importance. It's all part of the air of Intrigue and Treachery that is *everywhere* in this Age of Empires.

So if you've ever wanted to match wits with an Evil Terrorist Brotherhood, seduce a Mata Hari, or just save innocent millions from Certain Disaster, you too may well be cut out for the life of a Steam Age Superspy.

*Residenz: The King's Palace in the Capital

*Russian Imperial Agent
Hauptmen.*

Secret Agents & Secret Societies

I wasn't surprised to find out there were Secret Agents (the term "spy" is used here to define secret agency that takes place on the battlefield) in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*. What amazed me was the sheer "James Bondian" quality of the spying.

Take the guy who betrayed King Ludwig to the Regent. Little did any of us suspect at the time that lowly Lt. Hauptmann was, in fact, His Serene Prussian Majesty's Agent Col. Rupert von Hauptman, code named "The Fox of Prussia." Neither did we suspect that inside his saddlebags was a secret telegraphic key, vials of acid and nitroglycerin, and a tiny box camera (on which he'd recorded Ludwig's arrival for posterity). Inside his regimental saber hilt were a lockpick and a flashbomb. In fact, the only reason we know all this is that several minutes after he'd hooked up his telegraphic key to a nearby line and reported in to the Regent, he was ambushed by a band of highwaymen, beaten senseless and stripped of all his possessions. Eventually, the robbers were captured by the Bayernese Border Guard and the whole story came out.

Superspies and SuperGadgets

Part of this superspy mania is the style of the times. In a world where gadgets are everywhere and dash is all important, you have to expect that the secret agents will be cut from the same cloth. Major operatives have code names, cover identities, reputations. Like Bond, they frequent the gaming tables at Monte Carlo, the salons at Biarritz, and the yachting season at Cowes, blending flawlessly into the environments where the rich and powerful rulers of New Europa congregate. Agents also carry vast arrays of secret weapons and high-tech devices; the stash used by Hauptmann was only a small sample of what a high-level operative has at his disposal.

Secret Hideouts

Agents aren't the only ones who seem like they've escaped from a *Wild, Wild West* TV episode; many Secret Organizations of the *Falkenstein* world are equally flashy. When you spend a lot of time dealing with mad scientists, criminal masterminds, dastardly anarchists and other national agencies, it's important to have your secret headquarters disguised as a bakery or tailor shop, with elevator floors, hidden panels and special clockwork traps. Whether it's secret hideouts hidden in private railway cars, observation bases in

sewers, or R&D labs behind the walls of an Embassy library, the well-heeled 18th century Organization has a penchant for larger-than-life style. Even the infamous World Crime League meets on board Robur the Conqueror's gigantic helicopter-like *Albatross Clipper*!

Here are just a few of the Secret Organizations I've encountered in my travels:

- **The Second Compact Alliance:** A loose association of wizards, Faerie, Dragons and Dwarfs whose main goal is to slow down the advance of Unseelie-inspired technology. Agents are drawn from all walks of life and have a variety of skills; their only common feature is a desire to preserve Magick and head off what I call the "Steampunk Revolution."

- **The United States Secret Service:** Two-fisted, fast-drawing, laconic agents, their mission is to thwart plots against the U.S. Government and stop any Evil Masterminds who threaten American citizens. Hidden boot weapons and secret gadgets are definitely part of the package. Based in Washington, D.C.

- **The World Crime League:** One part Cosa Nostra, two parts SMERSH, the World Crime League's goal is world domination, nothing less. In addition to controlling vast vice, theft and racketeering operations, the Crime League also plots to overthrow governments, extort money through terrorism, and create Infernal Devices to control all Mankind.

- **The World Anarchist Brotherhood:** Led by the shadowy Karl Marx, the Brotherhood's goal is to totally destroy all existing governments (possibly to replace them with a Socialist paradise). Bombs, Infernal Devices and assassinations are all part of their program of terror and intimidation.

- **The Prussian Imperial Service:** The eyes and ears of von Bismarck himself, dedicated to achieving his goals. Well-equipped, ruthless, and very clever, with Agents all over New Europa, the Imperial Service is feared and respected by agents of all allegiances.

- **The Bayernese Secret Service:** Swashbuckling, daring, very *Three Musketeers*, but with more style than equipment. Mostly military officers and noblemen, they are loyal and devoted to King and Country, and make up in daring what they lack in gadgetry.

- **Her Majesty's Secret Service:** Debonair, suave and gadget-packed. Mostly recruited from London's Fast Set nobles, the British Secret Service stops threats to the Empire no matter where they originate. As a group, fair, but with several outstanding agents.

Science Made Squirrely

New European science is a real physicist's nightmare. It may be a result of Magick warping some of the rules of physics, but it sure seems to me that there are a lot more strange inventions that shouldn't work at all being used on a daily basis than any sane person would want to think about.

I call this the *Science Made Squirrely Effect*, and it seems to be a natural component of the *Falkenstein* world. It involves two basic assumptions: One is that your average Mad Inventor or Mastermind may well be a latent Sorcerer at heart, and may be unconsciously weaving elements of Magick into his inventions. So the *Albatross* flies not in small part due to the fact that Robur, its inventor, unconsciously wove some kind of levitation spell into its creation to supplement its huge rotors.

Another is that Physics may just be a lot less stringent than on the other side of the Faerie Veil. (Yeah, I know it sounds weak. But this place has *Dragons* running around on the streets for chrissakes!) After all, very little of what gets created over here actually *violates* natural law; if something's *too* outlandish, it just doesn't work. No, the most *outré* creations just bend the rules a little bit; they work better than they ought to, weigh a little less than they should, or can be used in ways that would be considered very difficult (or impossible) back home.

... With Mad Scientists & Masterminds

One thing I've learned since I've been here: New Europa is the sort of place where Dr. Frankenstein could feel right at home. Not to mention a lot of other crazies I could mention (the Invisible Man and Dr. Jekyll come to mind).

Whenever you get Big Science and Invention, you get scientific madmen. It goes with the territory; when you don't have lab grants, peer review and publish-or-perish, people can get up to some pretty strange things. Besides *New Improved Perpetual Motion Machines*, *Electrical-Magnetic Healing Devices* and *Patented Suspender Holders* (yes, all duly registered with the Royal Patent Office in London—I checked), there's plenty of time for a clever Investigator of the Unknown to dabble in *Creating Life from Inanimate Matter*. As Morrolan likes to say, "Idle hands make Science."

I have a personal view of this phenomenon because I live in a castle with a resident Mad Inventor. Although Rhyme is pretty tame as Mad Scientists go, he makes up for it with the sheer number of inventions he dreams up. There's something about Dwarfish technology that really fires up the imagination of a scientist. Not only that, but the inhumanly sophisticated craftsmanship coming out of the Dwarfholds allows the truly creative to do some things considered almost impossible in our own time. (Would you believe I once met a Dwarf who'd actually made a monomolecular wire? Luckily, he had no idea what to do with it!)

So we have a lot of amateur Dr. Frankensteins here in New Europa. Heck, we even have the original Dr. Frankenstein, for that matter.

The other side of the Big Science coin are the Masterminds, a far more dangerous proposition. (You don't have to be a mad scientist to be a Mastermind, but it helps.) Where a Mad Scientist is happy just creating his monster or whatever, a Mastermind isn't happy till he's found a way to *use* his creation; you might call them the practical experimenters of the Steam Age. Masterminds are always popping up in the newspapers. They build submarines to menace shipping, dirigibles to bomb cities, Infernal Rays to toast armies, in short, dangerous and useful toys. Sometimes they terrorize Mankind for money (it's easy to get when you hold a Thermic Heat Bomb over the Prime Minister's head). But sometimes they do it for Vengeance, a Noble Cause, or just plain Power.

But you don't have to have an Infernal Device to be a Mastermind. You just need a Master Plan. Chancellor Bismarck is a Mastermind because he has a plan to conquer all New Europa. And Masterminds like Moriarty and his World Crime League use extortion, terrorism and crime to further their evil ends. It just goes to show that in New Europa, World Domination and Evil Infernal Devices aren't just for Empires anymore.

Masterminds & Megalomanics

People think big in the Steam Age. They have grand schemes, great passions, and huge ambitions. So it's no surprise that when they go rogue, they do it on a scale that would astound most normal people. That's why the Steam Age is home to a host of megalomaniacs, masterminds and madmen. After all, I'm living in a world where only a few years ago, an almost penniless, probably illegitimate nephew of a deposed despot carved himself out an Empire with nothing but a comic opera army and a lot of nerve.

But then, I like Napoleon the Third.

He's not the only one with ambition though. Since I've been here, I've encountered (and fought) at least a half dozen highly talented and dangerous masterminds and power-mongers. Some are criminal masterminds like Moriarty and his ilk, controlling vast networks of thugs and extortionists. Others are political masterminds, like Otto von Bismarck, who just wants to take over all New Europa. There are enough master thieves, master sorcerers, and master spies in this world to populate a dozen series of cheap pulp novels.

The scariest masterminds though, in my opinion, are the scientific megalomaniacs: people like Captain Nemo, Robur, Dr. Lovelorn and The Master. What possesses a relatively normal engineer or scientist to get up one morning and decide, "Ah yes, today I shall invent a giant submarine (Nemo), flying bombing machine (Robur), mind control ray (Lovelorn), or clockwork robot army (The Master) and crush the puny mortals of the world under my metalshod jackboots!" anyway?

Sometimes their reasons are extremely well-intentioned: Sure, if you destroy every army on earth, there won't be any more war, and if you can mind control all the Kings and Presidents and Prime Ministers you

will certainly be able to get them to eliminate poverty. But do the ends justify the means? Aren't there better ways to change the world? And do you really need to set up a secret laboratory on a deserted island/long extinct volcano/abandoned mine/unscalable mountaintop, hire an army of Neanderthal thugs, and wear a bizarre uniform to accomplish something?

Why don't these people ever show up in enlightened places like Bayern with their super-scientific Infernal Device and let us enlist them in a worthwhile Cause? Or devote their energies to a never-ending battle against injustice and evil like Doc Savage did in the old serials? Instead, about every few years, another mastermind shows up with an infernal threat to the world order and about half the time I

end up drafted to help thwart it.

Stopping mad scientists isn't really part of my job as an agent of the Secret Service. But since I'm the only guy around who knows anything about advanced technology, I'm usually the one to spot the sort of anachronistic advancements that spell Unseelie meddling (or worse). I'd like to think all this Infernal Device creating is part of some devious plan the Dark Court has been hatching, but realistically, as long as Science is king in the Steam Age, there's going to be Masterminds and Madmen with new schemes for the betterment/subjugation of Mankind.

Some Well-known Masterminds, Their Inventions & What They Did With Them

- Captain Nemo *Nautilus* (Radium Submarine)
 - *Sank Warships to stop all war on the high seas.*
- Robur *Albatross* (Helicopter Airship)
 - *Bombed Paris, London & Rome (just because).*
- Dr. Lovelorn Mind Control Ray
 - *Took over Washington, D.C.*
- Lord Yosho Tomino Giant Steam Robot
 - *Conquered Tokyo, Peking.*
- The Master Inferno Bomb
 - *Extorted 1,000,000 £ from British Government.*
- Professor Moriarty Hypnotic Gas
 - *Used gas to rob Bank of England.*
- The Invisible Man Invisibility
 - *Became a one man London crime wave.*
- Count Iglio Cagliostro Clockwork Assassin
 - *Threatened crowned heads of NewEuropa.*
- Doctor Kondor Optic Heat Ray
 - *Extorted money from French Government.*
- Baron von Brass Reciprocating Pistol
 - *Armed his mercenaries to conquer all Africa.*
- Doctor Manchu Zombie Drug
 - *Raised undead armies to conquer China.*
- Dr. Jules Verne Verne Cannon
 - *ICBM Cannons protect France from invasion*

*A steam powered
Automotive. I drew this
one based on a design
often used by explorers and
military units; that's why
it has all the armor on it.
The equivalent of a Land
Rover, circa 1870 ...*

... & Steampunk Science!

If you want to live in New Europa, you'd better like Steam; almost everything here seems to be powered by it (one reason they call it the *Steam Age*, I suppose). There are steam automotives (like the version I've depicted in my sketches), steam "motorcycles", steam toys, steam helicopters, steam cannon, steam rifles and steam appliances. If you can put a stack and a boiler on it (whether heated by gas, alcohol, coal or oil), someone in New Europa will buy it.

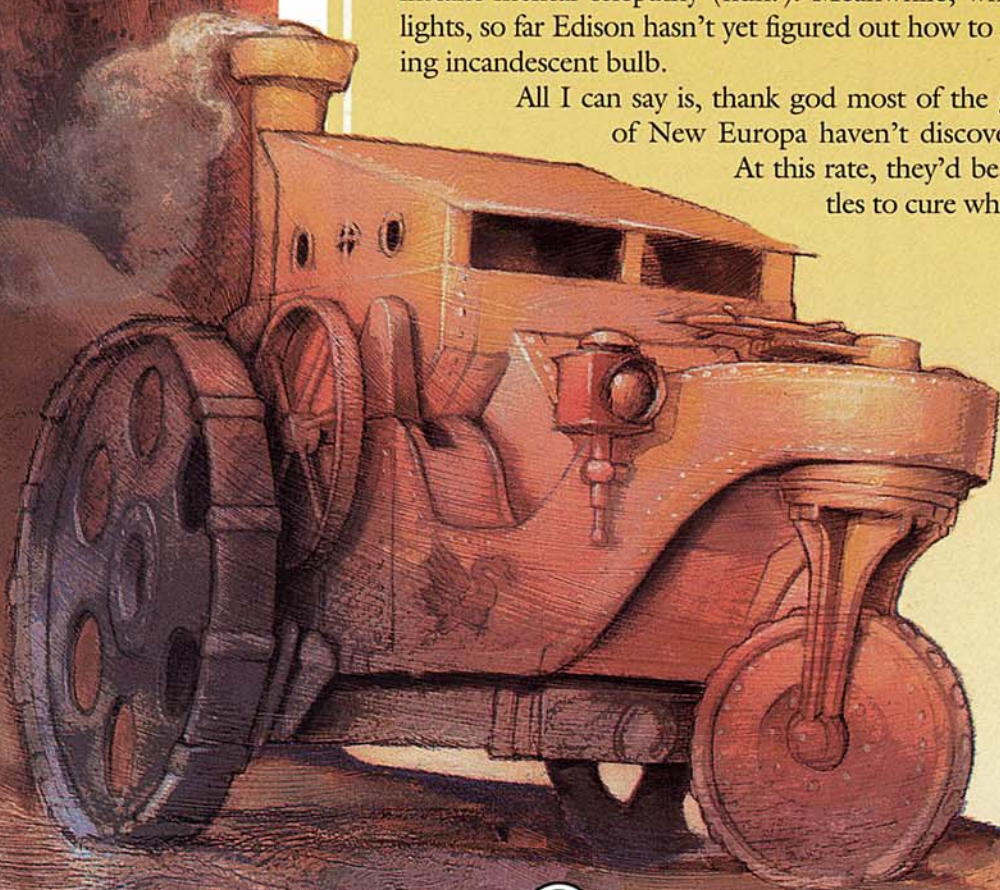
No one's invented a steam iron yet, though. I wonder why not?

What isn't run by steam appears to be run by clockwork. All kinds of things here wind up besides toys. There are clockwork land vehicles, clockwork computers, clockwork servants, clockwork ships. There are even clockwork prosthetics like the one Chancellor Bismarck wears. (Crank it up and let's shake hands! *Crrrruuunncch!*)

Then there's *Electricity*, a new force that is the equivalent of fusion power in this time period. Most people don't really understand Electricity, and all kinds of superstitions and quackeries have risen up around its use. Besides running trolleys and simple submarine motors, Electricity is also applied as a medical "ray" that can cause instant healing (huh?) and as a psychic force that allows instant mental telepathy (huh?). Meanwhile, while there are arc lights, so far Edison hasn't yet figured out how to make a long lasting incandescent bulb.

All I can say is, thank god most of the good inhabitants of New Europa haven't discovered radium yet.

At this rate, they'd be selling it in bottles to cure whooping cough.



An Age Of (Weird) Invention

One way in which New Europeans are different than people back home is the way in which they view Science. To people in the 20th century, Science is suspect, something that could turn on you at any moment like a rabid dog, the result of having every new discovery turn out to have a downside. Over and over again, we've been inundated by the idea that Science and Scientists can't be trusted; they're always exploring realms Man Was Not Meant To Know and getting us all in Big Trouble.

But in the Steam Age, Science is regarded with pride, enjoyment and even a little mysticism. It is hailed as the Savior of Mankind in this distant place and age, far from our own future where atomic bombs and corporate greed have given us a more cynical and suspicious view of technological wonder. One of the problems I have as a member of the Second Compact is that we're trying to limit Science in an age when the very idea of limiting Progress is inconceivable. It takes a lot of explaining to get across the idea that we just want to slow advancement down a bit until people are better able to handle it; I've had several bitter disputes with those who think any limit on technology is tantamount to Luddism.

Astounding Progress

Not that long ago, the fastest anyone here had ever travelled was by horseback (about 25 mph), and the strongest available power source was a water wheel. Now steam automobiles barrel along the cobbled streets at an astounding *thirty miles an hour*, and trains are up to seventy-five! Steam power allows the mighty Engines of Industry to produce staggering amounts of material goods unthinkable before the turn of the century, and with telegraphy, messages can flash across the world in the blink of an eye. The blinding force of the electric torch drives back the darkness of superstition and fear, and for a people who used to think whale oil lanterns were big news, that's pretty heady stuff.

Steam Agers are totally nuts about Science. Science is the Trivial Pursuit or disco of the 19th century. Everybody's doing it, or discussing it. There's

talk of Science (always with a capital "S") in all the most select Clubs and Salons. Social pundits eagerly debate in the papers whether a Scientific Utopia is at hand. Clerics thunder from the pulpits that Soulless Science is replacing God in the hearts of the people (and they may be right). The most widely read publication on the Continent right now is *Popular Invention*;

published in French, German, English, Italian and Greek. It showcases new inventions that are on the market, profiles Inventors and their Laboratories, and even has a *gossip* section on famous mad inventors like Verne, Captain Nemo and Dr. Edison. One of the most popular diversions is Gadgetech; clever little devices built into everyday objects, a sort of Science for the Everyman.

Common Inventions and Ideas in New Europa:

Telegraph • Sewing Machines • Evolution • Rayon • Artificial dyes • Torpedoes • Steam Turbines • Pasteurization • Automotives • Steam Velocipedes • Dirigibles • Primitive Submarines • Trains • Steamboats • Steel • Aluminum • Dinosaurs • Primitive Light Bulbs • Electrical Generators • Batteries • Babbage Computers • Breech-loading Rifles • Typewriters • Cameras

Common Inventions and Ideas Not in New Europa:

Telephones • Radios • Television • Internal Combustion Vehicles • Antibiotics • Movies • Phonographs • X-Rays • Airplanes • Stainless Steel • Liquid-fueled Rockets • Color Photographs • Wristwatches • Atomic Power

Weird Science

Steam Age science is also a lot more personal. The very spirit of invention permeates the air; every eccentric Lord has a "laboratory" somewhere where he studies Magnetism and Electrical Theory. It's the sort of science Dr. Frankenstein would feel right at home with—mysterious basements filled with sparking Jacob's Ladders and bubbling retorts, and a lot of shouting "Eureka!" Every day, the papers trumpet the triumphs of another basement wunderkind who creates flammable water, or chronicle the depredations of the latest Scientific Mastermind with a new scheme to Conquer the World.

So Science not only marches on, but rampages forward. It's Science jury-rigged and mixed with a lot of pseudo-scientific jargon; physics is still trying to reconcile atomic theory and philogiston, biology is just discovering dinosaurs and evolution, and chemistry is a mere step away from alchemy. The Royal Patent Office still issues certificates for perpetual motion machines. This is Science without frontiers, without boundaries, without anyone to tell it what's possible or not. And with the advent of *Engine Magick* (pg. 105), the line between the possible and the fantastic will become even more blurred as time goes on.

Steamtech, Anachrotech & Gadgetech

Steamtech. Well, that's what I call it; back home, you might call it *steampunk* instead. But there's a subtle difference between steamtech and steampunk. The idea of steampunk seems to be that high technology doesn't really fit into society, and that when it is present, it makes the society a dark, terrible place. Steamtech seems to fit *perfectly* into its milieu. It doesn't always make things better, but it certainly isn't a universally bad thing. It's more like the inventors of this age really sat down and tried to do everything they could think of with the basic technologies available. No matter how dumb it sounded at the time.

Dwarfs Make the Difference

Part of this, of course, is the influence of the Dwarfs. First of all, Dwarfish craftsmanship allows a level of sophistication that won't be rivalled by our world until the mid-1960's or so (Heck, they're already using alloys of aluminum!). Second, since a Dwarf has to become a Master at some kind of engineering before he can earn that all-important second name, it means that enterprising Dwarfs are always on the lookout for ways to improve an existing technology or create a new invention they can hang their reputations on.

Another factor is the influence of the Seelie and Unseelie Courts. As both sides spar secretly to get control of human affairs, they both "help out" their chosen champions with subtle (and not so subtle) technological hints.

Big Science

But the most important influence on Steamtech is that people are much more keen on the idea of inventing. In New Europa, everyone seems to dabble

in a little bit of Science. The Royal Patent Offices are constantly deluged with applications for *Perpetual Motion Machines*, *Automated Servants*, and *Improved Calculation Engines*. New inventions clutter the daily newspapers right next to the agony pages and the stock reports, and popular science magazines are the rage everywhere. All of this inventing furor contributes to creating the bewildering phenomenon of Steamtech.

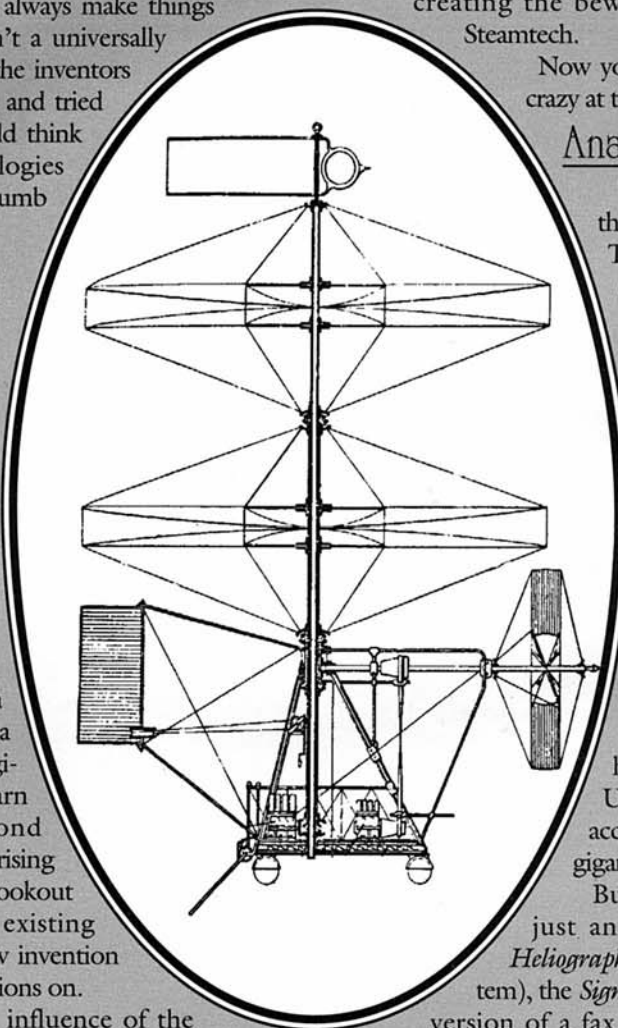
Now you see why this place gets so crazy at times.

Anachrotech

The way I see it, there are three basic types of Steamtech. The first one is what I like to call **Anachrotech**—weird Victorian versions of things we have in the 20th Century. For example, the *calculating engine* is a weird, steam-powered version of a computer; the *automotive* is a steampowered car, the *aeroship* is the 1800's version of a 747 jet liner, and the *entertainment clockwork* a wind-up version of a video game. The most egregious examples of this are devices that have been "suggested" by the Unseelie to willing human accomplices, like the Prussians' gigantic *LandFortresses*.

But Anachrotech isn't always just an Unseelie invention; the *Heliograph* (an arc light telegraph system), the *Signal Recorder* (a kind of 1870's version of a fax machine), and the *Steam Turbine* all sprang from the fertile (and slightly twisted) imaginations of New European tinkerers.

Anachrotech is also always something that is common to all elements of society (if you have the money, that is), just like anyone can buy a car in 20th Century America. I see kids with entertainment clockworks all over the place, and automobiles are starting to cause traffic jams on the streets of London. Anachrotech is ubiquitous, and by and large has improved life more



Steamtech, Anachrotech & Gadgetech

than it's messed it up. Except for the traffic jams, I guess.

Gadgetech

The second type of Steam Tech I call **Gadgetech**—technology applied to everyday items in the same way that a Swiss Army knife is more than just a knife. Steam Agers love weird gadgets; in their opinion, any mere cane or watch can always be improved by tacking on a hidden blade, compass, grappling hook and an electric torch. There are entire shops devoted to Gadgetech, where fashionable gents can pick out walking sticks with hidden compartments, snuff boxes with microscopes, and pocketwatches with telegraphic heliographs. There are truly times when I wish I had the franchise on a *Sharper Image* store here; I could retire a wealthy man. But I could still make a good living as a *Gadgeteer*, one of the many specialists who make and sell “quality devices for the discerning gentleman or lady.” You can find their shops in most major cities all over New Europa.

Since Gadgetech is sort of the equivalent of Steam Age personal electronics, it tends to be pretty modular in nature. A “gadget” always starts with some kind of basic container, like a cane or a cigarette case. Each container has a certain amount of space to contain things; in turn, many of the most common gadgeteering parts are designed by mass-produced manufacturing firms who sell to gadget shops all over the world.

Infernal Devices

Mind Control Rays. Radium-Powered Submersibles. Giant Nipponese Automata. Luminous Ether Flyers. Other Things Man Was Not Meant To Know.

In short, **Infernal Devices**.

Infernal Devices make up the third (and most interesting, I think) leg of the Steamtech triad. Infernal Devices are more than just weapons or deadly rays. They're any type of highly advanced device that's been created by a single-minded madman for the purpose of advancing a Master Plan. For example, Captain Nemo's *Nautilus* is an Infernal Device, since it exists to allow the Captain to pursue his aim of destroying all warfare on the high seas. You rarely run across Infernal Devices in everyday life; it takes an inventor who is obsessed enough to spend half his life (and a fortune in gold) to create one of them. Since I'm something of a Secret Agent, of course I run into them a bit more often. An occupational hazard, I guess.

Every Infernal Device is different, because it's almost always the creation of a Mad Scientist or a Mastermind (the only exception to this rule are Governments, whereupon in an amazing bit of self-justifying doubletalk, an Infernal Device becomes a Secret Weapon). Infernal devices generally fall into five categories:

Vehicles: Submarines. Tanks. Ships. Walkers. Spacecraft. All these are examples of Infernal Vehicles, the most popular type of Steam Age Infernal Device. *Popular Invention* is always showing pictures and plans for ill-fated planes, cars, submarines and so on; if it drives, swims or flies, New Europeans like it, and if it can do all three, they love it.

Weapons: Infernal Weapons are the second most popular form of Infernal Device, and the one most deserving of the name. If you're a Mastermind worthy of the name, you must invent a weapon at some time in your career. There are death rays (lasers), heat beams, sleep rays, giant cannon, and radium death missiles abounding in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, and if you're really lucky, you might end up encountering two or three of these devices combined.

Engines: Engines are a particularly strange type of Infernal Device; not quite weapon, not quite vehicle. Generally, they are machines that are stationary and are designed to accomplish an industrial purpose; Charles Babbage's *Calculation Engine* and Whitney's cotton gin would be good examples of Engines (ask any Luddite). Another example might be Tesla's *Broadcast Power Engine*.

Automatons: Humanoid robots and mechanical animals. Automatons also include clockwork toys and other movable, windup figures. For example, Dr. Miriam's *Amazing Precision Clockwork Servant*, or a child's wind-up flying bird. The nastiest automatons I've ever encountered were a clockwork spider with a poison needle and a gigantic steam-powered robot.

And Finally, Formulations: These are chemical “devices”: mind control and hypnotic gases, sleep powders, werewolf transformation drugs or invisibility potions. Formulations also include any chemical or metallurgical innovation, such as Dwarfish titanium or dynamite. Formulations are relatively rare; it's hard to push the laws of chemistry and physics even if you do have sorcery to help out.

➡ For more on Steamtech, see pg. 208 ➡

My Favourite Anachrotech

Anachrotech. Weird, wacky and *very* New European. Here are some of the best (and most common) examples of Anachrotech I've encountered here in my travels:

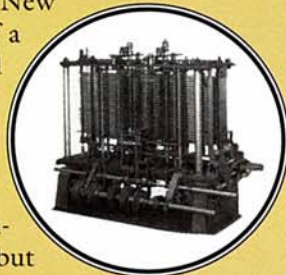
Abercrombie's Automatic Recorder: A miniature typewriter about the size of a book, with a spool of paper tape and a phonetic keyboard attached. For a journalist or writer, it's a godsend; I used one to record parts of this journal.



Automatic Abacus: The equivalent of a calculator: flat, palm sized, with metal wheels with numbered holes that represent 1's, 10's, 1,000's and 10,000's places. Using the attached stylus, you slide the holes to where you want them, and the value shows in a window at the top.

Automotive: A steam-driven motorcar; mostly the playthings of the wealthy. They're temperamental, hard to maintain, and automotive mechanics charge an arm and two legs for repairs. Mass-produced versions like the *Mercedes SL* (Steam Loco-automotive) and *BMW i-3* (Bayernese Motorwerk invention #3) are already hitting the exhibition showrooms.

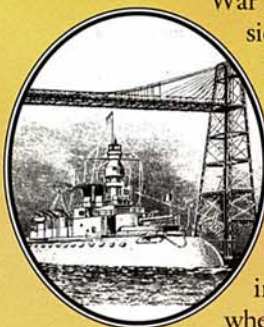
Calculating Engine: With a grant from the French Ministry of Science, and a clever Dwarfish construction team, Babbage's Calculating Engine was actually constructed in New Europa. About the size of a roll-top desk, they are used everywhere: aiming Verne Cannons, tabulating records, maintaining files. Calculating Engines are limited to displaying numbers on a rotating dial, but Verne and Lovelace are developing a teletypographic printer. Can *Photography Shoppe IV* and *Illustrator 1888* be far behind?



Clockwork Prosthetic: After the Napoleonic Wars left hundreds of soldiers missing arms and legs, an enterprising Dwarf inventor designed a prosthetic limb with spring-powered motors. Pump the lever on your Patent Clockwork Arm and it's good for over 100 openings and closing of its metal fist. A Patent Clockwork Leg has hidden compartments and can

flex its knee just like a real leg. While it isn't cyberwear, I expect any day to hear some smart guy has taken his Patent Arm to the local Gadgeteer for a few enhancements.

Dreadnought: A battleship something like a Civil War ironclad, with sloped, open sides, so that the quarterdeck has a six to ten foot "wall" surrounding it. The superstructure can be lowered on steam-driven pistons so that only the command tower is visible above the armor. The turrets fire through slots cut in the armor, and a paddle-wheel or propeller is mounted aft. Very common in the British Fleet.



Entertainment Clockwork: An 1870's video game! A metal box with a clockwork inside rotates a metal disk with background scenes, hinged, painted pop-up figures, and hundreds of tiny pins on the back. The disk rotates in front of a glass window in the front, and a spring-loaded pinball toggle shoots metal balls at the moving targets. A chime sounds when you hit, and a dial on top shows the score. There are thousands of these things all over, and new "entertainment disks" are popping up like weeds. The current fave is something called *Backalley Pugilist* in which the player fights colorful boxers from Prussia, France, England and Russia.

LandFortress: An armored box about forty feet tall, with heavy, sloping metal sides, riding on immense caterpillar treads. Huge steamstacks, rifle slits and rotating turrets complete the picture. LandFortresses are a recent invention and these metal-clad monsters are the terror of New Europa. Even the French fear them, because they can't bring their Verne Cannon to bear on the lumbering behemoths.

Telegraphic Signal Recorder: *Omigod, it's a fax machine!* I thought, the first time I saw this. A frosted glass plate is lit from below by a powerful arc light; you put your paper original on this. The paper must be able to pass light and the ink used should be as black as possible. A very primitive photocell senses dark and light and sends a signal to a distant telegraphic receiver, which prints out a stippled ink image. Extremely rare, used only by military and news services.

➡ For more on Anachrotech, see pg. 208 ➡

Of Deadly Dangers...

Looking back over my notes so far, I know I've probably made this world seem like some kind of Victorian Disneyland ride. But it isn't anything of the kind. The world of *Castle Falkenstein* can also get deadly serious at times, especially when you're involved in life-and-death, Empire-threatening situations

For example, shortly after I arrived here, I was catapulted into a headlong race to get a long-lost Crown Prince past a horde of assassins and safely on his throne. Except for an occasional paintball game, I'd had no previous experience with being in a gunfight, and even less experience at having someone try to cut my head off with a razor-sharp saber. All I can say is that I was lucky to have Marianne and the Colonel covering my tail while I dodged the shots. There were a lot of moments when, if I'd had time to stop and think about it, I would have been petrified with fright, and it still wasn't until I caught a bullet meant for the King that it hit me just how real all this was.

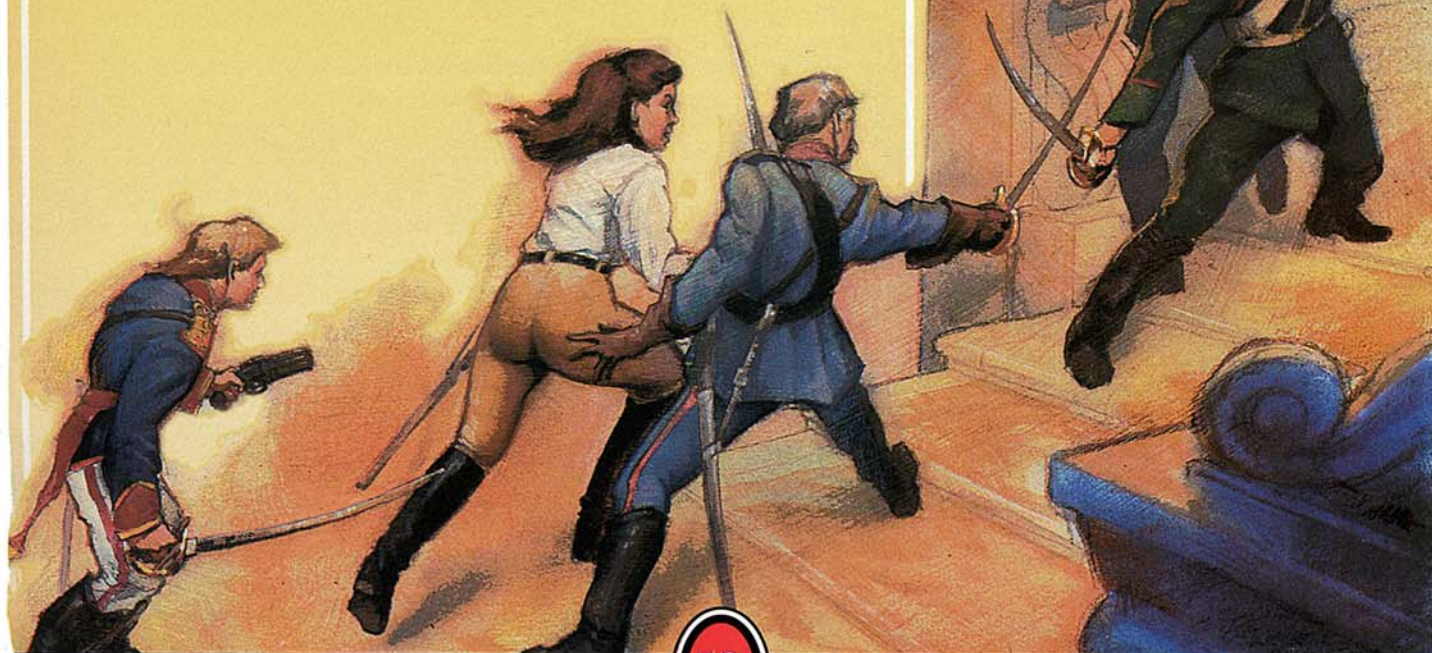
On the other hand, I survived. So I *must* have been doing *something* right.

If you live here, expect to have enemies. Nemeses who will employ any means to destroy you. Criminal evildoers who will stop at nothing to accomplish their dastardly plans. Nefarious spies and treacherous villains with big guns and sharp swords. In short, dangerous people with dangerous habits, like knives, guns, clubs, death spells ...

So let me stop a moment to tell you about the serious side of the *Falkensteinian* world. The parts where you get sliced, stabbed, shot at and clobbered.

Because if you ever find a way to get to this side of the Faerie Veil, you may want to invest in a few fencing lessons ...

*The Battle for the Palace—
Marianne, Tarlenheim and I
tackle the Regent's Guards as we
fight to get King Ludwig
crowned.*



Steam Age Weapons

Fencing is not a lost art in the *Castle Falkenstein* world. Powder gets wet, guns jam, but steel *always* cuts, even underwater. There's also something really intimidating about having to face three feet of razor-sharp steel that can discourage even the most determined highwayman or footpad. So most gentlemen (and not a few ladies) soon become adept at using a blade in combat.

Fencing is taught privately in many places, and citizens with military experience (especially the Cavalry) also learn to use a saber as part of their daily drill. Since duels are also an everyday occurrence, a gentleman often must not only know how to use a saber, but also a rapier (which is still the preferred weapon for affairs of honour). And daggers are favored for close-in work or when a long sword can't be hidden (although sword canes are a very common method of concealing a blade until it's needed). Types include:

- **Dagger:** A handy option when hidden in boot or reticule.
- **Saber:** The cavalry saber, with its wicked slicing edge, has almost replaced the slender swords of the 1700's; most gentlemen have had some military experience and with it a fair amount of saber drill.
- **Canes & Sword Canes:** The gentleman's weapon, the cane, with a lead filled head, can be deadly; even more so when you hide a rapier blade inside.



Powder &

Shot: Common

Steam Age Firearms

Cantankerous and prone to jamming, the gun is still not yet the supreme weapon of the Steam Age. Only recently have cartridge arms been invented, and metal casings are still quite expensive:

- **Revolvers:** What are called revolvers here we used to call *pepperbox* pistols (see above) back home: multiple barrels that rotate around a firing pin.

Revolvers tend to jam, only hold six shots, and take a devilishly long time to reload.

- **Drop Pistols:** Single-barrelled arms which are reloaded by pointing the front of the gun downwards to reload the chamber (you load in the pistol butt). Slow, but they don't jam and hold eight shots.

- **Derringers:** Small two barrelled pistols arranged in over-under design. Popular with American river-boat gamblers and ladies.

- **Reciprocators:** The 1800's equivalent of—yes, a machine pistol. Like a "revolver", a reciprocator has six rotating barrels. However, the winding spring is far more powerful, and the hammer falls automatically when the trigger is pulled, firing off a flurry of wild and highly inaccurate shots. By setting a small stop lever on the side, the number of shots can be controlled from all six at once, to as few as three. Very limited in range, reciprocators are favored by street thugs and ruffians.

- **Shotguns & Fowling Pieces:** Shoulder arms that fire charges of small pellets. Most are arranged in over-and-under or twin barrel arrangements, and load from a break-open breech.

- **Rifles:** The big innovation in military arms today are breech-loading, single-shot, bolt-action rifles. The Prussian needlegun and the French *chassepot* are the two best examples of what is still pretty primitive rifle technology. Both are slow to load and fire. Muskets, anyone?

Cudgels, Life Preservers

& the Lady's Hatpin

Rifles are expensive and swords require skill. So many people fall back on old standards that require neither.

- The **cudgel** is a heavy club wrapped in rope or iron bands; good for beating down any thugs who attack you outside the local public house or tavern.

- **Life Preservers** (of *Sherlock Holmes* fame) are heavy knotted rope or metal saps: the ancestor of the blackjack.

- The **lady's hatpin** is nothing to laugh at; nearly four inches of spring steel with a heavy knob or head at the top, it can be driven through an eyeball or even a gloved hand.

For more on Weapons, see pg. 185

Villains, Riffraff & Scoundrels

Not all dangers in the *Falkenstein* world involve Mad Scientists, Faerie Lords or Secret Agents. You also have to watch out for the muggers—or should I say *Rampsmen*, not to mention the *Gonophs* (pickpockets), *Palmer*s (shoplifters) and *Scurfs* (gang leaders).

Crime in New Europa is truly international in scope. Starting with the thug on the street, there are hundreds of well-organized gangs and criminal rings in almost every city on the Continent. These local gangs are nothing to laugh at; many already pack reciprocators and have connections with other gangs in other cities (so much so that the British slang has transplanted as far away as Russia!). The so-called “Criminal Underclass”, though much disparaged by people like Sherlock Holmes, is doing quite well, thank you,

and is perfectly capable of bashing your head in one fine night, stealing your *pogue* (purse) and vanishing back into the *rookeries* (slums) from where they came. So watch it, my fine *flash toff* (showy gentleman), or we’ll be havin’ your *push* (money) too, eh?

Silk Collar Crime

Crime isn’t restricted to the lower classes though. Smooth talking Rogues and cardsharps haunt the most exclusive clubs and spas, preying on unwary noblemen and bored aristocratic wives with equal alacrity. Scoundrels can be found as close as your

favorite club, where, through false social connections and cleverly manufactured backgrounds, they worm their way into the confidence of good citizens. It’s no accident that the now infamous *Great Train Robbery* of a few years ago spanned the social gamut from the

lowest slums to the best gentlemen’s clubs. If you want to steal from the rich, obviously you have to go where the rich congregate. Most of the time, you pull your crimes without needing a *barker* (pistol). But you’re not above using weapons if the victim gets ugly.

The World Crime League

Then we come to the Big Players: the Masterminds of Crime themselves. These guys aren’t content with a mere smash-and-grab or making off with the Royal Payroll. When you get to the level of the *World Crime League*, mere robbery isn’t enough. You plan massive operations to extort staggering sums from

world governments. You steal the entire contents of the British Museum and ransom it back for billions. You have men in every corner of the world, and entire nations in your pocket. Going up against these guys is like tackling SMERSH or the KGB. Their plans are big, and they don’t take being thwarted easily. Cross Moriarty or one of the other Crime Lords and you’ll soon find yourself on the wrong end of an assassin’s bullet or worse.

Typical Criminal Slang

(Or Speaking the International Language of Crime)

No Journal set in the 1800’s would be complete without a glossary of some of the argot (slang) used by the so-called Criminal Classes. Luckily for us honest types, much of the well-known British criminal “argot” has become the international standard throughout New Europa. Here are just a few examples:

NAMES OF CRIMINAL TYPES:

Cracksman (burglar or safecracker), *mobsman*, *tooler*, *buzzer* or *dipper* (pickpocket), *gonoph* (young pickpocket), *screever* (forger), *kidsman* (organizes child gangs), *shofulman* or *bit faker* (counterfeiter), *magsman* or *macer* (card cheat or con man), *vampsman* (armed robber), *rampsmen*, *nobbler*, *footpad* or *punisher* (hired armbreaker, thug), *Arab* (street urchin), *dollymop* or *ladybird* (streetwalker), *stickman* (dipper’s partner who takes the handoff), *stall* (person who distracts the dipper’s victim).

CRIMINAL TERMS

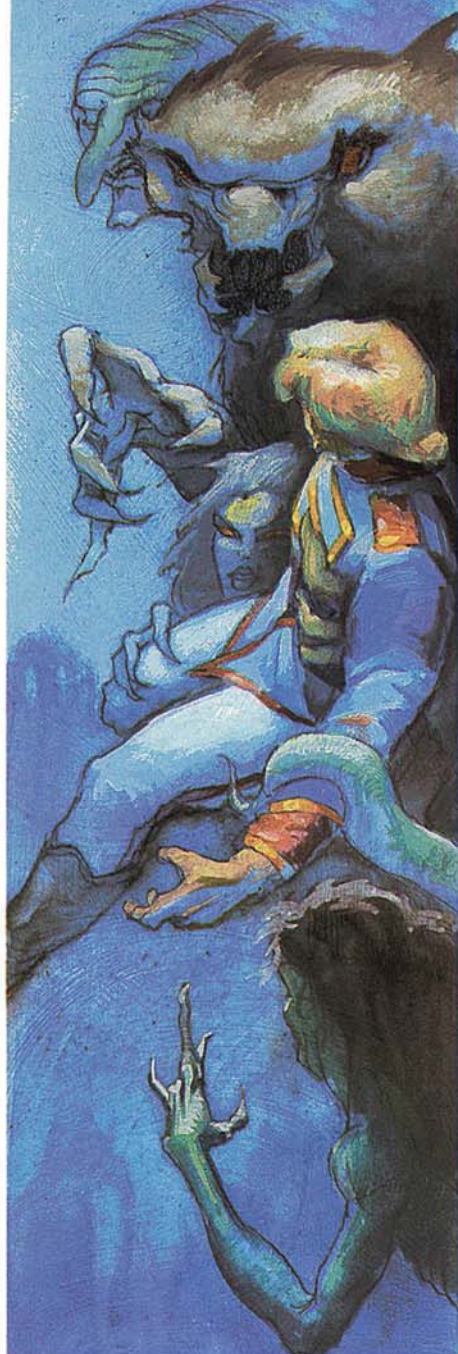
Grab or *Swag* (loot), *toff* (well-to-do gent), *twirls* (skeleton keys), *barker* (pistol), *betties* (lockpicks) *in lavender* (hidden from the police), *flash* (sharp, smart; also vulgar or showy), *peppermill* (reciprocator pistol), *hoisting* (shoplifting), *daffy* (a drink), *readers* (marked cards), *jemmy* (crowbar), *all gay* (all clear), *stand the racket* (take a rap for another).

LAW & ORDER TERMS

Crusher, *Miltonian* (policeman), *le Flic* (French police), *darbies* (handcuffs), *nose* or *blower* (spy, informer), *Died of Hempen Fever* (hanged), *Factory* (Scotland Yard), *jug* (prison), *nibbed* (arrested).

For more on Criminal types, see pg. 148

Captured by the Unseelie Host: The night of the Coronation, I stumbled into a secret meeting between Auberon and his Adversary. The Unseelie almost killed me, 'cept that Auberon faced them down and got me freed.



... Not All Of Them Human.



ou never forget the first time you face down a Dragon. Assuming there's a chance to have a second time, that is.

Dragons have an impressive array of natural weapons. Small Dragons have fangs equal to any of their smaller dinosaurian ancestors, and the really ancient saurians have heads (and teeth) of almost Tyrannosaurian proportions. Two-inch talons backed with immense strength can easily dismember a horse; *you're* not going to be any problem. Dragons also can use Sorcery; in fact, they're usually preternaturally good at it, which is something you'd expect from a race that survived the end of the Dinosaurs through creative spellcraft. They use it to do all kinds of tricks, from turning you into something small and insignificant, to simply crisping you in a sorcerously created breath of fire.

Needless to say, I respect Dragons a lot. And I give them all a wide berth, even those whom I count as friends.

But the most dangerous opponents in the world of *Falkenstein* are the Faerie.

Not only can the Faerie use weapons (constructed out of Dwarfish metals or Faerie silver instead of iron or steel), they also come equipped with a formidable array of natural weapons as well. Humanoid Faerie usually possess physical strength far beyond their size, and many have sharp claws and teeth. The more bizarre forms of the Unseelie sometimes have stingers, talons, fangs, pincers and even tentacles. (Have you ever been nearly strangled to death by hands made of tree-branches and ivy vines? I have.)

That's just the physical abilities. The Faerie also love to employ mind-confusing glamours, charms, shapechanging and the particular powers of their type. And when all else fails, sometimes they drag helpless victims off into Faerie and keep them as pets for a few centuries. Well-cared for pets, but still, it's no fun being domesticated, even by a gorgeous Faerie Lady. Especially for a hundred years.

That's just the Seelie Court. The renegades (who violate the Compact under pain of the True Death if caught) are even worse. A fun time for a Faerie renegade is to find a hapless traveller alone and chase him until he nearly dies from fright. They *used* to do this only at night on lonely highways or to woodcutters trapped in the forests after dark, but a few of the more jaded types have taken to hunting in the streets of major cities. They never touch their victims. They just hound them with terrifying glamours and frightening footfalls *just behind them* until the poor soul either reaches safety or goes insane.

The worst, by far, are the Unseelie. Although the Compact prohibits open warfare between Faerie and humans, it's not too specific about acts of terrorism: kidnapping the occasional victim for a few hours of horrible "sport" or descending in ones or twos to harass a lonely village too far away or too poor to afford a local sorcerer to protect it. Sometimes entire towns just disappear—carried off into the Faerie Realms overnight. So far, no one's started a war over these few incidents, but that may just be a matter of time.

Meet the Faerie Host

In the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, the Faerie exist side by side with Humanity. But although they are common, they are not all that visible. Most are secretive and quiet: the household Brownies who come out only at night to do the chores, the Knockers who guide miners at work, the nature spirits who tend field and stream are the most common manifestations of the Good Folk. There are darker encounters as well: twisted Giants and Trolls that attack lone travellers, goblinoid Red-Caps and Boggarts who prey on the unwary. But as the Compact holds the mass of the Unseelie at bay, such incidents are few and far between.

What Is Known

Other than legends, little is actually known about these beings, but what we do know about the Faerie is fearsome enough. Grey Morrolan, Master Wizard of the Illuminated Brotherhood, has theorized (Morrolan's got a lot of theories) that the Faerie may be denizens from another "dimension", comprised of pure luminous ether—merely magical "stuff" wrapped around a core of sentient will, appearing in forms that most interest them or that have been chosen through long tradition. They can change shape or size at will, appearing as tiny humans in one instant and gigantic monsters in the next. They can make themselves invisible to all but the Talented, fly, and even pass through walls. Their most terrible power is that of the *glamour*, the ability to create fantastic illusions in the minds of others. These are only the powers of the race as a whole; each species seems to have its own specific powers related to its personal mythology: Brownies can do incredible feats of work, Banshees know when humans will die, Leprechauns grant luck, Boggarts bad fortune, Green Women creativity... the list of powers is as long as the members on it. And all are very, very powerful.

Limitations

What stops the Faerie from wiping humanity out? Very little. Each species has its own dislikes and taboos: Some fear water, others holy symbols. The presence of cold iron seems to repel or harm them, but only recently has it been scientifically determined that contact with so-called "cold" or meteoric iron will truly kill them (called the True Death). My theory is that since the Faerie are basically energy with a personality, cold iron "grounds" them, like earthing electricity. But I'm no physicist.

They are also limited by the fact that they must always keep their word; to break a vow given is tantamount to instantly destroying the very being of a Faerie. For this reason, it's very hard to get them to promise anything (much less give you a straight answer). Once given, their word binds them. For all they hate us, even the Unseelie will not openly break the Compact's promises.

Types of Faerie

The most visible of the Good Folk are the High Faerie: the "children" of Danu and the tall, willowy Sidhe, both of whom actively participate in human affairs. Throughout New European history, there have been High Faerie soldiers, inventors, politicians and the like, although with their small numbers, the Faerie Lords still stand out among their human companions.

Meanwhile, there are a lot of Faerie out there (Sometimes too damned many, if you ask me). Part of the problem is that they really don't divide clearly into types; something to be expected from a non-material race that can look like anything it wants to. In general, the only thing that limits the number of kinds of Faerie is their relative lack of imagination (creativity is something they haven't much of) and their strict adherence to tradition. If a bogie looks a certain way, you can be sure that it's because his great-great-great-great-grandfather looked that way, and not because he couldn't look like something else if he'd thought of it.

The other problem with categorizing the Faerie is that most of what we know about them has been reported by unreliable human witnesses (those that survived), and most of those incidents are scattered throughout the mythologies and legends of over a dozen New European cultures. A particular Faerie type may have several different names, depending on where you ask, and there may be any number of superstitions about how to deal with it. Most of which are wrong.

Auberon's son Cimmiric (whom I've developed a friendship with) has promised to one day compile a list for me of all of his people and their many variations. But for the time being, what I've done is to group particular common types into categories, based on similar habits and mythologies. This is by no means an exhaustive study (entire books can and have been written about Our Good Neighbors), but it should serve to explain any Faerie that turn up in my narration.

The Lesser Faerie

Lesser Faerie are creatures of limited power who live in human households, fields, mines or factories (where they can help or hinder the humans they encounter):

• Bogeys

(aka Boggarts, Imps, Bugbears, Falchans, Redcaps, Bogles, Awd Goggies, Spriggans and Goblins): Small goblinoids around five to ten inches tall; roughly human shaped, but with bizarre features (slitted pop eyes, talons or claws, tiny wings and tails) and habits. Most Bogeys are unfriendly to humans; in fact, **Redcaps** go out of their way to kill mortals and dye their pointed red hats in human blood. Bogeys are the rank and file of the Unseelie Court, performing most of its spying work, kidnappings and dirty tricks. They have also been known to gather in packs and tear mortals apart. My advice? See a Bogy, shoot it.

• Brownies

(aka Grogans, Trows, Piskies, Hobs, Bwcas, Fennoderee, Killimoulis and Gnomes): Tiny men under ten inches tall; very human like, with pointed ears and slanted eyes. **Brownies** enjoy working around humans (in secret), and are fond of practical jokes. **Bwcas** (pronounced Bookas), **Brownies** and **Fennoderee** will sew, clean, milk the cattle and feed the pets for a bowl of milk and some cheese; they often find employment in the city as secret household servants. **Killimoulis** (famed for their enormous noses) are masters of milling and have even taken to doing factory work. **Gnomes** are great craftsmen, and are adept at making tiny, clever things, as well as controlling animals. Brownies are fine to work with, but easily insulted. Whatever you do, don't offer them new clothes or money; they'll have vengeance on you if you do.

• Faerie Animals:

(**Arkan Sonney**, **Black Dogs**, **Church Grims**, **Boobries**, **Cait Siths**, **Faerie Cattle**, **Cu Sith** and **Padfoots**): Faerie who delight in taking common animal forms, delighting in dangerous practical jokes. **Cait Sith** and **Cu Sith** are huge Faerie cats and dogs who act as guards and allies to those they befriend.

The **Arkan Sonney** is a small white pig that brings luck. **Church Grims**, **Black Dogs** and **Padfoots** are all huge canines, the first guards the churchyards of friendly clergy; the others stalk and play clever tricks on lone travel-ers, (although both have been known to attack). **Boobries** are giant birds that carry off cattle and sheep, while **Faerie Cattle** often lead a farmer's herds off through the Faerie Veil.

• Fetches

(aka Co-walkers, Doppelganger, Fylgiars): Invisible Faerie who attach themselves to mortals for unknown reasons. In general, they are beneficial, protecting their chosen victim from other Faerie and general harm (people who seem to be extraordinarily lucky usually have a Fetch taking care of them).

Fylgiars often take the shape of invisible animals; **Doppelganger**, **Co-walkers** and **Fetches** are invisible as long as their mortal host is around, and materialize in his form when he isn't present. Having a Fetch is fine if you don't mind something invisible always watching over you.

• Kobolds

(aka Knockers, Blue Caps, Wichtlein and Cobyneas): Mine Faeries; helpful to mortals, but temperamental. All are adept at tunnelling, locating rare ores or gems, and warning mortals they like of impending



The Lesser Faerie

mine cave-ins (Knockers get their name from the knocking sound they make to warn humans). **Kobolds** will also lead mortals to rich veins of ore or shore up tunnels; in fact, in Bayern and Wales, the Kobolds come right out and join the miners at lunch.

• Leprechauns

(aka Clurichauns): An Irish Kobold, specializing in shoemaking, tricks and drinking whiskey (a drunk Leprechaun is called a **Clurichaun**). Leprechauns are probably descended from Irish Kobolds who, thwarted by the lack of good mining in the Emerald Isle, took up cobbling instead. While it's not true that all Leprechauns have a pot of gold, with their Kobold heritage, they can tell you where you can *find* a lot of gold. (You still have to dig it up.)

• Nymphs

(Niaads, Dryads and Nereides): Minor nature spirits, always in wispy, attractive female form. They are bound to a particular natural feature which they may not stray far from: **Dryads** have a tree they protect, **Niaads** a stream or river, and **Nereides** a specific beach. Attractive to human males, they have been known to seduce and bind their lovers to their chosen spots until they wither and waste away. However, there have been a number of Nymph-human matings that produced children. As an interesting note, I recently met a Dryad in the middle of urban Vienna; her tree had been cut up and fashioned into a Beidemeyer-style cabinet, and she moved with it!

• Phookas

(aka Brags and Bugganes): Although all Faerie can change shape to suit them, these types specialize in it, commonly taking on the forms of horses, hounds, humans and bulls (I haven't yet encountered a six-foot rabbit). Phookas are much like Fetches in that they like to attach themselves to a chosen person, but do so wear-

ing a material form. While Phookas and Bugganes are usually content to play pranks or to observe their chosen mortals, Brags actively set out to kill or injure their victims through a variety of deadly tricks. If you suddenly acquire a stray dog, horse or six-foot rabbit, touch it with some cold iron just to make sure it's real.

• Pixies

(aka Sprites, Elves and Fairies): These are the classic "fairies" people think about back home, a result of Victorian writers sentimentalizing a very dangerous group of beings. All "pixies" look something like the popular idea of Tinkerbell: tiny humans about six inches tall, dressed in leaves or bark, with gauzy wings, tiny weapons, and surrounded by a soft glow. Since Pixies like to meddle in human affairs, they've become the model for many Faerie myths, including Shakespeare's King Oberon and Queen Titania. Needless to say, Oberon is getting pretty tired of being asked where his wife is.



Mike's Note:

As a general rule, Tom seems to have casually lumped a lot of smaller Faerie types together into categories with a fine disregard for local legends or variations. For a more complete picture (that I'm not all that sure will apply to New Europa), you may want to check out Nancy Arrowsmith and George Moore's *A Field Guide to the Little People* (also see page 174-175 of this book for more info on the Faerie).

The Greater Faerie

Greater Faerie are larger, more powerful creatures who live in the wilds, away from men. They wield terrible power over nature magicks, and have inimicable ways. When humans are encountered, the result is usually dangerous or deadly to the people involved:

• Forest Women

(aka Dames Vertes, White Ladies and Giances): Guardians of forests and fields; wilderness powers given form and never seen in civilization. All of these ladies are staggeringly beautiful, with pale, youthful faces, long flowing hair and utterly graceful carriage. Forest women tend to the needs of nature with their healing powers. They have also been known to guide lost travellers and heal sick mortals, and will often willingly marry human males, living with them and even bearing children—but always under a taboo that their husbands must not break. Inevitably, the hapless lout does the wrong thing and loses his bride.

• Haunts

(aka Will-o-wisps, Jack-in-Irons, Trolls, Fachan): Faerie found on lonely dark roads at night; creatures which prey upon lone travellers. **Jack-in-Irons** is a spectral giant who beats victims to death and hangs their heads on chains about his body. The **Fachan** is a hideous one-legged, one-handed, one-eyed monster that craves human flesh. **Will-o-wisps** lead travellers into hidden danger: over precipices and into bogs where they drown. Haunts are all limited by the fact that they cannot face the light of day, and so must prey on lone victims at night. My advice: travel by train, or before sundown. And if you must travel at night, never, *ever* travel alone.

• Lake Ladies

(aka River Women, Undines, Rusalki, Gwagedd Annwns and Sirens): Much like the Forest Women, **Lake Ladies** are beautiful beyond belief, bewitching human males who encounter them. Lake Ladies live in kingdoms under lakes or rivers, but unlike Mermaids, have no tails. They also marry mortals, but always under conditions that invariably the human male forgets or breaks. Lake Ladies are much more moody than their land counterparts; if angered they have been known to drag their paramours under the waves. The gorgeous **Rusalki** of Russia have a distressing habit of luring mortal lovers into the clutches of their savage Vodyany husbands (who drown humans for fun).

• Mermaids/men

(aka Merrows, The Folk and The Blue Men): Like Lake Ladies, merpeople also have extensive underwater kingdoms. However, the “folk” do have tails (which they can shed magically for limited periods of up to twelve hours). Most **Mermen** are ugly, fishlike creatures; **Mermaids**, of course, are beautiful women with long flowing locks. Merpeople help or hinder mortals as they see fit; Mermaids are particularly fond of luring human husbands under the waves (whether they survive is unknown). The most dangerous of the merfolk are the evil Blue Men of the Minch Strait, who love to sink ships.

• Nature Spirits

(aka Pans, Satyrs, Fauns, and Pucks, Brown Men, Green Men and Leshye): If Forest Women represent the female aspect of Nature, then Nature Spirits are the male side of Nature: powerful, dangerous and often bad-tempered. **Pans, Satyrs, Fauns** and **Pucks** are goat-footed humanoids fond of music, wine and mortal females.



The Greater Faerie

Brown Men are sober forest guardians and protectors of wild beasts. The bizarre **Leshye** of Russia control immense forest domains, which they trade back and forth to pay gambling debts. Dealing with Nature Spirits is a rare and very dangerous event; these creatures have elemental power to command.

• Giants

(aka Formorians, Fimbologs, Trolls and Ogres): These are non-spectral creatures of great size and power, now dwelling in caves far from civilization or in the ruins of fallen cities. The oldest of the Giants are the **Formorians** and their allies the **Fimbolog**, two races of evil titans who battled (and were nearly destroyed by) the Tuatha de Danann shortly after the Faerie entered New Europa. Trolls and Ogres are giant cousins who stake out crossings and caves to murder all they encounter. Not as large as their kin, they make up for it by their savage lust for human flesh, which they tenderize by beating victims to death with stones and clubs.

• Selkie

(aka Roane): Another sea-living Faerie race, the Selkie normally resemble seals, porpoises or marine mammals; they are able to take human form by shedding their animal skins. If a mortal finds and takes the Selkie's hidden skin, it will give him control over the Selkie; there are a number of legendary Human-Selkie marriages based upon this form of blackmail. The Selkie have no cities, preferring either a nomadic existence, or to live as human fishermen in small seaside villages (storing their skins in very well-defended sea caves nearby). Recently, many Selkie have taken to joining the navies of New Europa as scouts and able seamen. Presumably, they're locking their skins in their seachests at night!

• Spectres

(aka Gabriel Rachets, Banshees, Bean-Nighe and Cwn Annwn): Spectres fall into the category of fearsome beasts or creatures that portend doom and destruction. Occasionally, they go beyond portents and actually harm their victims. **Gabriel Rachets** are spectral hounds who track down a doomed victim and howl over his house in warning. **Banshees** and **Bean Nighe** are wraithlike, spectral women; Banshees normally attach themselves to a hereditary mortal lineage, and appear shrieking near the doomed person's house. **Bean Nighe** are often spotted washing the victim's bloodstained clothes.

• Water Demons

(aka Nuckaleeves, Glastyn, Uisge, Jenny Greenteeth, Shellycoats, Vodyanys and Kelpies): A host of Faerie who like to lurk underwater in coves or streams until a mortal victim comes along. **Nuckaleeves** and **Kelpies** take the form of gigantic horses who lure humans to mount, then ride into the water and drown them. **Jenny Green-teeth** shapes herself as hideous old hag and lies waiting under the surface of stagnant pools to snatch children. And **Vodyanys** will drown anyone their Russalki wives can lure in!

• Vampires

(aka Baobhan Sith, Glastig and Leanan-Sidhe): Not all vampires come from Transylvania, as I soon discovered. There are versions all over the **Castle Falkenstein** world. All share the same characteristics: great beauty, sexual magnetism and an insatiable thirst for human blood. Few are stopped by garlic, the cross or daylight. The **Leanan Sidhe** are particularly nasty: They exchange blood for creativity, so that the victim wastes away even as his writing or harping becomes brilliant.



The High Faerie

Possessed of fearsome powers and terrifying abilities, the High Faerie are the rulers of the two Courts, Seelie and Unseelie. The Seelie Court's High Faerie favor humanoid forms, while the Unseelie take nightmarish forms with some naturalistic elements. They are all, without exception, very, very dangerous:

• The Tuatha De Danu

The *Tuatha De Danu* (Children of the God[dess?] Danu) were part of the original Faerie to enter New Europa; in their original forms, they were huge red-blond giants of dazzling features and fearsome fighting powers, who later took more reduced forms as they dealt with humanity. Most of the Tuatha were wiped out in a pyrrhic battle with the giant Formorians and Furbolog called the Nightfall War; their descendants have become the Daoine Sidhe, a lesser race created by mating with mortal stock. Besides being literal giants, the Tuatha were also skilled sorcerers in their own right, something no other race of Faerie is capable of. I suspect Lord Auberon may be of Tuathan stock; he has been known to cast powerful spells and there is something about him that causes even the terrifying Lords of the Unseelie to pause.

• The Daoine Sidhe

Descendants of the Tuatha, created by interbreeding with humans (mostly Irish). The Daoine Sidhe are the closest thing to classic Tolkien Elves: tall, fair, beautiful and infinitely graceful. Unlike their ancestors, they cannot use magick (no other Faerie can), but they are skilled in the arts of glamour and warfare. In fact, the Daoine Sidhe take great pleasure in battle and are highly respected as warriors. Where the

Tuatha did not often deal with mortals, the Daoine Sidhe have an active part in human society, and to a great extent enjoy it. This may be simply because the bloodlines of both races are by now fairly intermixed; humans acquired the Gift of perceiving Power from the Sidhe, while the High Faerie have gained a greater resistance to iron. The Daoine Sidhe are famed for their musical skills, fine hunting and horsemanship, and witty banter. They are also known for their abilities as seducers; the term "faerie lover" is always applied to a particularly sexy paramour.

• The Unseelie

Host

(aka Lords of the Unseelie): Not all of the Formorians were wiped out in the Nightfall War many years ago; some survived, their numbers decimated by the terrible battles. They took to kidnapping mortal females and forcing them to bear their offspring.

It was a bitter pill for the proud ex-Formorians to swallow, and over the millennia, the humiliation of having mortal blood intermixed with theirs festered into a combination of self-loathing and violent racial hatred.

Since the Unseelie see the Daoine Sidhe as the authors of all their problems, the Dark Lords have a particular hatred for their Light cousins. Their devious cunning has made them the natural leaders of the Unseelie Court. While the majority of the Unseelie would be content to subjugate humanity and beat Auberon, the Dark Lords will settle only for Mankind's destruction and the Daoine Sidhe's utter annihilation.



For more on the High Faerie, see pg. 175

The Faerie Veil

Imagine a featureless Place: no top, bottom, sides or sky. Only a swirling maelstrom of shifting blue light. Like being trapped in a cloud chamber, or the bottom of a special effects whirlpool. This is the real Faerie Veil, the Land of Unreason.

Forget all the stories you've read about how Faerie is a place of wondrous streams of jasmine wine and mushroom forests. That's merely a projection of will the Veil's inhabitants place upon its fabric, a dream state projected for their own comfort, and the sanity of any mortal "guests." The pure state of the Veil is a featureless nimbus of energy, shifting, swirling patterns of glowing blue fire. From this vortex of pure power, which occupies the space between material universes, come the Faerie, a pure energy-based lifeform possessed of will and sentience.

Faerie Doorways

To creatures with intellect, the Faerie Veil's pure insubstantialness is a cross between sensory deprivation and a light show. This is one reason why the Faerie find it so hard to be creative; they evolved in a place where nothing existed except themselves, and even they were only energy patterns in the roiling matrix. It wasn't until the first and most powerful of their race managed to open a doorway into a mortal universe that they even grasped the idea of permanence and form. But once they realized there was more than shifting patterns of light, they were hooked; they came pouring into each new universe they could enter, delighting in form and solidity, taste and sensation. It was the beginning of their addiction to Man and his creations, and the start of the Unseelie's undying hatred of their mortal rivals.

The Boundaries of the Veil are endless; it is a realm that touches on all the mortal universes that ever have been or ever will be. You enter the Veil through those

portals traditionally opened by the Faerie themselves: standing stones, rings of flowers, pebble circles, Faerie mounds or caves (and recently closets and doors). These are the traditional entryways available to the majority of the Faerie. Only the most powerful of their Kindred (like Auberon or his Adversary) can create new doorways, they or very powerful human sorcerors. Thus, it is a major event among the Courts when a new doorway is opened, especially one into a new universe.

As the Faerie returned home periodically to their shadow world, they began to turn their considerable wills towards shaping it into copies of what they had seen beyond the Veil. But the limit of the Veil is that while its most powerful denizens can impose their will upon it, it is the reality of a dream: unchanging, unoriginal and all too boringly perfect. So the Faerie are forced to, time and again, return to the lands of men for innovation, originality and excitement.

The Courts

By the time of the infamous Nightfall War, the many visions of the Veil had been coalesced into two, around which centered the two courts of Faerie. The Seelie Court shaped the image of the Faerie Veil most known to humans: a land of eternal Spring, gossamer castles floating on clouds, parks filled with gigantic flowers and mushroom forests, and flowing streams of sparkling wines. The Unseelie, in turn, shaped a Faerie of endless, twisted dark woods, foetid swamps and flaming pits of lava. They are two separate kingdoms floating in the eternal lightflow of the Veil, held only by the wills of their respective rulers. But both Courts still hunger for the substance of mortal reality; a new world means a new place for the Seelie to revel in and for the Unseelie to plunder and terrorize. And the decision as to who will rule is the primal source of the warfare of the Faerie.



Pounds 'N Pence

Buying things would be a lot easier if I only travelled in one country, say France. But since I travel all over the Continent and deal with at least five kinds of currency (not to mention the currencies of the hundreds of tiny Balkan and South German states) there really isn't an easy way to say "... it costs this much."

But everybody (even the British) has *pennies*; copper coins that are the lowest common denominator, they also have a general money value that other monetary amounts are measured by, which is generally called *currency*. Since most nations on the Continent avail themselves of the Rothschild Bank and other international money lenders, currencies on the Continent are all in decimal values: there are always 100 pennies to one unit of currency. To simplify things, I'll always refer to prices in either pennies (p) or currency (c), only referring to the local names for each if it's really important. Any costs will be listed in Continental examples:

Country	Pennies	Currency
America	Penny	Dollar
Austria	Pfennig	Florin
Bayern	Pfennig	Guilder
Britain	Penny	Pound
France	Centime	Franc
Prussia	Pfennig	Mark
Russia	Kopek	Ruble

Only among the stubborn British (with their own arcane monetary system of pounds, shillings, ha'pennies, guineas, threepence and whatnot) will you find 200 pence equalling a pound. So as a rule of thumb, when converting Continental money to British, divide your *cash* by two; when buying Continental things with pounds, divide your *cost* by two.

Like most New Europeans, I hate the British monetary system, since they require that you convert your perfectly good money to pounds to buy things in their stodgy old Empire.

But Not Everything is Battles & Balrogs ...

And we don't spend all our time cowering under the beds with big Cold Iron crosses and reciprocators loaded. To be honest, since I run with an adventurous set, I encounter far more danger (both human and non-human) in a week than most people here encounter in a lifetime. If you keep company with fine upstanding citizens like an Illuminatus Wizard, a Faerie Lord, the Head of a Secret Service and a Dwarfish Mad Scientist, you can expect that your life isn't going to be like living in the London suburbs. Maybe I'm crazy, but I seem to be thriving on it.

So what is life like when you're not battling Dragons, thwarting the Wild Hunt and making sure that some Mastermind isn't planning to inflict a new and even more destructive Infernal Device on an unwitting world? Or investigating ruined castles and hunting down immensely powerful magickal creatures?

Embarassingly enough, sometimes I go *shopping*.



Yeah, I know it sounds crazy for any red-blooded American male to get into, but you can buy some *great* stuff here. The first month I was in New Europa, I bought a matched pair of ivory-handled "revolvers", a gold hilted saber with engraving on the blade, and a really cool black frock coat with hundreds of hidden pockets big enough to hide an army. I *love* that coat; it makes me look like a combination of Clint Eastwood in *High Plains Drifter* and Basil Rathbone in *Hound of the Baskervilles*. And you can even hide a reciprocator in the sleeves. I'm also a regular customer at all the local Gadgeteer shops (the 1800's equivalent of a *Sharper Image* store), where I buy walking sticks with smoke grenades, shoes with secret telegraphic equipment, and pocketwatches with hidden dart throwers.

It helps to have an expense account financed by a King.

I also go walking around looking at the sights; the street scene painting in this journal (in an Impressionist style loosely copied from Edouard Manet, who's popular in Paris right now) is from one of my walks. I attend the Theater and watch the latest plays with Marianne (although she couldn't get me to go to the Opera, even at swordpoint). There are always plenty of Exhibitions and Lectures to attend; Dr. Richard Owen did a touring show of his new Dinosaur models (I didn't have the heart to tell him how wrong he was) last month in London, and I've even seen Charles Dickens do a parlor reading of one of his short stories. I haven't seen the divine Sarah Bernhardt on stage yet, but I plan to. There's a *lot* to do here, and I'm hard-pressed to cram in as much as I can. But I haven't stopped trying—at least not yet!

It's Also an Age of Great Cities...



also travel. A lot, in fact.

Gaslights flickering in the foggy streets of London. The rising sun spreading in red and gold from the top of Montmartre in Paris. The brilliant carnival lights of the Prater amusement park in Old Vienna. The chilly white minarets and Arabian towers of a snowy Petrograd winter. Rome rolling its winding streets and ancient ruins over the sun baked hills. These are just a few of my favorite scenes from Steam Age city life, a life filled with all kinds of adventure.

In London, I get the highs and the lows: the teeming slums where street criminals lurk and plot in their incomprehensible thieves' cant, all the way to the grand Regency townhouses along Hyde Park in the West End where the fashionable set hangs out. London is the most "steampunk" city of them all; all it needs is neon signs and flying steamcars to complete the picture of urban squalor side by side with the powerful Industrial Trusts of the Steam Lords who really run England.

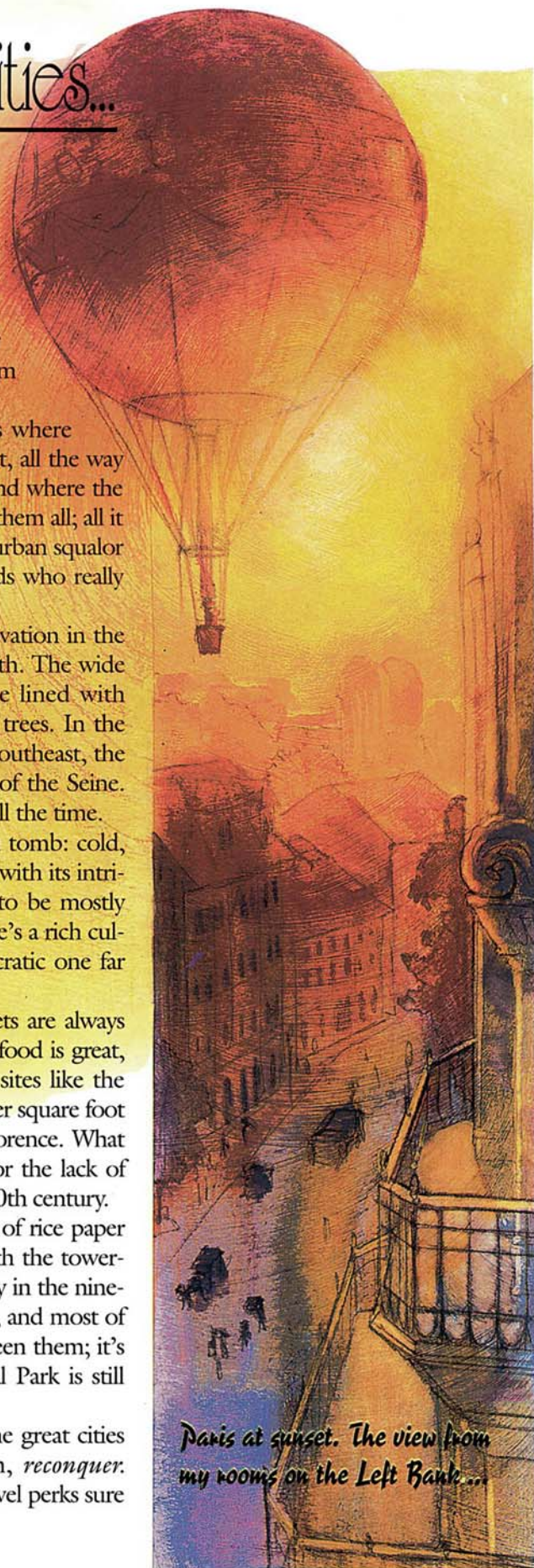
Paris is another world entirely. Since Napoleon III's great renovation in the 1860's, the City of Light is one of the most beautiful cities on earth. The wide avenues, laid out by the master architect Baron Haussman, are lined with sophisticated shops and cafes, and shaded by ranks of leafy green trees. In the center of the city stands the great Arc de Triomphe, while to the southeast, the Louvre and Notre Dame rise majestically above the placid banks of the Seine. Nights in Paris are gay, festive and like being at a really great party all the time.

If Paris is vibrant and alive, Petrograd (St. Petersburg) is like a tomb: cold, remote and starkly beautiful. I like the Tsar's great Summer Palace with its intricate, sort of Russo-Arabic design, but the rest of the city seems to be mostly stone buildings whipped by icy winds off the Gulf of Finland. There's a rich cultural life here in the Russian capital, but it's a very formal, aristocratic one far removed from the miserable peasant's life on the street.

Rome is, well, Rome. It's always hot when I'm there; the streets are always crowded with shouting, busy people, and the dust is choking. The food is great, the mail service terrible, and the sights historic. Besides obvious sites like the Colosseum, Circus Maximus and the Forum, there are more ruins per square foot in Rome than in any other place in New Europa except maybe Florence. What fascinates me most about Rome, though, is the fact that, except for the lack of electricity, cars and airplanes, it looks almost *exactly* like it did in the 20th century.

I've also explored Tokyo—or rather, *Edo*: a crowded collection of rice paper and bamboo buildings crammed together in a hodgepodge beneath the towering stone walls of the Shogun's Fortress. Meanwhile, New York City in the nineteenth century is still strangely rural: There are few roads in the city, and most of the buildings are large brownstone homes with a lot of space between them; it's more like a suburb than a major metropolitan area. Even Central Park is still open countryside.

London, Paris, St. Petersburg, New York, Tokyo and Rome: the great cities of the Steam Age world, all spread like new worlds to—hmm, *reconquer*. Working for a Secret Organization may have its dangers, but the travel perks sure make up for it.



Paris at sunset. The view from my rooms on the Left Bank...

Horsing Around

The automobile of the 18th century has four legs and eats grass. It goes by the elegant brand name of the **horse**.

Raised as I was in a freeway culture, it was hard to imagine a time when mass transit was still in its infancy. But until someone invents (a) reliable automobiles and (b) decent roads, horses will probably still be the most reliable way for getting from place to place in New Europa, carriages and cabriolets (cabs) notwithstanding. Which is why this section is important.

Hey, the train doesn't go *everywhere*.

Types of Horses

There are quite a few types of horses, each pretty specialized as to function. **Racehorses** are the speedy denizens of the track: expensive, pampered and high strung. **Hacks** are the everyday horse: the Toyotas of Victorian streets, used for getting to and fro without a lot of speed. **Hunters** are generally raised for the chase, and are fast, durable and sleek; they are also very similar to the cavalry mounts I often ride. **Mares** and **geldings** are the every day riding horse of the well-to-do; dependable, and reasonably fast, they are used most often to pull carriages of the one-horse, two-horse (a *matched pair*), or four-horse (called a *four in hand*) variety. **Cobs** are heavy-duty draft horses for pulling large wagons or carrying really fat burghers on the way to market. Women and children usually ride **ponies**, which are smaller, lighter and easier to control, or even hitch them to pony carts. Finally, there are **heavy warhorses** (used for the massive cavalry attacks common to the period), and **stallions** (fiery and unpredictable, but a mark of status for the hussar who can tame one).

Horse Speeds

I remember a lot of rabid discussion of horsepower in gaming circles back home, based mostly on tables and charts. Now that I deal with the bloody things on a daily basis, I have a better idea of what they really can do. Top horseback speed is usually about 50 miles a day, say 15 miles an hour, with plenty of stops and walking along the way. A carriage team might get up to 11 mph for short trips of less than an hour!

Horse Upkeep

The darned things are also expensive; a hunter or carriage horse can cost anywhere from 100c to 200c, and a hack up to 40c. Better to buy a cheap donkey for a few silvers.

Don't forget, you have to feed them too! And horses only have a useful life of around six or seven years (The harder working ones may only make it up to four years). Now I know why I preferred cars.

Carriages

If you don't feel up to riding, the next best option is to take a carriage. The standard four wheel carriage is known as a **coach**; it seats up to six com-

fortably and is drawn by four to six horses; it is the epitome of social standing to have your own. A smaller four-person coach is known as a **victoria**. If you don't want a clunky carriage, a **gig**, **brougham** or **surrey** (two wheeled vehicles driven by a single horse or matched pair) is the equivalent of a sporty roadster. And lastly, if you don't want to own your own rig, **fiacres** (Vienna), **hansoms** (London) and **cabriolets** (Paris) are all varieties of common, two-wheeled, one- or two-horse taxis that can be hired in all major cities.

Type	Description	Cost	Speed
Donkey	Cart hauling, cheap travel.....	1-3c	5mph
Pony	Small horse for children.....	10-30c	10mph
Hack	Everyday cheap horse.....	25-40c	10mph
Cob	Draft or heavy horse.....	25-40c	6mph
Mare	Gentle female riding horse.....	50-60c	12mph
Gelding	Gentled riding horse.....	50-60c	12mph
Hunter	Cavalry/hunting horse.....	100-200c	15mph
Warhorse	Heavy cavalry mount.....	200-250c	12mph
Stallion	Spirited riding mount.....	200-250c	15mph
Racehorse	 Fast, temperamental.....	500-1000c	25mph
Yearly upkeep for stabling, feeding, grooming.....		60-100c	
Tack (saddle, bridle, etc.)		25-50c	
Renting from livery stable		40-50p a day, 85c a year	
Coach.....		100-300c	
Victoria.....		50-100c	
Gig or Surrey.....		50-80c	
Cab(fiacre, hansom) rental		0.12p per person+.06p per mile	

Trains, Ships &...Automotives?

But what if you have to go someplace where a horse won't do the job? When you have to cross a whole continent or an ocean only trains, ships or an automotive will fit the bill.

Trains

Next to horses and carriages, trains are the most common way of getting around in New Europa (the map on pages 30-31 shows the major routes). Most large cities and all capitals have stations along these lines. Trains aren't all that common yet in the *Falkenstein* world, what with Faerie nature spirits and sorcerors ripping up the tracks (all that steel affects sorcery in very annoying ways). Steam Age trains also aren't known for their creature comforts; noisy, slow (about 70 mph tops) and generally filthy, they are still pretty much in their infancy.

There are four principal types of train travel. The first, the **Private Coach**, is a full apartment in miniature, with 2-6 bedrooms, a sitting room and a dining room; most royalty and wealthy travellers either own or hire one of these. A **1st or 2nd Class Coach** is made up of enclosed booths that seat four people facing each other; the better the class, the nicer the seats. An **Open Car** seats up to fifty people in benchlike rows.

In London, the recent installation of the **Underground** (named so even though about half of it is in big open trenches) allows city dwellers to get around town cheaply, although the trains are horrible, smoky affairs and the cars little more than open cattle cars. So far, this innovation hasn't reached the rest of New Europa, thank God.

Sailing Ships

The other most common means of transport around New Europa are ships. About one third of these are traditional **sailing ships** little changed from the craft of the 1700's. Expect leaky hulls, creaking sails and occasional days of doldrums when the winds are poor. But you can always find a merchant going your way.

Vane Clippers

One of the more bizarre forms of aquatic transportation available in this world (about 1/3rd of all shipping)

are **vane clippers**; a hybrid between a windmill and a clipper ship, with huge wind-driven propellers cranking chains that connect below to a propeller. The big advantage to vane clippers is that they aren't as dependent on the wind—they don't need to tack; you just turn the props!

Steamships

The last third of all shipping in New Europa is **steam powered**, with reliable and speedy engines. These paddle or propellered steamships are rapidly replacing the old sailers. Already a few great liners like the *Great Western* have been built for the Trans-

Atlantean luxury trade. Fast, reliable, but pricey transport.

... & Automotives

The most recent innovation in New European transport is **automotives**: steam-powered vehicles resembling a car crossed with a locomotive. Cantankerous and expensive, they are usually only seen in cities where the roads are good. For more on these, see my notes on *Anachrotech* (pg.52).

Sample Fares & Passage Costs

FARES ARE FOR ONE PERSON ONLY

TRAIN FARES

Railway Train (50-70mph)

1st Class	3p per mile
2nd Class Coach	2p per mile
Open Car	1p per mile

London "Underground" 1p per station

SHIP PASSAGE

Small Steam Launch/Riverboat 2-2p per mile
Steamer (400mi/day)

1st Class	1c per 100 miles
2nd Class	1p per 100 miles
Steerage	50p per 100 miles

Vane Clipper (300mi/day, w/favorable winds)

1st Class	1c per 100 miles
2nd Class	50p per 100 miles
Steerage	25p per 100 miles

Sailing Ship (200mi/day, w/favorable winds)

1st Class	50p per 100 miles
2nd Class	25p per 100 miles
Steerage	10p per 100 miles

OTHER PASSAGES

Automotive rental (20mph)	50p per mile
Automotive purchase	200-400c

Dressing the Part

Clothing in the 1800's makes the man (or woman). It's a measure of your social standing, how much people can take you seriously, and even where you can go. The wrong outfit can get you snubbed or even thrown out of some places (bad news if you're trying to make a contact or conduct an Investigation).

I Knew He Was a Gentleman From His Clothes ...

Luckily, I have access to one of the leading lights of men's sartorial splendour, HRH Albert Edward, Prince of Wales. Bertie may not yet be King, but he's definitely the king of fashion in the Empire and abroad. According to Bertie, the well-dressed gentleman of any civilized nation must have the following:

Top hat: Narrow brimmed, high-crowned, collapsible black hat. A **bowler** (a round topped hat with a small brim) can also be worn, but it's a sign that you're incurably middle class.

Good boots: Forget shoes. Good black or brown boots are better for wading through muddy streets, and you never know when you'll have to ride a horse.

Linen shirts and silk ties: Fine linen is very important; clean, starched shirts are hard to keep that way, and those who can do so automatically gain in status points. A lot like 20th century tuxedo shirts, with loose body and sleeves, and thin tab collars that the tie is folded under. Silk is best for ties, which are tied cravat-style.

Gloves: Essential. Besides protecting your hands when riding or giving an enemy a good thrashing, they're also another sign of a gent.

Cane or Umbrella: The cane is the 1800's equivalent of the 1700's court sword. Most are weighted

with lead (making them deadly clubbing weapons), or have swords inside. A true gentleman is never without one.

Cape or overcoat: A huge, swirling affair with a shorter "capelet" over the top. Better than an overcoat, because you can hide more weapons under it. Overcoats are double-breasted and reach to the knees.

Tweed or woolen suit: Basic three piece suit: waistcoat (vest), tapered trousers and jacket. The jacket tends to be a little longer in back than front.

Long frock coat: Worn for more formal business occasions, it's the typical long coat you see "Victorians" wearing in movies like *Around the World in 80 Days*.

Formal suit: Long, black tailcoat with matching trousers, white waistcoat and shirt. Sometimes a sash is worn around the waist or diagonally over the shoulder (when worn this way, medals and decorations can be pinned to it). For a very formal event, the tie is white. White gloves are a must. A gentleman must have a formal suit if he is going to the Opera, a ball or a formal dinner. The only other option (which I usually take) is to wear "regimentals": a full uniform complete with medals and sword.



Women's Wear, Daily

I'm constantly amazed at the wild variations of women's clothing in the *Falkenstein* world. The "look" right now is a one piece "frock" with a high collar, full-bosomed blouse, puffy sleeves and long skirt piled up frothily on the floor. Yet, I've also run into 1900's style "Gibson Girl" outfits, crinolines, bustles, picture hats, suit-dresses and other weird sartorial anomalies. One never-changing standard is the

Dressing the Part

corset; that tight, one-piece tummy-chest binder so beloved of lingerie magazines back home. Even practical Marianne wears one on formal occasions (her first action in a duel is to cut the laces so that she can breathe). Although Marianne is equally comfortable in a uniform as she is in a frock, it doesn't mean she doesn't have a female's discernment about fashion; here's what she thinks a well-dressed lady should have in her travelling trunk:

Lingerie: The foundation of a lady's wardrobe. Corsets in several colors, stockings to match, a selection of chemises and matching pantalettes. In silk, of course, and liberally doused with perfume.

Afternoon or visiting dresses: Simple, elegant frock of silk or satin with a draped skirt, high collar, bustle. There's an entire art to holding the skirt daintily to one side as you walk, so you can show off your expensive lace petticoats to admiring gentlemen.

Morning or country dresses: You wear these when you're visiting someone's estate in the country, or when lounging at home. Embroidered muslin with taffeta underskirts for that all important rustling *frou-frou* sound as you walk.

Linen blouses: Classic "Gibson Girl" styles, with wide yoked bosoms, high collars and puffy leg o' mutton sleeves.

Evening gown: Heavy silk, velvet or taffeta gown, with miles of flounces, ruffles, embroideries and long, contrasting underskirts. Pearls, gems or ribbons are worn in the hair and around the neck. The ultimate is an exclusive gown designed by *Worth of Paris*, the most famous boutique of the 1800's.

Dinner dress: Formal version of the afternoon dress: very tight heavy silk, brocade or velvet skirt and a very low bodice with ropes of pearls, Dwarfen gold chains, or Celtic-style Faerie jewelry adorning your slim neck.

Capes or shawls: Floor-length capes are popular. The best shawls are of silk from India, with heavy silk fringe.

Fan, parasol, muff: Useful for making gestures, swirling elegantly, and for hiding all kinds of clever devices.

Hats: No woman can possibly have enough hats: huge "picture" hats to shade your face, tiny caps, straw boaters like gentlemen wear, velvet top hats. Marianne likes to conceal gadgets, daggers, garrottes and other useful items in her otherwise silly-looking chapeaus.

Hatpins: The self defense weapon of choice for a modest lady of Society. The average hatpin is a six inch spring steel spike, with a large head that's easy to get a grip on. As bad as a dagger, some are even poisoned.



Some Prices

MENSWEAR

Business Suit	1-2c
Cane	1-2c
Formal Suit	20-25c
Frock Coat	3-6c
Pocketwatch	1c
Silk Top Hat	2c

LADIESWEAR

Cape	2-3c
Chemise	1c
Corset	1-2c
Evening Gown	30-100c
Fan	1c
Formal Dinner Dress	10-25c
Frock	2-3c
Hat	1-3c
Hatpins (10)	1c
High-button shoes	5-10c
Pantalettes	75p-2c
Parasol	1c
Petticoats	1-2c
Reticule (purse)	1-2c
Shawl	50p-1c
Worth of Paris Gown	200-500c

The Queen's English (or Whatever)

You'll notice I'm writing this entire letter in English instead of transcribing conversation from the languages they were originally spoken in. Though my German and Italian are passable, thanks to years of high school and college classes, I have deliberately translated most conversations here in New Europa into Standard American English. And I mean *American*, not British English (which is something else entirely).

See, unlike someone writing only from Victorian England, I live and travel all over the Continent. So translating things to fit the colorful slang and accents of typical "Victorian" fiction just doesn't work for France or Bayern; their natives all have their own slangs and habits.

So instead of trying to write everything in five or six languages, the best I can do is give you a few Victorianisms common to all New Europa.

1) **Language is more formal.** People speak with fewer contractions, greater clarity and more educated words. For example, use *shan't* or *cannot* instead of *can't*. And *enunciate* clearly, *old chap*. The best suggestion? Read Jules Verne's novels, A. Conan Doyle's stories or the conversations in this letter. Even if the language is different, you'll get the feel, and that's the most important part.

2) **Oaths are more exaggerated.** *Great Scott!*, *Mein Gott!*, *Sacré Bleu!* and *By God!* are all typical Victorian ways of showing shock and surprise.

3) **Insults are more picturesque.** *Cad*, *bounder*, *scoundrel* and *villain* are favorite terms used to

describe evildoers, and *dastardly* or *outrageous* (as in *This is an outrage!*) to describe their fiendish activities.

4) **Everyone (including the toughest and most rugged of men) sounds a lot more emotional.** If Queen Victoria can't help underlining everything, or emphasizing her expressions with *Italics* and Capital

Letters, at least she isn't alone; everyone here talks in overblown, highly emotion-charged language. Even tough guys like Otto von Bismarck aren't immune as this speech of his to King William of Prussia shows:

"—Yes, we shall be dead, [Your Majesty], but we must die sooner or later and can we perish more creditably? I myself in fighting for the cause of my king; Your Majesty in sealing your divine right with your blood? Whether shed on the scaffold or on the battlefield ... you would be gloriously staking your life for the rights conferred on you by the grace of God!"

Or take this typical Mastermind's rant from Robur the Conqueror:

"—My machine is neither French nor German, Austrian nor Russian, English nor American. It is my own! With it, I hold control of the entire world, and

there lies no force within the reach of humanity which is able to resist me!"

Talk about chewing the scenery.

So if sometimes the dialogue I describe sounds a little like something out of a bad historical novel, remember—they really do talk that way in 1870. It's not my fault, honest!

Talking, New European Style

(Or, Language Prof. Henry Higgins Would Approve Of)

As a general rule, people over here talk a lot like they do back home in their respective countries. However, language is a lot more formal, with lots of longer words and formal expressions. Below are a few important differences I've noticed in my travels:

New Europeans Use This	Instead of:
<i>Astounding!</i>	<i>Awesome!</i>
<i>Bobby, Guard, Gendarme or Constable</i>	<i>cop</i>
<i>Bounder, Cad or Rogue</i>	<i>SOB, bastard</i>
<i>By God!, Great Scott, Merde, Sacré</i>	
<i>Bleu! (French), Mein Gott! (Germanic)</i>	<i>Damn</i>
<i>Cashiered</i>	<i>fired or "canned"</i>
<i>Dear Fellow, Chap or Friend</i>	<i>Hey, Dude!</i>
<i>Fiendish or Dastardly</i>	<i>Bad or Sneaky</i>
<i>Flat or rooms</i>	<i>apartment</i>
<i>Holiday</i>	<i>Vacation</i>
<i>I say!</i>	<i>Hey, there!</i>
<i>Lady, Damoselle, Fraulein</i>	<i>woman, girl</i>
<i>Master or Mister</i>	<i>just a last name</i>
<i>Miss or Mrs.</i>	<i>Ms.</i>
<i>Not at Liberty</i>	<i>I can't</i>
<i>Shan't</i>	<i>Can't</i>
<i>Shouldn't</i>	<i>Wouldn't</i>
<i>Solicitor</i>	<i>Lawyer</i>
<i>Slain or foully murdered</i>	<i>killed or "wasted"</i>
<i>Gave Him A Sound Thrashing</i>	<i>I beat him up</i>
<i>Trousers</i>	<i>Pants</i>
<i>Waistcoat</i>	<i>Vest</i>

The Ladies of Falkenstein

New Europa may have some of the most beautiful females I've ever seen: gorgeous, swan-like creatures with vast, expressive eyes, piles of ringletted hair, huge picture hats and miles of frothy, insubstantial gowns. I know there are homely women here; the odds say they have to exist. But I rarely meet them. Instead, my days are filled with the swish of satin gowns, sloe-eyed glances and heady waves of perfume. (Yeah. Right. I *hate* it so much; can't you tell?)

Emancipated Womanhood

One of the best things about this "Neo-Victorian Age" is that women also generally have a higher status than they did in our own. I rarely run across the fainting, frivolous frou-frou you read about in historical romances (unless the particular lady wants to appear that way). Emancipation seems to have made vast inroads throughout the Steam Age; most civilized nations allow women a vote and to own property, for starters. Although it's not terribly commonplace, ladies in New Europa run businesses, make investments, go exploring, write books and travel extensively. Some have even been known to join the military (either in disguise or as mercenaries). Of course, you can bet a woman soldier is one tough customer; some of Marianne's friends would make Rambo look like a wimp by comparison.

You also don't encounter a lot of the Victorian paterfamilias lording it over the middle class housewife; a clever, highly educated wife is considered to be a reflection upon any husband, the more accomplished, the better *he* looks. About the only place I've ever encountered massive resistance to female membership are the Universities, Sporting Events, the Military and Medicine—and even these bastions are crumbling bit by bit under waves of accomplished and skilled women (although it may be

a few decades before the armed services give in altogether and allow women to fight on the battlefields instead of in specialized support corps).

Another Social World

No, the kind of separation of the sexes in New Europa seems to be along social, not economic lines. Gentlemen, for instance, have their Clubs and organizations; no lady would ever think to barge into these sanctums. On the other hand, the gentle sex has its Soirées and Salons where witty and educated ladies gather to discuss topics of the day strictly without the interference of males. While there are places where each sex has its own dominion, the rest of the social world of balls, theater, art shows and hunting is pretty evenly shared by all.

I'm at a loss to explain this departure from the Victorian norm; the only theory I can come up with is that since this world is so much more honorable, courtly and generally civilized, there's less threat in treating women with equality. Of course, there's also Morrolan's theory to consider: Women more commonly have the Gift, so maybe they've been using it to influence civilization.

Not to mention the fact that the woman you try to oppress may well turn out to be a Faerie Lady with a bad temper and the power to back it.

In any case the ladies of the *Castle Falkenstein* world are still, at the heart, ladies. It's as though in being accepted as *equals*, they were able to keep the qualities that made them feminine: manners, intelligence, wit and beauty. But don't let the frills and fripperies kid you. The women I've met here can be tough as nails, and can hold their own with a sword or pistol as well as most men. And only an idiot crosses them under any circumstances.



Marianne and I at the Coronation Ball. In this painting, I concentrated more on Marianne's gown than my own clothes ... after all, as she informed me, "Mon brave hussar, a uniform, no matter how fine, is still a uniform. But a Worth gown—ah, that is a work of art!"

...An Age of Glamour & Sophistication—

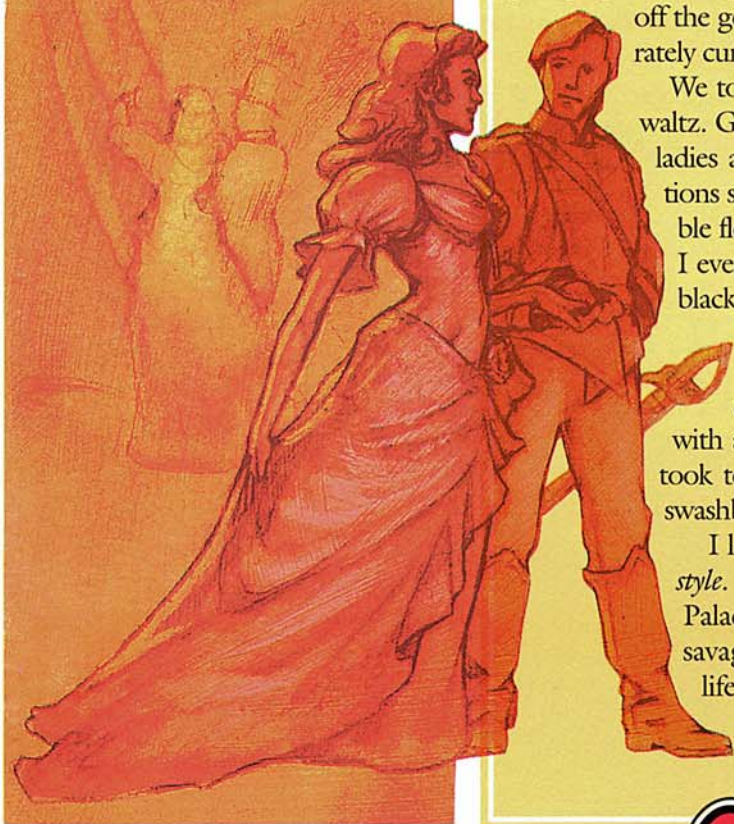
There's an entire glamorous transcontinental Society here in New Europa, of glittering Balls, sophisticated Salons and suave, witty gents and gorgeous ladies. This is the part of the "Victorian Age" everyone always seems to overlook in the history books; the style and dash that earned this time the sobriquet of *The Golden Age*. We always think Victorian life was just dirty London slums, and it really isn't so. There's a heroic, romantic side as well.

For example, let me describe the first time I attended a formal Ball. It was right after King Ludwig's coronation, and I was decked out in the most *incredible* outfit I'd ever worn: tight black riding breeches with gold inseams, a stiff, red, silk tunic heavy with braid and shiny medals, high black hussar boots with swashbuckler cuffs, and a high red uniform shako with a stiff plume. The intricate gold swirls of Hungarian knotting decorated my cuffs, matching the filigreed and bejeweled saber that hung on my hip. My *sabretaché*, an oblong hussars "purse" decorated with braid and unit insignia of the 24th Bayernese Lancers, dangled below that. I looked great.

But Marianne looked even better, in a gown from the exclusive House of Worth in Paris, a gorgeous, creamy satin confection, with huge bell sleeves and a plunging décolletage. Faerie lace frothed and foamed at hem and cuffs, setting off the gems and tiny light spells Morrolan had woven into her elaborately curled hair.

We took a carriage to the Residenz, where a full orchestra led the waltz. Glitteringly uniformed officers swirled bejeweled and beautiful ladies around in the Grand Promenade, and their dazzling reflections shimmered in a blaze of crystal chandeliers and polished marble floors, carried along by a heady scent of roses and champagne. I even ran into Morrolan, suavely elegant in white tie and formal black, a beautiful blonde in a shimmery blue gown on his arm and a flute of Moët in his gloved hand. Later, we waltzed past Colonel Tarlenheim, splendidly martial in full uniform and chromed, plumed helmet, engaging in conversation with a Faerie gentleman whom (from his uniform and medals) I took to be a French officer. It was like something right out of a swashbuckling movie: glamorous, dashing and really cool.

I like this aspect of the Falkensteinian world, because it's got *style*. It's the part where you have romantic assignations in the Palace garden, pass secret documents during a waltz, and duel savagely in the cold moonlight. It's a little bit of what makes life in *this* Steam Age something to look back on as a more stylish, civilized time.



In Society

Life isn't all just duels and Dragons in the Steam Age. There's a large and complex social side to Neo-Victorian life that is just as interesting as the technology—the part I call “Being In Society”.

The Season

Much of Being In Society revolves around what's called the “Season,” a sort of social round that combines yearly events with places where fashionable sorts go to be “seen.” The Season begins just after Easter, when the wealthy and noble leave their country estates and visit capitals all over the Continent to attend winter parties and balls. In London, the start of the Season corresponds with the opening of Parliament; in Paris, the Season takes off with the opening of the official, government-sponsored Salon of the Royal Académie, a competition in which the best artists in France compete to exhibit their works in the Louvre. In Vienna, Munich and Berlin, grand Royal Balls open the festivities, allowing the ladies to show off their new wardrobes and the debutantes to be presented at Court. Each month brings new events that must be attended: in May, the opening of the Royal Academy of Art, and the Opera; in June, races at Ascot and the Derby. House parties and visits to the chateaus, villas and castles of the well-to-do are scattered throughout the summer, providing a fine background for a bit of hunting, fine dining and discreet bedroom adventuring. Late in summer, the fashionable set journeys to “take the cure” in exclusive hot spring spas like *Marienbad* in Austria and *Baden-Baden* in the Rhineland. Besides their medicinal charms, the spas are popular places for musicians, painters and great writers to mingle with the social scene, as well as being good for liaisons, assignations, casino gambling and the other types of naughtiness well-heeled Steam Agers are so fond of.

The Season ends in July with the summer yachting at Cowes. Here, millionaires and Princes race their fastest boats in the great Regatta. Then it's back to the estates and castles to rest up for another Season.

The Club

Another important part of New European social life revolves around the Club. A Club is a combination private hotel, reading library and dining room frequented by like minded individuals. A good club has everything a member might ask for: a well stocked larder and dining room, wood-panelled libraries and reading rooms featuring the latest books and newspapers, and smoking rooms with heavy leather chairs and open bars.

Membership (costs pg.166) in a Club is always by nomination by a member, and a single nay vote can blackball you from joining. The most exclusive Club in the *Falkenstein* world is the *Marlborough* (limited to personal friends of the Prince of Wales). Other clubs include the *Reform* in London, the *Legion* in Paris, and the *Explorer's Club* in Bayern.

In New Europa, there are exclusively men's clubs, exclusively women's clubs, and a rare scattering of mixed establishments. In general, however, most ladies in New Europa seem to concentrate their efforts less on Clubs and more on the more social and visible world of the Salon.

The Salon

Gatherings centered around the home of a great hostess or important literary/artistic figure, Salons are where the witty and intellectual gather to discuss topics of the day. Artists show their new paintings, writers and poets read their works, and musicians play their new compositions. The Salon (and there are many) is the



In Society

place to be if you're going to stay part of the intellectual elite of New Europa.

Salons can make or break any career that involves a lot of socializing or public acclaim. They're the way to meet the important people you need to know. Most of the famous personalities I know I met while attending Salons and parties with Marianne who, being a Countessa, has quite a few contacts.

Organizations & Academies

Being in Society also involves being part of the truly important Organizations of New Europa. As an explorer, you'll join the *Royal Geographical Society* to gain sponsors and recognition; as a Scientist, the *Lycée Scientifique* of Paris is the group to join for proper respect from your peers. Inventors and writers have their own Organizations too.

Dinner Parties

Dinner parties?!? Before you gag, remember that an awful lot of business in polite Falkensteinian society takes place at dinner parties; you meet new people, cement relationships, settle (and start) disputes, gather information, spy on your enemies and maybe even engage in a little romance. Half the time, the only way you'll even get to see someone you need to is to wrangle an invitation to a fête both of you will be attending. So get out your formal suit, because sooner or later, if you deal with the upper crust, you'll end up at a dinner party somewhere.

Dinners are always thrown by ladies; men must rely on a family friend, relative or wife to act as hostess. Once a hostess has been chosen, she must first

determine the guest list, making sure all the guests will get along well, that there's an equal number of men and women, that mistresses aren't invited to the same fête as wives, and that rivals in love are not invited at the

same time as the object of their affections. A hostess who manages to convince a Dragon to attend her soirée has scored a social coup, as the elusive saurians attend very few parties and then only the best.

There are at least ten courses in a formal dinner: soup, fish, cutlets, roasts, fowl, game, lobster, oysters. And witty conversation is also an important part of the repast.

Balls & Dances

The dinner party is often the preface of another great Society function: the Ball. A Ball begins much like a dinner party; however, the guest list can be larger. A Ball can be thrown by any private party, but the most important ones are sponsored by Kings or Governments, with the purpose of celebrating coronations or public events. A Royal Ball requires that Ambassadors and Diplomats from allied nations be invited, as well as all important local personages and nobility. A

Royal Ball is a grand and glorious sight, with splendidly uniformed officers and beautifully gowned ladies swirling to the sound of a waltz.

But not all Balls are thrown by Kings or the wealthy. Vienna is unique in that many powerful guilds and organizations also sponsor a large number of public balls each year; most are elaborate costume events like the *Industrialist* and the *Hotelkeepers* Balls in January. But the most popular of these is an elaborate costume gala held in,—of all places, Vienna's insane asylum!

I can't wait to check that one out.

Comme Il Faut

Comme Il Faut roughly means "Things That Are Done" (Or Not Done). Think of them as general social rules of conduct. Here a just a few examples:

- When formally calling on someone, you should leave your card with the butler. If the top right corner is folded down, it effectively means "You need not return this call—I'm just dropping by."

- Lavish tipping is considered vulgar (no more than 2%).
- A royal request or invitation is never refused.
- Letters from a mistress should always be sent to a gentleman's club, and delivered face down on a salver, so that the name or handwriting cannot be recognized.

- Husbands and wives need not attend the same parties in the evening.

- Married ladies must not engage in *affaires* until a legitimate male heir has first been produced.

- When out riding or driving, a gentleman places his wife to his right hand, a mistress to his left (to avoid confusion to those they might meet.)

- Gentlemen do not smoke in a lady's presence unless invited to do so.

- Private places (the library for example) should be off limits to a young lady and her partner during a Ball.

- A lady never calls alone upon a gentleman except upon a matter of business or on a professional call.

- It is considered improper to dance with the same partner more than twice at a single ball.

- Reversing direction during a waltz is the mark of a cad.

Precedence & The Social Order

To someone of the egalitarian 20th century, the structured social castes of New European Society probably seem ludicrous. To some of my socialist friends, it might even seem horrific. But if you're going to get any feeling at all for how things run in the great Salons and Courts of New Europa, you're going to have to accept that in this world, social standing counts.

The big difference between the classes of our past and that of my adopted homeworld is that often it's the style of the person that counts more than his or her actual rank. In short, someone who acts like a gentleman is generally treated as such, whether or not he has the pedigree. Although a hostess will occasionally have to consult her *Debrett* or Burke's *Peerage of the Empires* (two popular books that serve as a sort of *Who's Who* of New European society), in most cases, it's not polite to ask about someone's pedigree and they're not required to tell. It is considered extremely rude to make a fuss about someone's social rank if he

(or she) comports themselves in a manner proper to their station; this sort of boorish behavior can get you "cut" from the Social scene fast.

In the complex social life of the upper classes, however, rank can be used as a weapon. You can use it to snub people you don't like, keep them out of your favorite hangouts, and even refuse to accept their challenges for a duel. You just have to do it subtly. If you're several ranks higher, you can just refuse to acknowledge their existence: the "cut" or "snub." If you're only a couple of ranks up, you're civil but that's it, and if the name comes up for consideration at a social event, you can *tacitly* object. But again, it's advisable to be careful; as even the Prince of Wales discovered, a perceived social snubbing can get you called out (if your challenger is within three ranks of yours), or sued for slander.

A few useful hints to remember: A lady married to a gentleman takes his rank as her status; however, a

gentleman marrying "up" does not take his wife's status. When entering for dinner or a ball, a lady travels with her husband or eldest son; if there is neither, she is matched with someone of a rank equal to her own. An eldest son of Baron rank or higher is always given the next rank down from his father's; the son of a Grand Duke is a Duke. Younger sons (and all daughters) have Lord or Lady added to their names.

When dealing with Germans *anywhere*, a non-ecclesiastical rank of Baron or higher allows the holder to

place the ennobling "von" in front of his/her last name (for example, both Gen. von Tarlenheim and Chancellor von Bismarck are noble, although Tarlenheim is actually a Duke and of higher status than Bismarck, who is a Count). Usually the "von" is ignored in all but formal conversations.

Dragons and Faerie occupy a special place in Society. As it's considered rude (and suicidal) to insult powerful magical creatures, Faeries and Dragons are *always* addressed as "My Lord

or Lady" and hold a rank equal to the average Marquis. If they are recognized as holding a higher rank within Faerie or Draconic circles (such as High King Auberon or the Dragon King *Verithrax Rex*), then the higher rank is used. As mortals, Dwarfs are always addressed as "Master" and ranked the same as humans.

In general, most people in Society aren't too insistent on full titles; to insist is considered to be boorish, Prussian or both. Most aristocrats get by with Sir, Ma'am and an occasional title thrown in just to remind the person you're trying to impress that you know they're important. With friends and family, titles are dropped altogether.

Why is this all so important? First, it helps avoid hurt feelings. It's also important when determining your romantic chances with a particular aristocrat. Most important, it avoids duels, which is a common and lethal way of settling insults to one's honor.

A Vest-Pocket Burke's Peerage

Title (by Rank)	Proper Address
King/Emperor	Your Majesty
Prince Consort	Your Majesty
Crown Prince	Your Royal Highness
Prince/Princess	Your Highness
Archbishop	Your Grace
Grand Duke	Your Grace
Duke	Duke or Duchess of (Location)
Dragon/Faerie	My Lord (My Lady), Your Grace
Marquis/Marquess	My Lord (My Lady), Your Grace
Bishop	My Lord (My Lady), Your Grace
Earl	Lord or Lady (Location), Your Grace
Count(ess)	Lord or Lady (last name), Your Grace
Baron(ess)	Lord, Baron or Lady
Baronet	Sir +(first name). England only
Knight	Sir +(first name). England only
General/Admiral	Rank+(last name)
Col./Naval Capt.	Rank+(last name)
Commoners	Master or Mistress (last name)

Dueling Etiquette

Although illegal in the British Empire, duels are still fought openly all over New Europa (and even the English have been known to hop the Channel to settle an *affaire of honour*). What differentiates a duel from a common brawl, however, are its very precise rules of conduct and etiquette:

- The Challenger “calls out” the the offending party by slapping him with glove or open hand, or by sending a formal letter of Challenge. A formal Challenge always begins with: “*I demand Satisfaction for—*” and states the reason of the insult.

- Satisfaction may only be demanded when a lady’s honor is insulted through word or deed; the good name of your family has been insulted; or when you have been *publically* accused of cowardice, lying or theft.

- Both parties must be of equal social or military rank; gentlemen duel gentlemen, officers duel officers of equal rank, etc. Military officers may *not* duel each other in time of war.

- Both parties must appoint a *second*—someone who will witness the duel and take their place should they be unable to perform. Refusing a correct Challenge is considered a major mark of cowardice and dishonor.

- The Challenger determines the conditions of Satisfaction: to *first blood*, to *defeat*, or to *the death*. When the duel is ended, the matter is considered settled *forever*.

- The Challenged chooses the weapons, time and place of the duel, always “at his earliest convenience.” Usually, duels are fought with pistols or swords. Sabers or rapiers are usually used in a sword duel; if pistols are chosen, the Challenger determines the number of shots (1 to 3) allowed.

...Of Flashing Blades & Midnight Duels



ou comment off-handedly that a fellow officer acted improperly on the battlefield.

- You make a rude comment about “pointy-eared meddlers” in front of a Faerie Lord.

- You question the family lineage of a high-born noble.

- You make the mistake of calling a Dragon “Mister Lizard.”

Any of the above are social gaffes that can land you in a **duel to the death**. Except the last one; a Dragon is far more likely to reduce you to ashes with a well placed fire-blast. Dragons don’t waste time on petty human squabbles very often. To them, we’re just one step above being a major meal item, and you don’t get into fights with your food.

See, New Europa is an armed society; a society where weapons are openly carried and even expected. It’s only been in the last few years that the major cities of the Continent have even had organized police; even now, every man is expected to be able to defend not only himself, but any helpless civilian in duress he might encounter.

When you have a lot of weapons and a highly refined code of Honor, you get a dueling culture. And so it is in the Steam Age. Although it’s frowned upon by most governments as a threat to the peace, duels to determine questions of honor are a very common occurrence: a social ritual with its own rules of complex conduct. The classic duel is fought with swords, although pistols can be substituted. Since the challenged party chooses the weapons, though, there are some wild variations; I’ve heard of duels using daggers, bombs, chess games and even cannon. All were in deadly earnest.

As a side note, in militaristic Prussia, dueling has become an important *sport*; student groups stage meets between rival Universities, and almost anything can provoke a duel with one of these swaggering, sword-swinging “Student Princes.” (I once was in a Berlin beerhall and asked a Heidelberg student if he had the time. “*I haff the time to demand satisfaction from you, foreign dog!*” he barked. Next thing I knew, we were crossing blades. Luckily, this was after a lot of lessons with Auberon had improved my skills; I rapidly disarmed my opponent and paddled his well-padded rear with the flat of my blade for good measure. They let me drink in peace after that.)

The weapon of choice among Berlin’s student body is the *schlager*, a slightly blunted saber with a huge bell-shaped guard (called the “soup-bowl” of honor). The entire body of the duelist is heavily padded; the eyes and the head are covered except for the sides of the face, nose and mouth. The object of this cute little game is to slash your opponent’s face, giving him a nasty scar that he can brag about to the young ladies at parties.

Somehow, I think that misses the point. Wouldn’t the *worst* duelists be the most cut up?

Prussians. Go figure.

Count von Erich roared an incoherent oath and leapt at Marianne, bringing the flat of his blade around in an obvious attempt to slap her into submission. But she lightly sidestepped and parried the cut, steel belling against steel, then riposted, scoring a thin cut across his cheek. His eyes narrowed. "You little tramp," he growled as his hand came away bloody. "I will cut out your eyes for that. I will slice off your nose. You will beg me for death."

Metal shrieked as their swords met in *couer-de-couer*, sending her skidding backwards with the impact. Marianne rolled in the dust and came up on her feet, barely dodging as his blade slashed out again. The crowd gasped as a thin cut across her thighs began to well blood.

Her eyes hardened to a cold emerald.

The next flurry of cuts tore through von Erich's guard as though it wasn't there, flickering silver death that stabbed and ripped through his fine uniform. He parried desperately, retreating as he looked for cover. Marianne vaulted to the edge of the fountain, then to one side as he lunged flat out at her stomach. The Count's blade scraped along the marble; she pinned his outstretched arm between her arm and body as she plunged three feet of razor sharp steel through his shoulder. He screamed and yanked his blade from her grasp, scoring a cut through silk and silken skin. Marianne gasped momentarily, then fell back as von Erich threw himself into another lunge. Her blade speared out, tearing through the back of his uniform as he spitted himself on its length.

—Tom Olam, *An American Artist in Victoria's Court*

At one point during the Coronation Ball, Marianne was accosted by her old enemy, Count von Erich. This is a sketch of their battle as I remember it—too bad Marianne had to slice off the hem of her gorgeous new gown.



Affairs Of Honor

Although I tend to make light of it in some of my notes, dueling is very serious business in this world. The people of New Europa take insults very personally and do not often let them go unpunished. They're also more likely to be insulted by things we'd think nothing of in the 20th century; insult humor would never catch on here.

There are definitely things that can provoke a duel in *Falkenstein* society; the rules of the game, so to speak. In general, the conventions of dueling allow you to make a challenge under the following circumstances:

To Defend a Lady's Honor

It is the proper place of a gentleman to protect a lady's good name by not revealing improper secrets or information, especially regarding any romantic liaisons between them. When a lady's good name is bandied about, it can wreck marriages, ruin engagements or cause the lady in question to be considered an unfit companion in polite society. When such indiscretions occur, it is the right of the lady to defend her own honor (and many do), or to request a champion to take her part. Note that many husbands or fiancées of wronged women eagerly take up the gauntlet if only to erase the implication that they too have been dishonored by an unfaithful lover.

To Clear Your Family's Good Name

Your name is one of your most important assets in the socially structured world of the Steam Age. While nowhere as rigid as the Victorian Age of my history, the social standing of your family name can determine if you'll be considered a proper mate for a particular person (no one wants a family reputed to all be thieves and blackgards as in-laws!), a fitting partner in a business (no one wants an alliance with a clan of financial wastrels), or a reputable commander (what if cowardice runs in your family line?). While less clear cut as defending a lady's honor or a wrongful accusation, an insult against the family name is considered a justifiable cause for a challenge.

When You Are Wrongly Accused

Of theft. Of cowardice. These are insults against your good name, and since your good name is used to underwrite credit, secure business and establish that you are a honorable person to deal with, a false accusation can have a great impact upon your everyday life. An officer accused of cowardice won't be trusted to command dangerous missions; a businessman accused of unscrupulous practices won't land any clients, and a clerk rumored to be an embezzler won't get hired. Thus, false accusations are always grounds for a duel, assuming you have proof that the person you're challenging really *did* make that accusation.

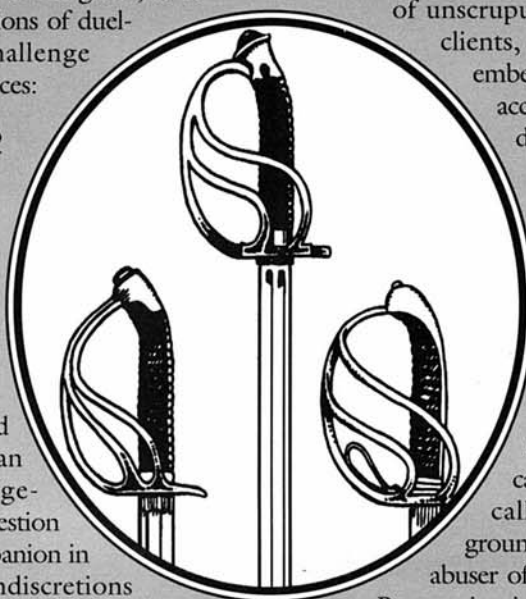
When You Are Provoked

When someone deliberately insults you before others, it's considered to be a direct provocation. Racial or ethnic slurs, name calling or physical abuse are all grounds for a duel, if only to get the abuser off your back for once and for all.

Provocation is one of the haziest areas of challenging someone; many times, braves and bullies deliberately provoke those they consider easy victims, hoping to get them to grovel or be humiliated. One option in this case is to refuse to be baited by provocation, instead announcing to one and all that the offender is trying to take advantage of you and that you refuse his challenge as unworthy unless he can produce a worthwhile challenge (under the accepted conventions of dueling) against you. Another is to call upon a champion to uphold your honor; there is no great dishonor in doing this if it's recognized that your attacker vastly outmatches you in skill or size.

To Take Another's Part

It's permitted to challenge another on behalf of a weaker party, assuming that the party has requested your aid. You may rightfully take up a challenge on behalf of a lady, child or elderly/infirm person.



☞ For more on Dueling, see pg. 192 ☜

Honor & Virtue

What is Honor? And why is it so important here in New Europa that people fight duels to the death to preserve it?

Back home, the concept of honor has gotten a very bad name. At it's best, it seen as unfashionable, old fogeyed and out of date, like chastity belts for young women. At it's worse, it's seen as a kind of macho thing, a way of bullying others into duels or a kind of defensive arrogance.

But in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, honor is still very important. It's far more than a kind of shallow posturing or arrogance. It's a way of doing things; a type of behavior that "sets men above the beasts." At it's best in this society, it allows people to do business without lawyers, let's women travel the streets unmolested, and makes sure that the weak and oppressed find defenders on their behalf.

Of Honor ...

Honor. It's a toughie. Ernest Hemingway called it *grace under pressure*: the ability to carry yourself with style and spirit, to exhibit principles even when things get difficult.

But the best description of Honor, I think, is one given to me by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, someone who actually has a high degree of honor for a reputed womanizer and party animal.

Honor is knowing what the right thing is and doing it, no matter what the cost.

In the name of Honor, you pay your debts whenever they're owed, because that's the right thing. You treat ladies with respect and politeness. Children and the elderly are protected. Your word is your bond, and you always keep it. You stand up for your friends when they're maligned or mistreated, even if it means social expulsion. You stand up for the right thing against intolerance, injustice and Evil.

Honor also requires that you honor your family name and the people who handed it down to you. That means you try not to do anything that would disgrace the dignity and good name of your lineage. Sometimes it may mean paying off an debt or obligation brought on by another member of that family. But you do it because honor counts.

Honor is not an easy thing to uphold. If you take up arms to defend an lady in distress, you may well end up with a blade in your ribs. If you do the honorable thing and right a wrong, you may lose friends, family

and possibly even your job. And if your good name is dishonored, it may require that you spend all you have to clear it, even if in the end you have to challenge your defamer to wipe the insult out in blood.

Maybe that's why Honor's fallen from favor back home; it's something too difficult to maintain in a cut-throat, in-your-face, modern society. Maybe it's something you lose when you gain the skills of technology. I don't know. But what I do know is that if losing the concept of honest and straightforward courtesy is a requirement of becoming part of the Modern Age, then we've sacrificed something that outweighs any new technological miracle.

Perhaps that's why, in the final analysis, when faced with two guys who shanghaied me out of my home dimension to accomplish the honorable task of restoring a lost King to his rightful throne, I couldn't just blow them off and demand to be taken home. Maybe the reason I chose to help them in their quest is that I too had some sense of honor inside me, something that demanded that I also right a wrong no matter what the cost.

... And Virtue

The other side of Honor is Virtue, another word overused and out of favor in my own century. Back home, Virtue is often seen in a sexual context; you're virtuous if you don't sleep with a lover. But here in New Europa, it covers more than that aspect; it means you do good things for the sake of doing good things, without expecting a reward. People contribute to charities, take in homeless families, and do good things within their communities as a matter of course. Even the wealthy and powerful secretly contribute to the common weal, because Virtue is supposed to be it's own reward; you gain nothing if you advertise.

With Virtue, the idea is that any kind action you take *matters*; to turn away from doing good is tantamount to doing something bad. It's just a hunch of mine, but I think that the real reward of Virtue isn't the good feelings it gives you; the big reward (especially in really dehumanized societies like the ones back home), is that it gives you a sense of your worth in the universe—something you do has an effect on the world, and you can make things better.

Honor. Virtue. The right things, done without regard of cost. Two very old ideas which still count for so much in this Age Of Steam. Two ideas we could have used a lot more of in our own modern time.

The Grandmaster of the
Illuminated Brotherhood.

...Of Magickal Power & Sorcery

M

agick is alive in New Europa. But it's very different than anything I've ever read about Magick (even the spelling, which Morrolan dryly informed me was not Magic, but *Magick*).

For one thing, the practitioners of Magick aren't like anything I've ever heard of before. Let's take the group Morrolan belongs to—the Illuminated Brotherhood of Bayern (est. 1776). The Brotherhood is like a combination of secret society, cult and gentleman's club, a sort of “Shriners of Sorcery.” The Illuminated Ones maintain Lodges in hidden places all over the world, exchanging information on spells, sorcery, good cigars and the doings of rival wizardly groups. There are secret passwords and countersigns; like most magickal cabals in the Falkensteinian world, the Illuminatus also have a Secret Symbol that is circumspectly worn to identify other members of their group.

Why all the secrecy? Why don't all the wizards in the world get together in one group and decide just to take over the world? Part of the answer is that magick users tend to arouse jealous or homicidal instincts in non-wizards; it's better to stay undercover than risk being burned at a stake. The other part lies in the nature of scholastic sorcery (pg. 82). Because shaping a spell knot (the weave of magickal energies that create a given effect) takes so much time and is so complex, doing really powerful spells requires a large number of people working together. Yet the chances that you can get any large group to cooperate for a lengthy period of time are pretty slim; I suspect that moments after the first Great Spell was cast, the participants turned towards each other and said, “Now, we should use our power to (insert as many different ideas as there were spell casters).” Within moments, the first great magickal war had begun.

And magickal wars New Europa has had in plenty; the common man in the street just doesn't hear about them. For example, in 1521, a group of Templar priests travelling with Cortez to the New World were so offended by the Aztecs' human sacrifices that they cast a Great Spell to obliterate the Aztec civilization. The Aztecs retaliated by hurling a madness spell back at the Spanish Church, which manifested itself in the murderous self-destruction of the Inquisition.

Did you know that? Chances are, even if you were New European, you wouldn't. In fact, the only reason I know it is that in 1860, the Golden Dawn allied with the last remaining Aztec shamans, prompting the Templars to join with the Brotherhood to eradicate their old foes. As a once-Golden Dawn adept, Morrolan was so sickened by the idea of human sacrifice that he defected to the Brotherhood; he told me this story. Yet to the man in the street, the only signs of this sorcerous war were a series of mysterious deaths and mutilations scattered across the Continent, and an Aztec sacrificial knife found on one of the bodies.

In general, I've managed to stay clear of the sorcerous side of New European intrigue. Even though I was snatched by magick, I don't use it and I'm not considered to be valuable to any of the warring Orders (except maybe the technology-oriented mages of the Temple of Ra). But it's important to realize that such things go on just under the placid surface of Falkensteinian life, side by side with the mad scientists, masterminds and secret organizations that make the headlines the average Steam Ager reads every day.

How Magick Works (I think)

Describing Magick in New Europa is a little like describing how brain surgery works back home: Those who know how can't describe it to a layman, and those who don't know have no idea of where to begin.

Etheric Knots & Superstrings

The first idea I had to grasp was that there is an underlying, super-subatomic level of reality that somehow establishes the rules of the reality we can see. The "Art" of Magick is basically composed of the Ability to "see" this network of magickal energies that underlie reality, and the Ability to manipulate that energy and tie it into immense "knots" that shape the fabric of reality. Tying knots in new or different ways is what High Sorcery is all about, because the shape of the knot and the kind of energies used to tie it create the desired effect you want. The better your Sorcery, the better you perceive and manipulate subetheric threads, and the easier it is for you to Gather the power of Sorcery around yourself. In short, you don't deal with reality on the atomic or even subatomic level. You deal with it on the weak/strong force, quarkian level. Somewhere in the middle, Science and Sorcery end up doing the same things.

I wonder if Morrolan's ever heard of "superstring theory"?

Magnetic Fields & Magick

How this is done is something I haven't yet figured out. But I have a few theories. The best one is that this sub-atomic reality can be manipulated by using very focused magnetic fields, and that people with the Gift have the ability to generate these fields mentally. The ability to do this appears to be hereditary, coming from occasional human-Faerie cross-breeds over the last few millennia. Logically, since the Faerie are an energy-based species, such an ability would be very useful to them and may be what allows them to shape physical bodies and such.

It would also explain a lot about Engine Magick. Most of the workings of this Art form are purely mechanical, but certain parts of an Engine must always be constructed from Cold Iron in order for the device to properly function. If Cold Iron (which is magnetic) can manipulate magickal/magnetic fields, it would go a long way towards explaining not only Engine Magick, but also the fact that the Faerie find Cold Iron lethal. After all, they're pretty much nothing

but magickal energy; touching Cold Iron must be like grounding their circuits.

Aspects of Magick

Additionally, different forms of magickal energy also structure best to certain types of spell "knots"; this quality is called Aspect. For instance, Morrolan describes knots that deal with Material matters as being angular and very orderly, like a Bach fugue, while Elemental energies are branching and interwoven as in the veins of a leaf. Emotional energies or "Soul" Magick powers are rounded and circular, like great looping coils of glowing rope; Spiritual sorceries are jagged and forked, resembling lightning (so Morrolan tells me; I have the magickal awareness of a rock).

Spells & Intuition

In the practice of Magick, each Wizard uses his own intuitions of Art and Aspect to shape the knots of his spells and accomplish variations on a basic theme. All the mysterious words and gestures that go with the spell are merely ways for the Adept to keep track of what part of the knot gets tied when. Which is important because when you tie these knots wrong, your shoes don't just come undone; instead, you blow up cities or turn yourself into a frog.

Spells, then, are the collected research (by the trial and sometimes fatal error of centuries) on a series of magickal knots that create a particular type of effect. This body then becomes part of the Lore of a particular branch of sorcery. For example, once you know the theory of how to Summon something, you know how to Summon practically anything; the only difference is the specifics of who or what you want, where they are when you summon them, and so on, what sorcerors call Definitions. When enough information is compiled about a given effect, it becomes known as Lore.

The Lore of Magick

Since each Order has its own bodies of Lore and Lorebooks and no two Orders ever have the same books, knowing who has exactly what Lore is problematical; shrouded in secrecy, the exact location of each body of Lore is hazy at best.

It also means getting a Unified Field Theory of Magick is going to be a long time in coming.

☞ For more on Sorcery, see pg. 197 ☜

Steam Age Sorcery

When I first learned that Morrolan was a sorcerer, I was mildly surprised to find he didn't have a pointy hat covered in cabalistic symbols. This is because the tradition of sorcery I was familiar with was the old hermetic tradition of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and other fantasy novels back home. The hermetic style of magick revolves around the idea of personal power and knowledge painstakingly gathered and jealously hoarded from wizard to wizard, master to apprentice. Its basis, as I understand it, springs from the writings of Hermes Trismegistus, an ancient alchemist whose penchant for working alone and in secret set the tenor of the hermetic tradition ever since.

But Steam Age sorcery is related to the *scholastic* tradition of magick. Instead of a lone wizard in a weird hat living alone in the woods with his spells and familiars, the scholastic's roots come from the great temples and mystic priest-hoods of ancient times: Templar Knights, Rosicrucians and Druidic Lodges; from knowledge handed down through runes of power and secret Brotherhoods. Scholastic sorcerors work together, in Orders and Lodges. The rules of these Orders are strict, secretive and have been passed down over many generations. They maintain libraries and found universities of sorcery, more like the wizards in Ursula LeGuin's *Earthsea* novels.

Scholastic Sorcery

Scholastic sorcery focuses not on personal power, but on mastery of the Arcane knowledge contained in your Order or Lodge. Personal skill is important, but knowing how to use the accumulated Lore of your Order makes you far more powerful. This is a very dif-

ferent magick than the usual fantasy novel style I was expecting. In scholastic sorcery, there are no lone masters teaching apprentices; instead, there are entire schools for apprentices, where higher ranks of masters impart knowledge to their followers, and the information is the direct transmission of things that were learned centuries or millennia before. Morrolan,

for example, tells me that there are parts of the Lore of his Order that were first discovered by Mesopotamian high priests, and which were handed down among the Illuminated unchanged to this day. My friend claims that some of the great Druidic spells go right back to the Neolithic Age, and may have even been used by Neanderthal shamen to influence the material world of the Ice Age.

Since scholastic sorcery depends more upon knowledge than personal power, its strengths are also different. You don't often see a scholastic rapidly launching fireballs and magic missiles, because he doesn't have the easy access to that kind of power that a hermetic has. Instead, his spells take longer to construct, but are far more powerful because they draw upon the very fabric of the universe instead of his own inner power. If a hermetic magician instantly launches a small fireball at his enemy, a scholastic sorcerer spends a whole day building a complex spell that will obliterate the entire city his opponent lives in.

When a scholastic sorcerer engages in rapid sorcery, he has two options. The first is to project his will as a tangible force to overcome his opponent's mind. This is known as a True Sorcery Duel, and nominally ends when one of the sorcerors has had his brain reduced to tapioca by his enemy's mental attacks.

The second method is flashier but far more dangerous. Since sorcery in New Europa is based upon



Gathering threads of sorcerous Power around yourself and knotting it into new definitions of reality, the big drawback is that this takes time.

But there is an instant source of Power already Gathered and accessible—yourself. By unravelling the fabric of your being like an old sweater, you can weave new spells. However, the danger is that you'll unravel yourself to death.

A Theoretical Magician

As a side note, Morrolan tells me he theorizes that hermetic wizards come from realities where the background Power is very low but the internal Power is very high. This allows them to unravel large amounts of personal power without any serious cost to themselves. But scholastic sorcerors exist in realities with high ambient Power levels and so haven't evolved to gather large reservoirs of internal power. It's important to realize that Morrolan's position in the Illuminated Brotherhood is equivalent to a theoretical physicist working on the Engineering faculty of a large university. Most other mages in his Brotherhood listen to his theories, shake their heads and get on with the daily business of obliterating evil Orders that are sacrificing innocent people, secretly shaping the politics of Steam Age empires, and raising wards of Ultimate Protection over their Sanctuaries.

In short, sorcery here is seen as part of an ongoing war of arcane brotherhoods and associations (or, as I like to kid Morrolan, "wizard gangs") engaged in a never-ending underground battle for sorcerous supremacy of all Europa, and Morrolan is considered by his peers to be something like Stephen Hawking at a nuclear bomb designers' conference.

Since each Order maintains its own body of Lore, a sorceror is often required to join a number of groups in order to have a

full body of knowledge. Oftentimes, these Orders may even be in opposition to each other, requiring a careful balance of loyalties and alliances on the part of their members. In general, it's pretty difficult to join an Order; you have to have several members vouch for you and even then you have to prove yourself for months before they'll let you learn anything about their secrets. That, in turn, involves reading their Lorebooks, restricted to all but the Adepts, and which usually takes several months of careful study. Most wizards are lucky to get into one Order; sorcerors like Morrolan who have actually managed to join two or more are quite rare.



Becoming a Sorceror

So you're probably wondering how you too can take up the exciting career of a Practitioner of the Arcane Arts of the Steam Age. The first requirement is to have a fair measure of the Talent—the Gift, the Sense—in other words, the ability to manipulate the invisible "knots" that make up Magickal reality.

The next step is to find a Secret Order willing to teach you. Don't bother to go looking for one; they'll find you. Since the Talented are in short supply, Adepts are constantly watching for those they suspect of Ability; when they think you're ready, they'll contact you. As a Novitiate, you will learn the basic rules and Cantrips; later, as an Adept, you will study the group's Lore and Magickal books. Finally, as Master (and later Grandmaster), you will work to increase the Order's knowledge and further its causes.

Mike's Note: The above, of course, only pertains to "sorcery" within the fictional world of New Europa. RTG Inc. does not encourage or condone the actual use or practice of the occult or magic. Remember: this is a game, not real life. You Have Been Warned.

Sorcerous Orders of New Europa

Following are brief descriptions of just a few of the hundreds of mystic orders and lodges in the *Falkenstein* world; many are known only by rumor and still others Morrolan refuses to discuss altogether ("You don't even want to know, old man."). Each is described with as much detail as I've been able to get out of my reluctant advisor, noting whatever history, rituals, symbols, handshakes, costumes, temples, initiation rites, and associations (friend or foe) are known. I've also described each Order's Books of Lore where possible, including the physical book, its history, and what it teaches you to do.

I don't promise this is all correct or even close, but to be honest, I consider it a miracle I got this much out of Morrolan!

ILLUMINATED BROTHERHOOD OF BAYERN



The early "Illuminati" were sorcerous Adepts of fifteenth century Europe, who were linked to the Freemasons and Rosicrucians of the time and dedicated to promoting intellectual enlightenment.

The current Order, established in Bayern in 1776, is dedicated to promoting personal mastery of the Art, and to spreading enlightened social and governmental principles. Since the Brotherhood does this by secretly manipulating nations and events, it is no surprise that it has been suppressed throughout its history (until recently even in its home Bayern). Its activities also put it in direct conflict with its mortal enemy, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (which seeks to control the world for its own personal gain).

The symbol of the Brotherhood is a large, unblinking eye in the center of a pyramid, which reflects its links to the ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian temples from whence it sprang. Members of the Order are known to each other by the eye-in-pyramid rings each Adeptus wears on the right hand. Ritual garments are long grey robes with the eye symbol, worn only during High Rituals. As a rule, the Brotherhood has no temples or sanctuaries; instead, members meet in private clubs or their homes. The Illuminati also favor education and knowledge, therefore many great Universities have members estab-

lished in their Libraries or faculties. Known Lorebooks include:

Manuscriptum Mentallis: Written by Trigmeistus Adeptus of Austria in 1215, this text is often associated with the Order of the Illuminated Brotherhood of Bayern. Most of the book's text is concerned with mental control of others through the disciplines of *Mental Command*, *Dominate Will*, *Forget*, *Implanting Suggestion*, *Entrancing & Beguiling*, *Stunning* and *Create Blinding Pain*. The book is a series of loose scrolls bound in black leather and gold bindings, heavily decorated with illuminated letters and runes.

LeRoeun's Scrolls of Dimensional Movement: The first of the Writings of Unknowable Knowledge, encompassing the disciplines of instantly projecting the physical form to other planes of existence: *Travel to Other Lands*, *Travel to the Faerie Realms*, and *Travel to Other Dimensions*. The scrolls are written on thin, flexible sheets of grey metal, and wrapped in a binding of the same material.

HERMETIC ORDER OF THE GOLDEN DAWN



Although in our world the Golden Dawn is known as the organization that spawned the notorious sorcerer and would-be demonologist Aleister Crowley, in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, this Order has a much more established and orthodox history, going back to ancient temples

originally established to worship the goddess Isis. The Golden Dawn's teachings also combine what little is known of the works of Hermes Trismegistus and a smattering of Egyptian and Celtic traditions. In general, the Dawn are the closest thing to a secret society of power-hungry magicians planning to take over the world. Like their sworn enemies the Illuminati, they also manipulate events and politics, but for personal power and economic gain. Although the Golden Dawn has not yet exhibited the evil characteristics seen in its later history, they are very dangerous and bear close watching.

The group's symbol is currently a stylized ram and crescent motif. This is often worn as a pin or pendant by members. Black, hooded robes covered in red cab-

balistic symbols are worn when practicing the Art. The Dawn is strongest in England, Wales and Prussia, favored places where it can maintain a network of hidden temples and secret meeting places. Known Lorebooks include:

Dark Libram of Necromancy: The darkest of the three Books of Set, this prohibited and rare manuscript allows the caster to master the fell disciplines of *Animation of the Dead*, *Speaker to the Dead* and *Draining of the Life Force*. A heavy, knarled volume of unpleasant texture, rumored to be bound in either human or Dragon skin. The tiny crabbed writing seems to crawl all over the page and has been rumored to drive men mad.

Libram of Summonation: The calling of things through time and space, as written of in the Grand Libram of Metaphysick and Transferences of Corum The Adept in 109 B.C. Objects, weapons, living things, armies of creatures, spirits, angels and other multidimensional beings may all be Summoned through knowledge of this mystical work. A large brown Dragonskin book with bronze clasps and velum pages.

GRAND ORDER OF THE FREEMASONIC LODGE



An ancient order devoted to promoting brotherly love, faith and charity, the Freemasons of New Europa also use magick to accomplish their noble aims. The Masons claim their heritage from Hiram of Tyre, the great builder of Solomon's Temple, but also have links to Egyptian mysticism, Christian doctrine and Sufi teachings, all organized around the idea of a great "stonemasons" lodge that promotes good will between all men. Since the Freemasons are the oldest known sorcerous order in New Europa, many of the founders of other groups have sprung from their ranks. This has often led to the Order having to hunt down and exterminate their more evil offshoots as they arise.

The symbols of the Freemasons are taken from their associations with their ancient craft: the square, compass, plumbline and level; these are often incorporated into rings, pins or pendants. Members wear white leather aprons when pursuing the Art, and the eye in the pyramid often associated with the Illuminated Brotherhood originally came from Freemason mythologies. Masonic temples can be found worldwide, although because their Order is very secretive about its good works, actual Lodge

buildings are never ostentatious. Known Lorebooks include:

The Manuscriptum Universal Alchemic: The only complete surviving work of Hermes Trismegistus, this manuscript is a classic of alchemical theory, with disciplines of the *Universal Alchemic* which allows the caster to change the material structures of objects and the related disciplines of *Flesh to Mineral* that allow the caster to change a chosen mineral to flesh and vice versa. A slim silver book with matching cover; grey pages filled with tiny silver writing.

Agrivicca Rexus' Realm of Illusion: This tome (created by Agrivicca Rexus in 1298 B.C.) concerns itself with Illusions of the mind and body, and of the Imparting of them with Sight, Sound, Touch, Smell, and Taste to the amazement of others. A heavy volume of illuminated manuscripts, bound in brass covers with a heavy lock.

ORDER OF THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM



Also known as the *Knights Templar*, this Order draws its history from a religious order of Crusaders. The Templars are a very old society, whose ritual and knowledge are mostly derived from Arabic scholastic sorcerers and Middle Eastern rituals; they may well be the source of the original Freemasons. The original order, established in the Holy Land during the Crusades and obliterated by the French in 1307, retains its military bearing even today; the Templars are primarily dominated by soldiers, seamen and warriors, the fighting wizards of the *Castle Falkenstein* world. They have a particular hatred of Orders that practice human or animal sacrifice, or who engage in the summoning of evil spirits. The Templars have been known to descend upon these groups with fire, sword and spell to wipe out all their members.

Templars are well-known for the red cross that symbolizes their Order and its devotion to God. The cross appears in rings, cloak pins or pendants. Traditional garb when practicing the Art are long white tunics with red crosses down the front. The Templars are most powerful in Scotland, where they maintain many ancestral castles and churches, including their mystical center at Rosslyn Chapel near Edinburgh. They have also made great inroads in the United States in recent years, where they have taken up the sword to wipe out the remnants of the old Aztec sacrificial cults. Known Lorebooks include:

Libram of Mystic Transformation: The Libram of Osman the Prophet, who is rumored to have learned these knots at the foot of the Djinn Sulien, and who may have passed this knowledge on to Templar scholars during the Crusades. The substance of this body of work is the manipulation of living matter, as in the disciplines of *Changing Size*, *Shape of a Known Form*, *Invest With Powers of a Known Form* and *Shape of the Unknown Form*. Fourteen very ornate gilded scrolls in a brass-bound chest, which is covered in florid Arabic characters.

Osman's Tome of Physical Movement: The Second of Osman's Four Mysteries, this Tome contains the disciplines of *Knowledge of Flight*, *Mastery of Levitation*, the *Hand of Hovering* and the *Floors of Glass*, all relating to spells of physical movement. Similar to Osman's other mysteries, this is a series of ten silver filigreed scrolls written in Arabic, locked in a heavy iron chest with the triangular seal of Osman on the top.

MYSTIC LODGE OF THE TEMPLE OF RA



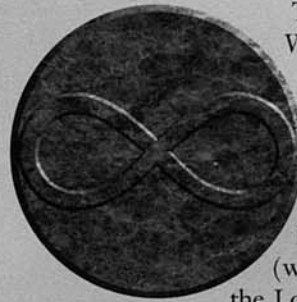
A relatively recent Order centering upon the great sorcerous dynasties of the Egyptian priesthood. The Temple of Ra believes that its members are incarnations of the ancient Pharaohs and that their destiny is to rule the world through a combination of Egyptian mythology and technological super-science. To this end, they actively recruit scientists to their ranks, and their shrines are as much laboratories as they are temples. The Temple has no compunctions about using a combination of sorcery and science to accomplish its goal of crushing all "lesser" peoples before it.

The followers of Ra affect Egyptian symbology in their ritual dress: Elaborate headresses, snake-headed staffs and linen robes are often worn during the practice of the Art. In common society, the members of the Lodge are known by the ankh-shaped pendants or pins they wear. Occasionally, the ankh is carved into the face of a ring as well. The Temple of Ra is a relatively small organization, but extremely zealous. Its main membership is in France (where several trap-filled neo-Egyptian temples have been established) and Prussia. Known Lorebooks include:

Libram of Temporal Control: This Libram is a body of knowledge associated with Xerxes of Thrace. It comprises three bodies of knowledge: the

Manuscriptum of Time Cessation, the *Discipline of Time Acceleration/Slowing*, and the *Discipline of the Temporal Fugue*. This book is a series of loosely bound sheets, some of modern writing paper, some on calfskin, several on old parchment, some on fax paper, one on wax tablets and one on a sheet of thin slate, all piled haphazardly in a large metal box marked with the runes, *Imperial Star Fleet Ration Pack*.

THEOSOPHIC MASTERS OF THE WHITE LODGE



The members of the White Lodge believe that they are the agents on Earth of a race of powerful, ethereal beings called the *Mahatmas*. Once masters of all New Europa, these creatures (who theoretically live on the Lost Continents of Lemuria and Mu) now guide the White Lodge to higher consciousness through their teachings. A mixture of Cabalism, Buddhism, Taoism and sorcery, these teachings call upon Mankind to turn away from technology and to embrace a life of simple mediation. As a result, the Lodge is often found sorcerously sabotaging technological accomplishments or sending mystic dreams to influence those the Lodge wants to subvert. Needless to say, this often puts them in direct conflict with the Lodge of the Temple of Ra, which prizes superscience above all other things. The White Lodge might be taken as a group of powerful lunatics, were it not for the fact that many other Orders truly suspect that the Mahatmas are really agents of the Unseelie or worse.

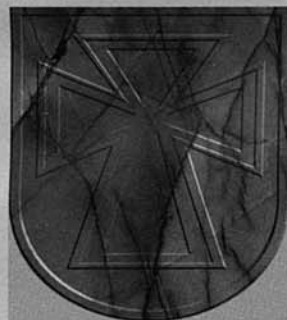
The White Lodge's members can be recognized by the mystical infinity symbol they wear, either as a tattoo at the base of the neck or hidden by forehead hair, or in pendants or rings. Ritual garb when practicing the Art are long white, cowed robes with the infinity symbol in blue on the front of the hood. Meetings are held in private temples or in members' homes or clubs; the White Lodge is scattered all over New Europa, although recently it has gained ground, particularly in Vienna. Known Lorebooks include:

Megron's Realm of Dreaming: Written by Megron the Sumerian, this text is the second of the Three Realms of The Heart (the first having been lost), and is considered to be the foundation of the Knowledge of the Old Kingdoms. There are five Dreams which may be sent using the knowledge within: *Dreams of Prophecy*, *Dreams of Warning*, *Nightmares*, *Erotic Dreams* and *Killing Dreams*. The

form of this volume is unknown, but is rumored to be a glowing roll of many vellum sheets.

Manuscript of Paranormal Divination: This body of work, known to the scholastic orders through the writings of Jarix the Red Mage, contains powers of divination and extraordinary perception: *Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Srying and Divination Barrier*. The manuscript is written on several black onyx tablets covered with tiny gold symbols.

THE HOLY ORDER OF ST. BONIFACE



With so many secret Orders vying for control of the Art, it is not surprising that the Church has also decided to take a hand in the scholastic sorceries. The Holy Order of St. Boniface was founded in 1350 with the aim of eliminating evil wizardry and its depredations upon the innocent. Members of the Order are drawn from all walks of ecclesiastical life, including the Catholic Church, the Church of England, the Lutheran Churches and several of the Protestant sects. Besides opposing those who would use the Art for evil, the Order of St. Boniface also uses its skill to heal the sick and tend to the spiritually troubled.

Members of the Holy Order have only one thing in common: They are all clerics of one sort or another, recognizable only by their vocation. A common prayer is used by members on rare occasions where identification is important. Members of the Order may be found in churches worldwide. Known Lorebooks include:

Ritual Writing of Psychic Binding: *The Ritual of Psychic Binding* (written in 1065 by the Order of St. Stephen of Malta to combat evil summonings and demonic possessions) is a body of knowledge concerned with the mystic bindings that control or restrain others from attacking an Adept or from leaving his presence, and includes the disciplines of the *Simple Geas, Magick Circles, Wards or Talismans, Strengthen the Life Bond* and *Psychic Bonds*. A simple grey leather folio with a silver cross embossed on the cover, with the title written on the inner flyleaf.

Realm of The Unknown Mind: While not an officially sanctioned book of the Order, this body of knowledge teaches the Adept things of sanity and madness through the rituals of *Cast Out The Other, Conquest of Madness, Hear the Hidden Thoughts,*

Bring to Peace and *Bring to Rest*. Each volume (four in all) is bound in an ornately carved brown leather with red foil titling and a cross in the center.

ANCIENT BROTHERHOOD OF THE DRUIDIC TEMPLE



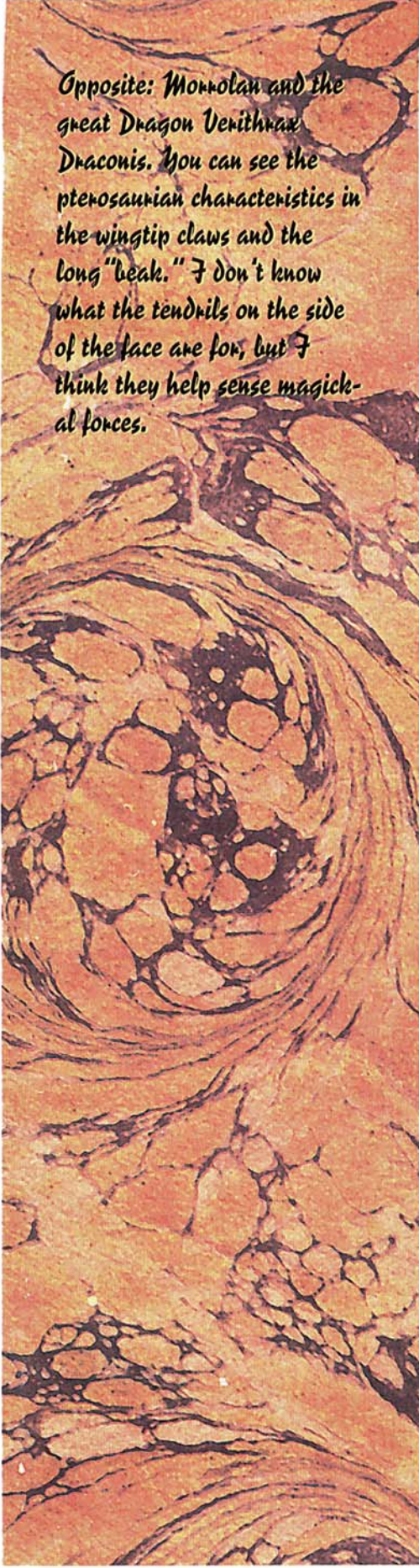
Possibly the only sorcerous group with its roots in the Neolithic Age, the Druids of New Europa are descended from the priest castes of the ancient Celts. Their religion is based around an animistic nature magick, with herbal knowledge and a respect for the natural world as its most important aspects. Most Druidic traditions are orally transmitted, and only recently have a few students written these rituals down. The Druids are very much the neutral parties in the ongoing wars between New European sorcerers. While the Ancient Brotherhood has attracted sorcerers from many other orders, when left to themselves, they will only interfere with other groups if their sacred groves or standing stone temples are bothered.

Druid symbols include the mistletoe and the holly, often symbolized as cloak pins, rings or torcs (a type of metal collar) heavily interwoven with Celtic knots and symbols. Their temples and sanctuaries are always in wild places, among Faerie rings and standing stones (the Kindly ones will never bother a Druid), or in deep forest glades. With their strong Celtic heritage, most of their holy areas are in England, Ireland, Brittany and Wales, with a few sites in Northern Germany and Scandinavia. Known Lorebooks include:

Manuscript of Elemental Shaping: Compiled in 122 B.C. from lost Roman manuscripts and Druidic chants, this work defines the major tenets of shaping Elemental forces, including *Investing the Element with Intellect and Form, Control of Elemental Temperature* and *Shaping the Element*. Seven sheets of beaten silver with raised Celtic characters, wrapped in a grey calfskin and tied with silver cords.

Burton's On the Raised Forces of Nature: This body of work, recently compiled by Sir Richard Burton in 1869, details the major abilities of the shamanistic traditions. Disciplines include *Raise the Storm, Raise the Maelstrom, Shake the Earth* and *Raise the Firestorm*. A modern leather book bound in four volumes, that resembles any of a hundred law books.

For More on Sorcery & Spells, see pg. 197



Opposite: Morrolan and the great Dragon Verithrax Draconis. You can see the pterosaurian characteristics in the wingtip claws and the long "beak." I don't know what the tendrils on the side of the face are for, but I think they help sense magickal forces.

— And Dragons!



ncient, powerful and very, very clever. These are the Dragons of the world of *Castle Falkenstein*. They're anything but the lumbering, greedy brutes of popular fantasy; the Dragons of this universe are witty, educated and magickally adept, soarsers of the highest material and mental peaks.

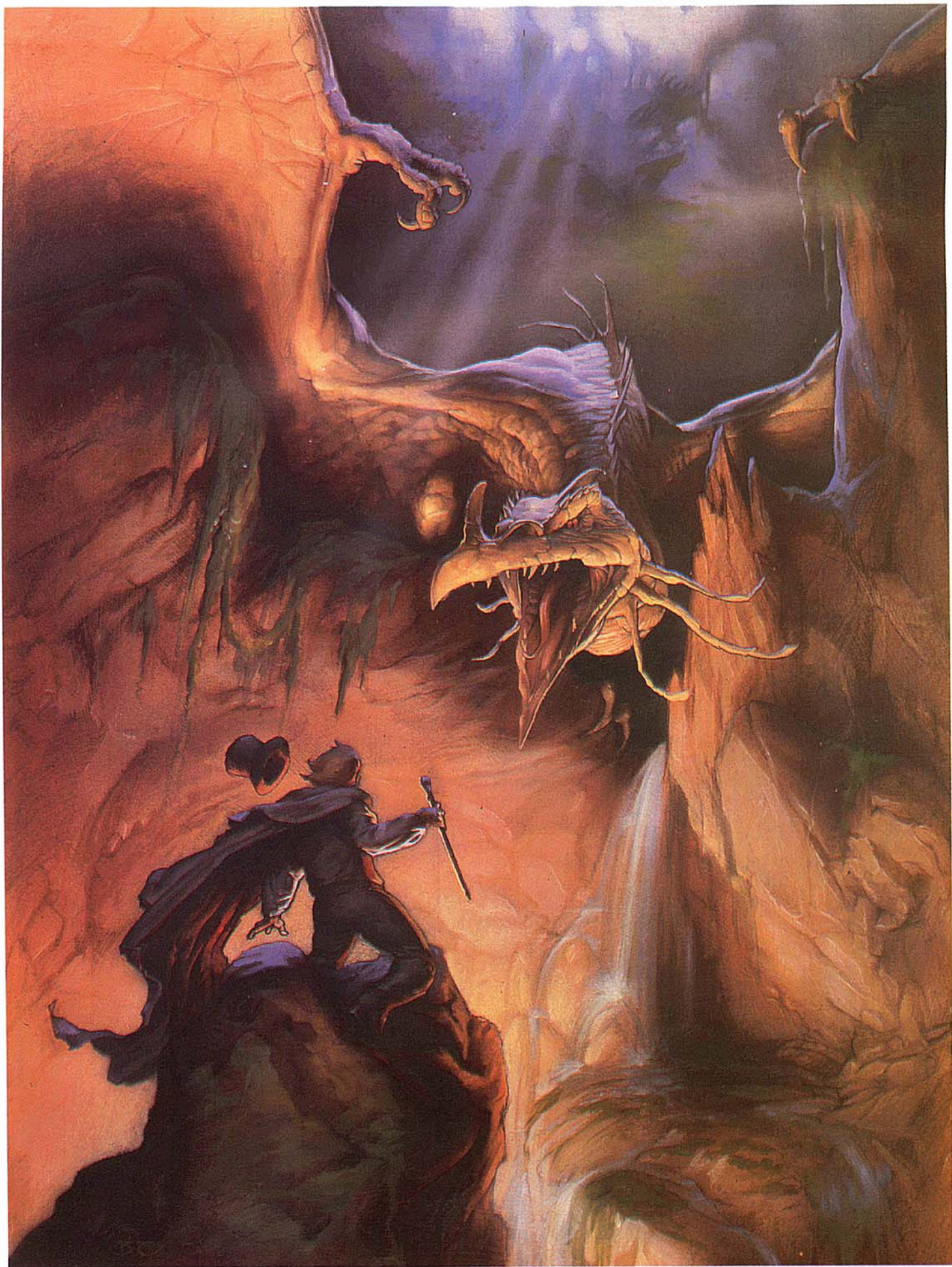
One of the things I like about Falkensteinian dragons is that they're *scientific*—they have a history that makes sense even to a person from the 20th century. Descended from the huge pterosaurs of the Cretaceous, they're almost as though the Almighty decided to keep a visible sign of Evolution in action; you can see their "dinosaurian" ancestry in every spine, scale and claw. And, as if to taunt us further with Humanity's impermanence, they remember it all. Everything—the days of steaming volcanoes and gigantic brachiosaurs shaking the earth; the coming of the Great Comet and the cold days that followed; even the first stirrings of the hairless apes that would eventually take over the world. Everything.

All this lives in the impressive racial memory of the Pterodraconis species, a memory that seems to be hardwired into the very genetic structure. Besides allowing Dragons to instantly know an impressive amount of sorcery (infant Dragons are born knowing the Shapings of the Firecast spell), this racial database allows the First Thinkers, as they sometimes call themselves, to pull off amazing feats of memory. Dragons never forget, not only what they themselves have witnessed, but also anything witnessed by a direct linear ancestor. I've had conversations with Ancient Ones who could describe any of the strange reptiles of the Age of Dinosaurs, then shift gears and describe, down to the very color of his toga, what Julius Caesar wore on the day he was assassinated.

In fact, this ability to remember may well be part of the Draconic obsession with collecting. As the Dragon King Verithrax Draconis once said in an interview in the *Times* (a Dragon interviewed in the *London Times*?!), "*A Collection is one way in which we can tangibly touch something from the Memory. If our forefathers held it, we can remember its touch. But if we hold it also, we can truly remember how it felt.*" So Dragons do hoard, but not for greed. Instead, they Collect as a way of keeping touch with the race memory that unites them.

Dragons are also adept sorcerers; they have access to almost all the arcane Lore that mere human wizards only gather in bits and snatches; seventy-two million years is a lot of time to learn and hone your spellcasting abilities. Their only limit appears to be an inability to manipulate the Art as much we can. Too much Gathered Power, or Power gathered too often, causes them to become confused and ill. The Dragons I've encountered use the Art rarely; it's far easier to shred an offending person with claws and teeth; to a Dragon, the Art is for Transformation, flight and the Firecast.

So why do I like Dragons so much? Let's just say that of all the things that are magickal in a very magick-packed place, they're the most amazing triumph of the fantastic over the mundane you could imagine.



About Dragons

As you might have already discovered, one of my favorite New European things are Dragons. Yeah, Dragons really do fly in the world of New Europa, and their slim, reptilian forms are still seen among the highest peaks. But they also walk among us, watching and learning, the Sixth Great Power of the Steam Age; rare, mysterious, and keeping a counsel that was ancient before Mankind existed.

What we in the world of *Castle Falkenstein* call "Dragons" are really a highly evolved form of the ancient reptile *Pterodactylus*, which has survived in the present day though a canny combination of intelligence and the ability to manipulate magick. There's some evidence in the extensive oral tradition of *Pterodraconis* that an early offshoot of the *Pterodactylus* clan used an enhanced sixth sense to detect thermal currents; this later evolved into an ability to manipulate the etheric energies required to keep a multi-thousand pound animal in the air. Some Dragon savants theorize that by the late Cretaceous, *Pterodraconis* had actually evolved limited shapeshifting abilities which allowed it to escape the mass extinction that wiped out its dinosaur relatives.

The result of all this evolutionary experimentation was *Pterodraconis Sapiens*, which can reach lengths of up to thirty feet and wingspans of over 120 feet among ancient specimens. Over the millenia, *Pterodraconis Sapiens* has learned better than any species alive to utilize sorcery to its advantage. When humans first appeared, *Pterodraconis* considered them a light snack, requiring a tribe for a full meal. But as humans evolved, *Pterodraconis* also evolved new ways to use them.

Half-Dragons

Pterodraconis' biggest problem had always been its low birthrate; now, instead of merely eating the sacrifices left outside of its lairs, it began to use its shapeshifting powers to take humanoid forms and impregnate female captives. The resulting half-human crossbreeds began to filter into human society (especially in the Eastern Lands), halting the decline in numbers and allowing *Pterodraconis* to move freely among the more numerous humans. When the Faerie entered New Europa, the Dragons began more often to throw off their disguise and walk openly around humans. But *Pterodraconis* still prefers a human form when in human cities. *Pterodraconis* can be told from regular humans by their extreme height (all dragons are at least six and a half feet tall), slender, double-jointed build, and catlike pupils.

Draconic society is a solitary one; most Dragons

prefer to live away from their own kind, coming down from their strongholds only to eat, mate, or add to their hoards. Although their long, sinuous shapes can occasionally be seen spiralling through the updrafts of the highest mountains, they can also be found in cities, pursuing their business affairs with the same calm, clinical detachment they use when running down a fleeing meal.

Mating & Family Life

When Dragons mate, they invariably choose the most attractive females around (human or Dragon). They romance their lovers, set them up in extravagant surroundings and shower mate and offspring with gold until the offspring reach maturity (about 10 years). Then the male parent takes the children away to teach them how to live as dragon-human crossbreeds. There's no concept like marriage in Draconic society; it's not uncommon for a single Dragon to have several families scattered all over the Continent. Female Dragons on the other hand, being rarer than males, have their choice of potential mates. Once the romancing is over, they too retire to their lairs to raise their brood until Dad returns.

Hoards, Firebreathing & More

A lot of things you'd imagine about Dragons are true on the surface. Dragons do breathe fire (by projecting a sorcerous flame ahead of themselves called the Firecast), fly (through an innate ability closer to levitation than anything else), and live up on high mountain crags (although many have given up those drafty, Dwarf-infested caves for abandoned castles and hunting lodges). One important trait, however, is the dractylian obsession with collecting. Dragons in New Europa build collections that would match anything in the Royal Museum. I've met a dragon who had collected over 1,700 clocks, another who had an entire cave of antique uniforms going all the way back to the Egyptians, and a third whose collection of stained glass rivals Chartres Cathedral.

King Ludwig, who counts a number of Dragons as friends, has his own pet theory: As Dragons became more sentient, they diversified into general collectables; china plates, fine wines. Gold simply became a way of buying things that they couldn't get by swooping down on a village and terrorizing the inhabitants. It's no accident that some of the King's Dragon friends have funded him a staggering amount of money with which to construct his dream castles.

But All is Not Well in New Europa ...

So together the five of us (the Colonel, Marianne, Morrolan, Auberon and myself) brought a long lost Mad King back from his mysterious exile, sorcerously raised him a Faerie Castle to rule in and fought our way past the assassins and military allies of an evil Regent to take back a Throne at swordpoint. Then we ended the entire affair with a glittering Coronation Ball straight out of *Cinderella* with all the crowned heads of New Europa in attendance.

Dripping in medals and with our ears ringing to the cheers of a grateful populace (heck, I was even given the honorary rank of Captain for my part in the adventure), we could now retire to Castle Falkenstein knowing in our hearts that Good had vanquished Evil, and that peace would finally reign supreme in the tiny Kingdom by the Inner Sea. Righto?

Wrong.

Little did we know at the time that the hardest part was just beginning.

For although the Iron Chancellor of Prussia had been temporarily thwarted by our ousting his hand-picked Regent, he wasn't finished. Instead, the wily von Bismarck went back to his stronghold in Berlin and got down to work.

Bismarck was a practical man. He knew that in order to reach his goal of ruling all New Europa, he must accomplish two important tasks first.

To start, he would have to unify all the Germanies under Prussian rule. That meant first eradicating the strong influence of the Austrian Empire on the Southern German states. No problem; Austria was weak and her military commanders foolish. A surgically precise strike with Prussia's advanced military might would easily crush the primitive Napoleonic Age forces of Emperor Franz Joseph, bringing the proud Habsburgs groveling to their knees before him.

Next, he would have to get rid of any competition for rulership of the new "Reich" he envisioned. Bismarck had thought to eliminate the rival Wittelsbachs by placing a lunatic on the throne under a hand-picked Regent. But if Bayern was now an obstacle to his plan to create his planned Prussian Empire, very well, he could eliminate it at the same time he destroyed Austria. Humbling Bayern would also bring the other German Kingdoms along the Inner Sea to heel under his jackboots.

Only then could the Iron Chancellor move on to crush France and her vainglorious rascal-Emperor, Napoleon the Third. *And then Russia and England in their turn as well ...*

Orders must be issued immediately. He turned to signal a secretary.

At a word, the great weapons factories of Dusseldorf fired up to maximum production. LandFortresses began to muster and drill on the northern plains. And Bismarck's secret agents scattered throughout New Europa to prepare for the opening shots of the next war ...

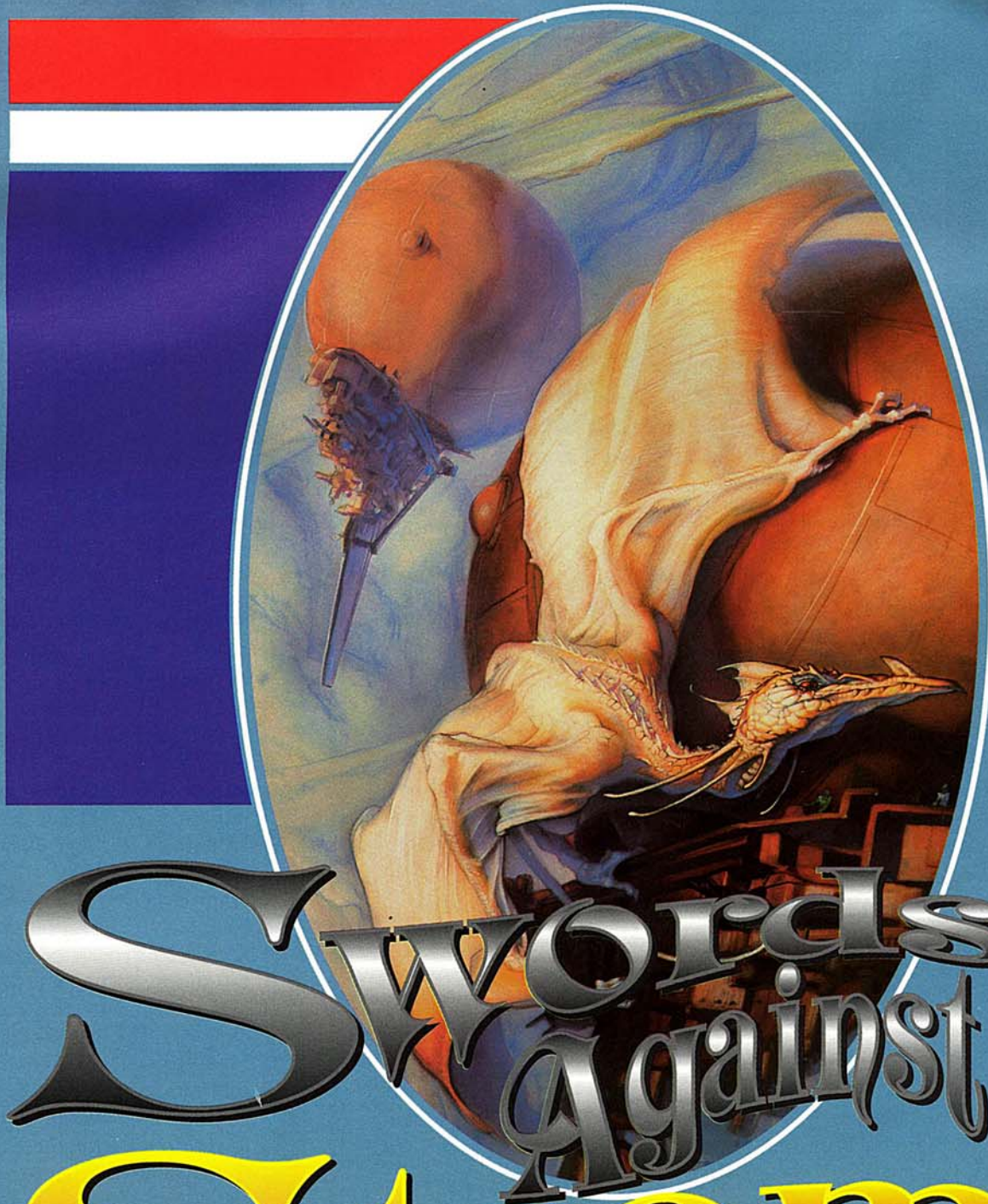
The Great Game...

Of the 1800's is *Diplomacy*, crossed with a little *Risk*; shadowy intrigues; the cut and thrust of witty comments and revealed secrets; the savage threat of war covered by the bland, nonchalant delivery. It's not a Game for amateurs; the stakes are high—millions dead in wars, cities destroyed, Empires annihilated. A single misstep can cost a diplomat an entire nation.

So the dance is performed very carefully, like a tango on top of a tanker full of nitroglycerine. At Coronations, Imperial Balls, exclusive Spas and other haunts of the powerful, the Players of the Great Game make their moves and play chess with armies and spies as counters.

Bismarck of Prussia is, of course, one of the best Players of the Game. But he's matched in skill by Britain's Benjamin Disraeli: a witty, urbane dandy who has even won the Iron Chancellor's respect. The Austrians still play, but their best Player died with Metternich, the legendary shaper of New Europa after the fall of Napoleon. And speaking of Napoleons, the Emperor of the Second Empire, Napoleon III, is no stranger to the double-dealing and cutthroat maneuvering required of the best Players.

So pay close attention to the subtle threats and verbal sword-play you'll encounter in the following pages, for these are the seemingly trivial events that mask the covert activities of Empires, and they maneuver like hungry sharks for the best bite. This is the Game played to its fullest, when the tensions are high and the loser stands to be invaded the next morning.



Swords Against Steam

Against A Revolution of Steam & Steel

So far, I've told you about how I was spellnapped; how I joined a heroic quest to return a lost King to his grateful people; and of the amazing Steam Age world I discovered just this side of an alternate dimension. Looking back over this letter, I realize that I may not have given you all the facts, but I think I've explained what I've been up to for the last few years. So far, so good.

Now the hundred thousand dollar question.

Why didn't I go home?

The job was done. King Ludwig had his country back. And, although in the final desperate moments of the battle for the Palace, I'd intercepted an assassin's bullet meant for the King, I didn't seem to be the Secret Weapon everyone had expected. My swordsmanship was improving, but I was no John Carter of Mars (although the Warlord did once offer to give me lessons). But we still didn't know why the Magick had Summoned me. And even the Grandmaster of Morrolan's Order couldn't tell me why I was here.

So why am I writing this to you from the Other Side of the Faerie Veil?

Did I marry Marianne and settle down happily ever after? Did I decide that I really liked living in a steampunk version of the eighteen hundreds?

Nope. The truth is, things got worse.

The Greater Faerie of the North came to Auberon first, confronting him in the great hall of the Castle. They told us how the Prussians had torn up the northern forests to reach the seams of coal and iron beneath. And how some humans were enslaving the Knockers of the upper Elbe and forcing them to work the mines to provide metal for the Iron Chancellor's expanding army of LandFortresses. The Compact was being broken, and the Greater Faerie demanded justice. But as Auberon had no *proof* of Unseelie complicity in these crimes—he bargained for time instead.

Other reports began to filter in. Of huge armies mustering on the plains of East Prussia. Of strange new weapons devised jointly between the scientific masterminds of Berlin and the industrial Steam Lords of Victoria's Empire. Of a rumored joint division of the world by the two most advanced nations on earth.

Then came emissaries from other Sorcerous Orders, bearing more bad news to Castle Falkenstein. The Prussians and the British had allied with wizard-advisors from the technology-obsessed Temple of Ra and necromancers from the Golden Dawn. Worse, the expanding web of railways girdling the Continent were starting to have a serious effect on the flow of Power in New Europa. The Art of Sorcery was being choked by a net of Iron. And finally came news of the Iron Chancellor's plan to invade Austria as the first step of his Grand Unification.

Through the Kingdom of Bayern, if necessary.

Bismarck and his allies were on the move. Already we could see the signs of their work. Now the forces of Magick and Faerie were gathering around Castle Falkenstein, around the one group that had successfully opposed the Iron Chancellor. Asking for our help.

I couldn't leave all the friends I'd made, all the people I'd come to care about, to go home and move bits and pixels on a monitor. More than anyone, I could see what was coming.

We were going to have to fight a Revolution. Against an Empire of Steam.

Readying my weapons. This is actually a rough watercolor that I later did as a full painting for Marianne. I included it because it's the only drawing I have of a typical Bayernese cavalry officer's uniform and weapons.



A Steampunk Conquest

"He [Bismarck] moves the King, the Princes and the people about like pawns upon a chessboard; he has flagrantly, and in open day, broken every treaty that stood in his way; he has conspired against the liberties and the peace of New Europa; with Austria, with France and last of all with Faerie, with whom he hopes to make Prussia walk side by side in a gigantic scheme of aggression, which war with France would be waged to forward. He is equally familiar with the use of force and of intrigue; he fears not God, neither regards Man; and he hitherto so succeeded in his schemes that he is well entitled to be considered the ablest statesman in Europe."

—Thomas Bowles, in
Vanity Fair, October,
1870

Well, that about sums the Iron Chancellor up, doesn't it? I remember when I came across this quote in a recent issue of *Vanity Fair* sitting on Marianne's desk; I was startled because except for a few Falkensteinian touches, it was almost identical to the same quote as written in a European history book I'd read in college years ago.

One of the advantages to having come from a time period just a few decades ahead of this one is that I often have a better idea of where things are eventually leading. The way I see it, if Bismarck plays his cards right, he'll eventually be able to batter his way past Bayern and tackle the Austrians in a war that will end in an utter defeat for the befuddled Habsburg Emperors. We saw a preview of this at the *Battle of Königsgseig*, (which I'll describe later in my letter); the Austrians showed up unprepared, carrying primitive muskets and led by a pack of doddering old generals who hadn't fought a battle since Napoleon escaped from Elba. It was a rout.

The Austrian Empire out of the way (annexed or just forced to sign a humiliating peace treaty), the Iron Chancellor can set his sights on the next big target: France. (According to my recollection of history, that should be happening right now, but since Bayern's been a more pressing thorn in Bismarck's side, he's behind in his timetable.)

Chances are, even with her Verne Cannon, Bismarck can beat France; her army is good, but disorganized, and Napoleon the Third, for all his colonial ambitions, isn't really all that warlike. My guess is that when the time comes to lob those 275cm shells at Berlin, we'll find that Prussian Agents like the Fox have done their work well and the guns just won't fire. Then the LandFortresses will come rolling in over the plains and into Paris.

But what comes next? Does Bismarck humiliate France if he defeats her? If so, will the stage be set for the rise of saber-rattling Kaiser Wilhelm and the First World War? Or will the Steam Lords take over Britain, ally with the new German Reich, and conquer the rest of the Continent? The problem is, with all the strange twists this world's history throws at you, it's almost impossible to tell.

Assuming history works out like I think it will, chances are what's in store for

New Europa will be a technologically advanced totalitarian state that will be in full control of most of the world by the turn of the century. With Babbage Calculation Engines, Prussian-controlled Verne Cannon, better LandFortresses, submarines and turbine Dreadnoughts, it won't take long for a new and greater Reich-Empire Axis to wipe out all opposition and establish a totally "steampunk" reign of tyranny that ultimately will be controlled behind the scenes by the Unseelie.



The Steam Lords of Britain

One of Bismarck's newest allies isn't inhuman or Prussian at all. As a matter of fact, one of the greatest threats to the peace of the *Falkenstein* world is all too human.

The Steam Lords of Britain are a cabal of very, very powerful industrialists who control the majority of industries in the Empire. They're very similar to the robber barons of America: wealthy and ruthless men who are the Captains of Industry and the Masters of Steam Age Progress.

A New Feudalism

But where the robber barons like Carnegie and Vanderbuilt are content to crush their competitors under the jackboots of their Trusts, the Steam Lords are far more ambitious; they fully intend to run Victoria's Government to their liking. One reason is that the majority of them are also members of the all-powerful British Aristocracy and are used to ruling over vast fiefs of downtrodden tenant farmers and hereditary estates; it isn't a big jump from low tech feudalism to the industrial brand of the same thing.

An Alliance Based on Mutual Trust?

Bismarck and his planned Empire of Blood and Iron fit right into the Steam Lords' plans to establish Industrial Feudalism; he's got the same low respect for personal freedom: he wants more Progress, and he's willing to make a deal with Britain if the Empire will ignore his Continental adventuring. In short, they couldn't ask for a better ally with whom to divide up the world between them—at least until they can double cross him. Not that this hasn't occurred to the Iron Chancellor already.

A Secret Agenda

The Lords of Steam have made an agenda of undermining Queen Victoria's most able Ministers (like Disraeli), of sabotaging social reform, and of ruth-

lessly eliminating anything that furthers an open, democratic society. These guys would love to force Jolly Olde England back to its pre-Magna Carta days if they could, with serf-workers forced to slave without pay in their factories and personal armies to crush any sign of resistance. Already, they've masterminded the use of Steam tech to suppress dissent (especially in Eire and India), and that's just the beginning of their ambitious plans.

Poor Bertie

One reason the Prince of Wales is so isolated from the actual mechanics of running the Empire is that as an egalitarian at heart, he strongly opposes the Steam Lords' plans. But by using puppet newspapers like the scan-

dalous *Reynold's News* (the Victorian equivalent of the *National Enquirer*) to blast trumped up scandals of poor Bertie's affairs to Victoria's credulous ears, the Lords have managed to convince the Queen that her son is an irresponsible skirt chaser and unfit to rule. Needless to say, they're working already on molding his younger brother Leopold to become a perfect puppet King once Victoria passes on.

But having the Steam Lords as a Nemesis has had a wonderfully focussing effect on the Prince's usually wayward nature. And by joining forces with Bayern and her allies, he hopes to drive the power mad lords of Steamtech out of England for once and for all.

The Top Steam Lords

The Steam Lords of Britain are a varied crew of industrial pirates indeed. But here are the top movers and shakers of the cabal:

- Lord Peter Asmough
The Midland Manufacturing Trust
Woolen and linen mills all over Southern England
- Lord Ashton Montague
The British Steam Consortium, LTD.
Railroads, Steam Engines and Railcars
- The 5th Earl of Isley
The London Financier's Trust
Banking, finance, factory investments
- Lord Blandford, 8th Duke of Marlborough
The Marlborough Investment Trust
Stocks, bonds, land investments
- Sir William Gordon-Smythe
Wellington Steel & Fabrication
Steel and Iron mills, industrial fabrication
- Lord Robert Ashburton Parkes
Leeds Industrial Chemical Works
Chemicals, dyes, celluloids
- Sir Robert Burnell
The Great Atlantean Steamship Company
Passenger liners, freight

*War Council in Falkenstein:
Although the Bayernese
Government officially meets
in Old München, most of the
important details get decided
in midnight meetings here in
the Counsellor's Room at
Falkenstein.*

A Council of War



he called a Council of War that night in Falkenstein.

With a nod from the King, Colonel Tarlenheim opened the briefing. "As many of you know," he began, "two years ago, Bismarck's Prussians joined a cabal with the Austrians to invade Sleswig and Holstein. But as with all great crimes, the thieves have begun to fall out. For the last five months, our Iron Chancellor has been doing everything in his power to goad his former allies in Vienna. He's forced the Austrians to withdraw their troops from Holstein, annexed the port of Kiel, and escalated his demands beyond all reason. He's looking for a war. And he'll have it by any means," the Colonel concluded.

"Alors, what kind of monster provokes wholesale slaughter?" protested Marianne. "Does not he care how many will die to accomplish his plan?"

"Chances are, he believes that the Prussians, with their superior arms and training, will carry the day without great loss," replied Tarlenheim grimly. "It's a small but bloody price to pay to accomplish his ultimate goal: to cast the Austrian Empire out of the region and unify all the Germanic states."

"You misunderstand, gentlemen," interjected the King quietly. "This is not about Austria. This isn't about Unification. This is about power. This is about an Empire of 'Blood and Iron.' King William may reign in Prussia, but Bismarck rules. And he would rule all of New Europa if he could do so. In other circumstances, he would not have dared to reach so high; the forces of all the Empires would have been arrayed against him. But the Unseelie make him confident, recklessly so. With his Fortresses he believes himself invincible: a new Napoleon wrapped in the eagle of the Hohenzollern princes."

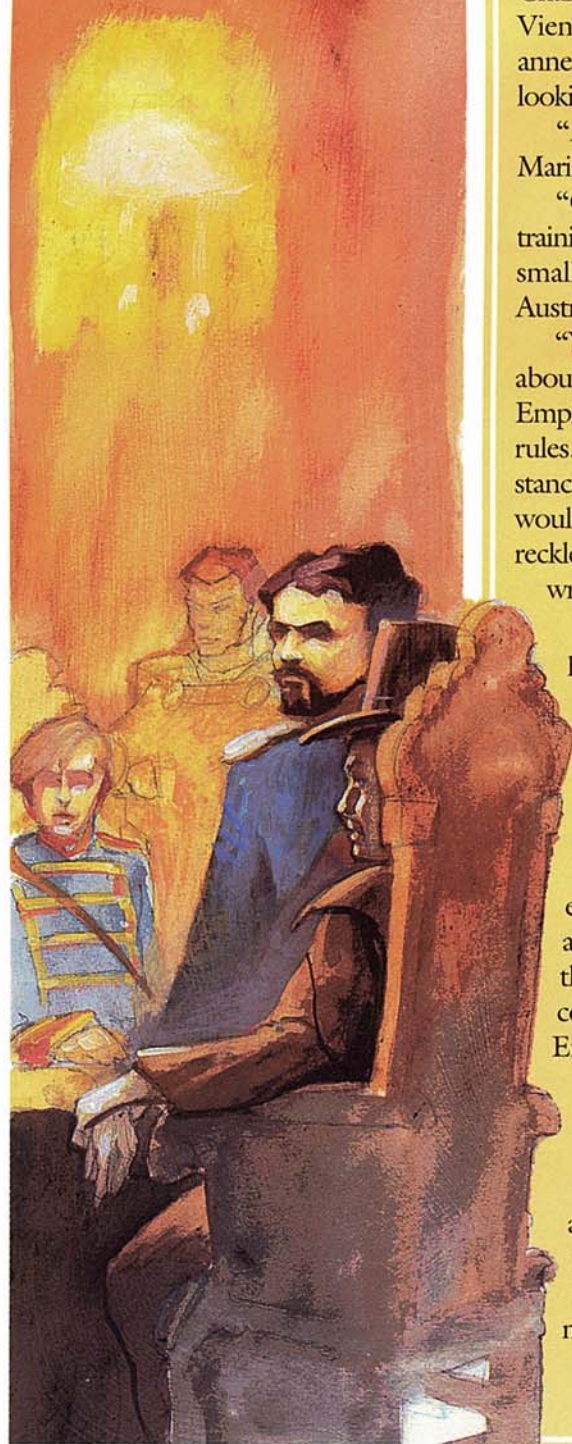
"Your Majesty is right," I said flatly. "If Bismarck succeeds in his master plan, we'll have a flat-out steampunk dictatorship by the end of the century. And worst of all, since the Unseelie Host'll have complete control of the master of that new Empire, they'll be able to do whatever they want to Humanity without firing an elf-shot." Suddenly, everything made sense; all of it came together like that last moment when you know how to complete a jigsaw puzzle, but one totally complete and horrible in its details.

"But sooner or later, even the conquest of New Europa won't be enough; the Unseelie'll goad Bismarck into believing that even the English are a threat. So the warships will be constructed and the battle taken over the Channel. And if the British Empire falls; there'll be the Americans to conquer, then the Dragon Kingdoms of the East; each in turn 'til Bismarck's Empire spans the world."

"Then we must stop him now," said Ludwig with calm, icy finality. "We have already decided that we must oppose him. All we need now is the means—the means and the army to fight him!"

"I propose a new alliance, my friends," the King's voice rang out. "An alliance of those who will also choose to take up arms against our common foe and his Dark allies. We must go out into the world and bring them to Falkenstein, so that we may prepare for the battle to come. Are you with me in this?"

One by one, we each nodded agreement. And so the die was cast.



To Gain A Dragon Ally

“We will join your Alliance when you can tell me why you are here, Man from Another Time.” the Dragon King Verithrax Draconis had said, pointing directly at me, then dismissing our embassy with a wave of a talon.

Morrolan and I walked back gloomily to our camp in the woods. The great thundering voice still rang in my head. What did the Dragon mean? I thought, staring up at the cold, brittle stars as they slowly came out. They seemed a long, long ways away.

“Back home, somewhere along the way, we made a big mistake, Morrolan,” I said finally as we sat down around the fire. “We chose the ability to do impossible things: travel to the moon, cure disease, send pictures around the world. But we lost something: a certain grace, a certain elegance of living. Now, we drive automotives that look like cheap tin boxes to work, and we work in even larger boxes, mostly staring at tiny boxes that tell us what to do.”

“You stare at small boxes?” asked Morrolan curiously. “We call them computers,” I explained. “A lot like Babbage machines, but without all the brass fittings and levers.”

“Ah. Quite hard to imagine, really,” mused Morrolan. “I must admit I rather like all the brasswork and Dwarfish touches.”

“Yeah, I do too. And I like having the time to eat a lunch uninterrupted, or work on something that I can see the results of. I like the fact that automotives all look different because they’re hand crafted.” He nodded. “When you make something with your hands, you put something of yourself in it, old man,” finished the sorcerer, as if stating the most obvious thing in the world.

I slowly began to load the heavy pistol. “That’s why that Dragon got me to thinking, Morrolan,” I said. “He really made sense. We need to fight to preserve what we have here. To make sure we don’t take it for granted. To protect it against the twisting and warping of the Unseelie and the people who can’t look beyond the immediate.”

“Someone; I think it was Churchill—” I began again. “Lord Randolph?” said Morrolan.

“No, Winston, his son. He said, ‘The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our time.’ That’s what I want to stop: the end of this Golden Age; the end of honor, of decency and fair play; of all the good things that this time holds.”

“Ah,” said Morrolan finally. “You’re saying we need a New Compact.”

“Hub?”

“A New Compact. Uniting the mages and the Faerie and the Dragons and the Dwarfs: all of us who have a stake in keeping this Golden Age alive.”

I rolled over and looked at him, pistol forgotten. “So,” I queried, “was there once an Old Compact?” He smiled. “Yes, old man, there was—and still is—a Compact. It is what keeps the Unseelie from wiping us from the face of this world, or us from destroying them in turn.” And then he told me of the First Compact: of how Auberon of Faerie, by wisdom and foresight, tricked the Dark Lord of the Unseelie, his fell Adversary, into signing an agreement of Eternal Peace with Humanity; an Agreement that would forestall war; an Agreement that had held fast against the forces of destruction on both sides to that very day. It was midnight when he finished the tale, and I stood up and I knew the Dragon’s answer.

...

“Draconis!” I called out at the very mouth of the cave. “Verithrax Draconis!” Slowly, a great amber eye opened from the darkness and regarded me somberly. Finally, there was a great exhalation of breath and Draconis rumbled, “So. You have an answer?”

I sat down at the mouth of the cave, warm in his steaming breath. “Yes, I have,” I said quietly, feeling the cold stars at my back. I took another swallow of air and spread my hands.

“Let me tell you a story, Sire,” I began. “Let me tell you of the land where I come from ... And why I’m here ...”

—Tom Olam. An American Artist in Victoria’s Court

Flashing blades and blazing guns—my impression of the first battle I was in. We were ambushed on the road to the Capital by the Regent's agents; as you can see, I counted more on my marksmanship than my fencing abilities!

Swords of The Compact



We called our infant band of rebels the Second Compact.

King Ludwig became our leader; the role of a dashing, enigmatic figurehead suited him pretty well. He also showed a surprising amount of knowledge about New European politics and a deft skill at the diplomatic gesture. Besides, we were meeting in his Faerie Castle.

Morrolan agreed to work with the Sorcerers; he had the contacts and knew what a good spell in the right place could accomplish. Tarlenheim would handle the military; he'd whip whatever armies we could muster together and plan our battlefield strategies. And Auberon was, of course, High King of the Seelie Court; through his subjects we would have eyes and ears both in the Mortal and Unseelie Realms.

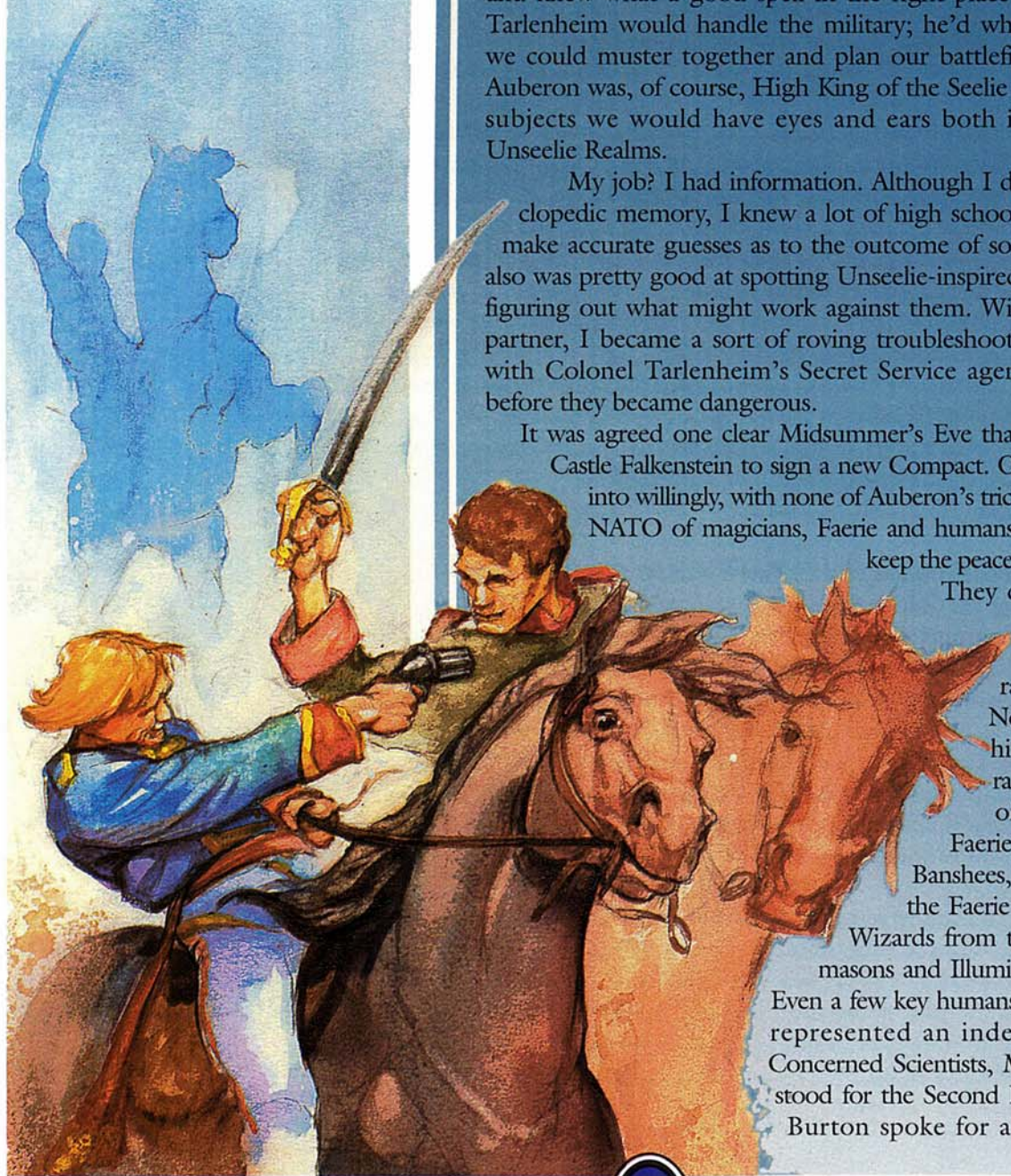
My job? I had information. Although I didn't have an encyclopedic memory, I knew a lot of high school history and could make accurate guesses as to the outcome of some future events. I also was pretty good at spotting Unseelie-inspired anachronisms and figuring out what might work against them. With Marianne as my partner, I became a sort of roving troubleshooter, working closely with Colonel Tarlenheim's Secret Service agents to thwart plots before they became dangerous.

It was agreed one clear Midsummer's Eve that all would meet at Castle Falkenstein to sign a new Compact. One that was entered into willingly, with none of Auberon's tricks or traps. A sort of NATO of magicians, Faerie and humans. A new attempt to keep the peace.

They came from all over the lands of New Europa: from the ravaged wilds of the Northland, the sunny hills of the Mediterranean, and the crags of the highest Alps.

Faerie, Brownies, Selkies, Banshees, Pixies, Nymphs; all the Faerie kindred. And then, Wizards from the Templars, Freemasons and Illuminated Brotherhood.

Even a few key humans came: Lord Kelvin represented an independent band of Concerned Scientists, Minister Jules Verne stood for the Second Empire, Sir Richard Burton spoke for a group of Britons



opposed to the rule of the Steam Lords, and Captain Nemo for those humans who opposed the war Bismarck was promoting. And our embassy to the Dragon King had convinced the elusive saurians that it was worth involving themselves in human squabbles, so that even they sent representatives. Only the Dwarfs, stubbornly refusing to participate in the inter-Court factionalism that they'd renounced their Faerie Powers to avoid, stayed away.

Our symbol was the swan, originally the personal emblem of King Ludwig. Beautiful and powerful, a swan is also one nasty bird when it gets angry. There's even a Faerie forest protectress called a "swan may" that can change from woman to swan, so the choice seemed singularly appropriate.

By the end of that night, the plan had been hammered out. We struck within the week, with a group of Kobolds who sabotaged the Dresden LandFortress works and earned themselves the new name of Gremlins for their ability to bollox machinery. Meanwhile, the combined powers of the Nature Faerie and the Wizards tore up tracks and hampered new rail construction all over the Continent. And late that month, working with Nemo's *Nautilus* and a small army of Selkie and merpeople, Marianne and I managed to sink a Prussian gunboat fleet sent to take up station on the Inner Sea between Prussia and France. The Iron Chancellor's forces reeled from the unexpected multiple hits.

But we were getting too good at our counter-Industrial Revolution. It was time for the Unseelie to strike back.



The Second Compact

Symbol of the alliance of Faerie, Humans, Mages and Dragons that oppose the forces of the Unseelie and their allies, the swan is also the symbol of the Throne of Bayern. Carried by members of the Compact on cloak pins, rings and medallions, it reflects the determination of the alliance to preserve New Europa's Golden Age.

Members of The Second Compact

The Second Compact has drawn in a wide variety of members from all over the *Falkenstein* world. Here are just a few of the conspirators and their reasons for joining:

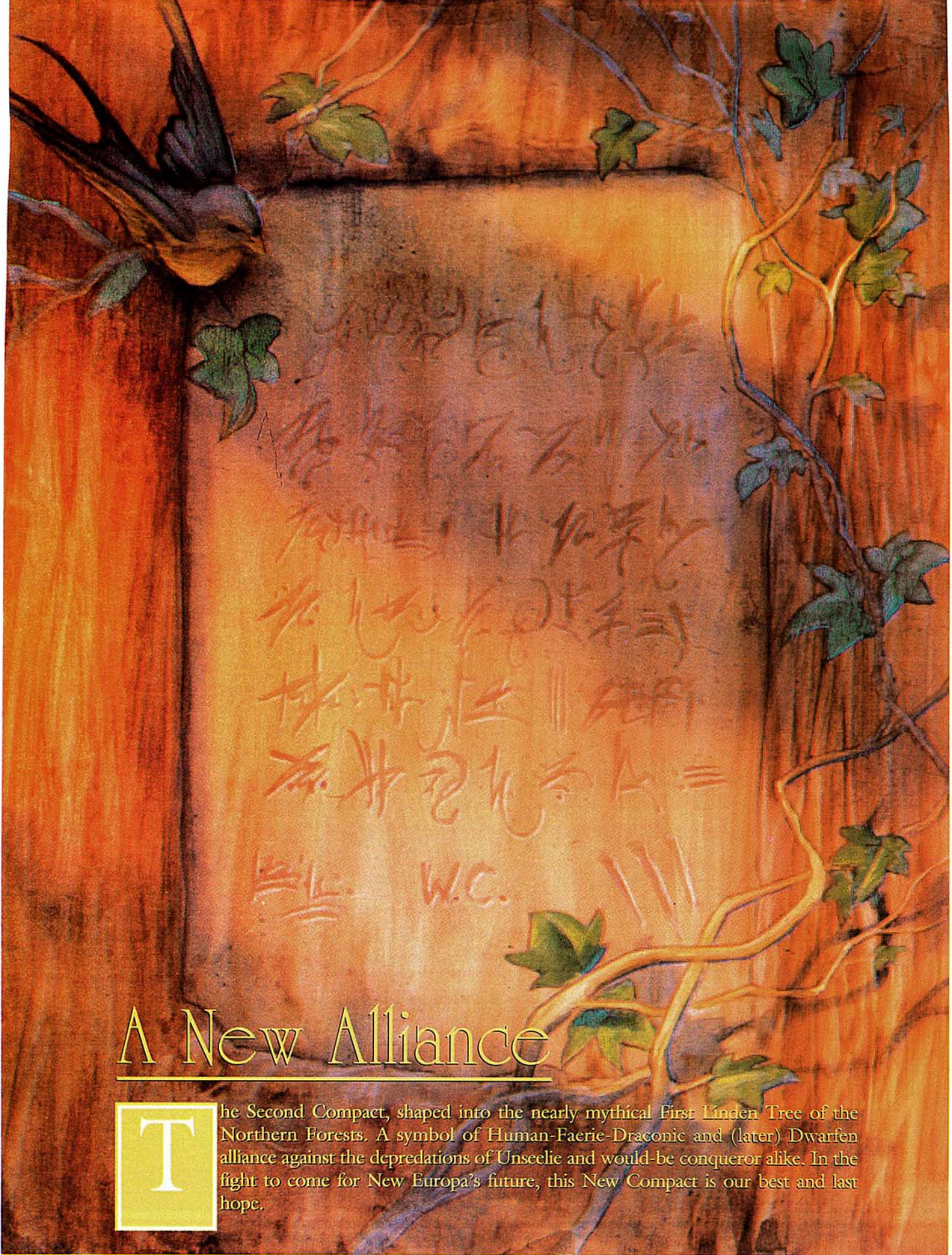
Prince Albert Edward of Wales joined the Compact to stop the Steam Lords of Britain. He is joined in this by **Sir Richard Burton**, who is opposed to using Steamtech to further colonial expansion, and **Lord Kelvin**, who fears the misuse of technology.

Politically, **Bayern, France and Austria** find themselves allied with the Second Compact; they'd be the first to be invaded if Bismarck has his way. The French are represented by **Science Minister Jules Verne**, and Bayern by **King Ludwig**.

On the Sorcerous side, the **Templars** and the **Freemasons** oppose the Unseelie and their plans to undermine Mankind; it also doesn't help that the increasing use of steel railway lines has a damping effect on Sorcery. The **Illuminated Brotherhood** opposes tyrannical governments on principle, and as loyal Bayernese would fight von Bismarck anyway.

Obviously, the **Seelie Court** opposes its traditional foes, the Unseelie, and are led by **Lord Auberon**. And the **Dragons** have joined mainly because many of them have half-human bloodlines and family is important to them.

Because the **Dwarfs** did not sign the First Compact, they have no protection under its Law, and both Bismarck and the Unseelie have taken advantage of this to enslave some of the Northern Dwarfholds. Although the Dwarfs are usually neutral, recent events have made them likely to join.



A New Alliance

The Second Compact, shaped into the nearly mythical First Linden Tree of the Northern Forests. A symbol of Human-Faerie-Draconic and (later) Dwarfen alliance against the depredations of Unseelie and would-be conqueror alike. In the fight to come for New Europa's future, this New Compact is our best and last hope.

The Second Compact

Why We Have a Second Compact

When the Faerie entered New Europa thousands of years ago, Auberon soon realized that the Unseelie would easily conquer the primitive local humans. So with typical deviousness, he set in motion an elaborate “sting”—meeting with the leader of the most powerful group of humans to propose a mutual aid pact, then letting it slip to the Courts that the true nature of this pact would bind the mortals for all time as allies of the Seelie Court.

The Adversary learned of this, and arranged to take Auberon's place at the signing with a clever bit of shapeshifting. But in his haste, he dismissed the glamour that disguised the real text of the document as part of Auberon's plan to fool the humans. It was only when he'd had signed that the truth was revealed: The signers of the Compact were forever bound not to make war upon each other.

Needless to say, this has only made the Adversary more determined than ever to find a way around his promise and pay back his old foe. His method is to accelerate human technology until we can't help but break the Compact.

See, an Industrial Revolution should be a gradually evolving process, in which people discover technologies at a rate which allows them to assimilate their impact. Take, for example, the classic Luddite situation: the cloth mills of England. What *should* have happened was that the factory owners worked with the local Weavers Guild to train new people to work in the plants. In time, someone would stop to ask where they were going to house all the new workers flooding in, and might stop to build more homes. Proper sewage systems would be put in, schools established, working conditions negotiated. If all this had happened at a slower pace, the horrible slums and milltowns of *our* Victorian Age would have never existed.

Reform vs Technology

People like Richard Owen, the great Victorian reformer, have tried to do things like this. Owen has set reasonable 10 hour workdays, eliminated corporal punishment, and started schools. He's arranged for cottages to be built to house the incoming workers. But Owen is one man. Compared to the hundreds who will throw up a factory, make a quick fortune and let the chips fall where they may, he's less than nothing.

That's what happened back home. But here in New Europa, the impact is far greater because of the influence of the Unseelie. Imagine for a moment computer-controlled machines, passenger aircraft, intercontinental ballistic missiles, robotics—all happening a hundred years earlier. That's what's happening in New Europa. And that's one reason why the Second Compact exists: not just to stop Bismarck, but also to slow the Industrial Age down to a manageable pace.

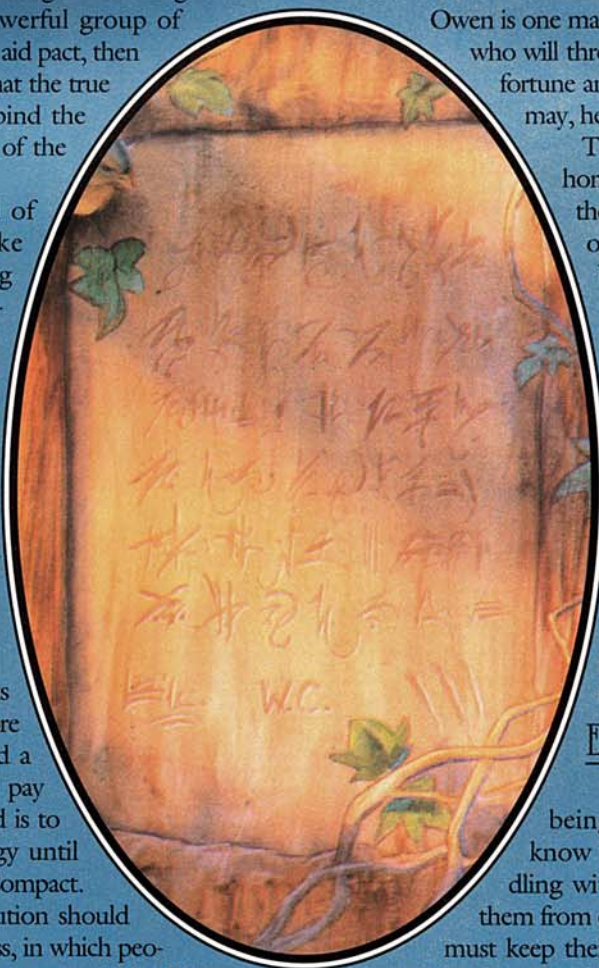
Evil Plans

With the insights I gain from being from the 20th century, I know why the Unseelie are meddling with us. The Compact restricts them from open war, and since the Faerie must keep their promises, they can't attack.

But the Compact doesn't stop them from helping us enslave *ourselves*. We won't stop to look at what we lose each time we gain a new technological toy. We can't know in 1870 that the smoke from coal-fired furnaces will be the acid rain of a hundred years from now. We don't know that a gatling gun today will lead to the trench warfare of the next world war.

But by working *together*, human, Dwarf and Faerie, we can stop the Unseelie and their puppet nations. We just need time to slow down and think about what we're doing.

The Second Compact buys us that time.



Faerie Attack!



should have been flattered. They went after me first.

It was late one night in my rooms at Castle Falkenstein, after a long strategy session with the Compact's leadership. I awoke with the smell of fire deep in my throat. Coughing, I opened my eyes and fumbled to awareness.

A miniature sun was rising at the very foot of my bed.

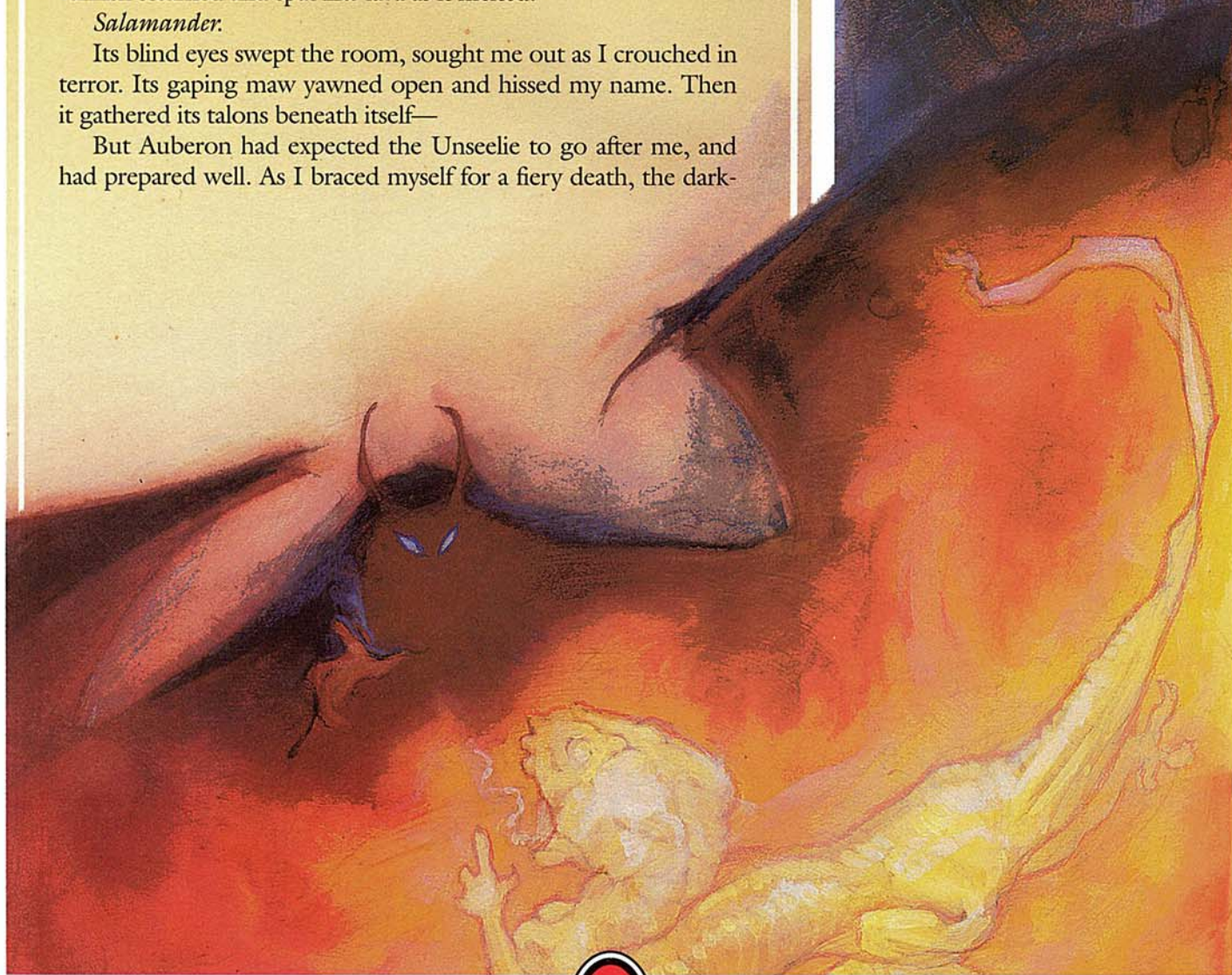
The brilliant white light filled the entire room and dazzled my eyes. Flames charred wallpaper and seared the ceiling, creating the choking smoke that had awakened me. And in the very center of the spherical inferno crouched a white-hot, twisted amphibian shape, a gigantic newt wrought from the very forges of Hell. Its clawed feet seared the floor beneath it, and bubbling varnish steamed and spat like lava as it melted.

Salamander.

Its blind eyes swept the room, sought me out as I crouched in terror. Its gaping maw yawned open and hissed my name. Then it gathered its talons beneath itself—

But Auberon had expected the Unseelie to go after me, and had prepared well. As I braced myself for a fiery death, the dark-

The battle in my room. The big dark guy is the Phooka; the gold lizard is the Salamander.



ness in the corner of the room suddenly intensified and took form; stretching like a shadow, flowing like spilled oil, it shaped itself into a huge manlike aspect. Great batlike wings sprouted from rolling, coiled muscular shoulders; glowing white eye slits opened and fastened on the blazing apparition threatening me.

The two met and exploded in combat right over my bed.

I threw myself backwards as the shock wave slammed the room, belling out the walls like cheap paper. Plaster rained down from the ceiling, igniting as it fell. As I scrambled for cover, the two great forms tore and tumbled, ripped and shrieked, white hot claw to dark mist talon. Light blazed through dark, dark smothered sun as the demon shapes battled. Then the great shadow creature got a grip on its opponent, and as the searing heat tore its flesh, bent back the shrieking, hissing lizard form until there was a sound like a breaking stick.

The Salamander was gone.

The looming shadow turned slowly to face me. It said one word, in a voice that sounded like a spectral wind whistling through the branches of a dead tree. One word—a name.

Phooka.

It said this with a certain satisfaction, as though it had just finished a job well done. Then it turned and melted back into the corner of the room, until it was once again only a slightly darker shadow. Soon, even that was gone, its duty to its Faerie Lord accomplished.

That was the first attempt on our lives by the forces of the Unseelie. There would be a lot more to follow in the days to come.



Creatures of Faerie

If the Faerie are sometimes bad news, their idea of **pets** is even worse. Imagine, for a moment, what a race capable of spanning the entire multiverse, a race with immense powers of mental control and illusion, would consider a fun pet. Since the incident with the Salamander (a favorite Unseelie pet), I've made something of a hobby of studying the bizarre Faerie taste in "animal companions." After all, any pet can be used as a weapon, assuming it's got the hardware and the inclination.

The pets of the Faerie usually have both.

Mythological Creatures

Some of the most popular creatures the Faerie like to take as pets are those which would normally be thought of as mythological in any place other than magick-packed New Europa. Here, the Faerie have domesticated all kinds of creatures from the realm of fantasy, including:

- **Manticora:** Favorite guardians of Faerie circles, caves and castles.
- **Unicorns:** Often used by Faerie Ladies as riding animals.
- **Wyverns:** Make great shoulder pets and personal guards.
- **Basilisks and Cockatrices:** More Guardians.
- **Sphinxes:** More allies than pets, they are clever and deadly.
- **Hydras:** Twelve heads of death, no waiting.
- **Salamanders:** You already know about these. Bad news.

These are only a few of the mythic creatures of the Faerie; the full list could cover more pages than the typical fantasy roleplaying game's "monster manual"! Expect anything.

Big Nasties

I don't know how they do it, but the Faerie also manage to turn up with a lot of giant-sized versions of everyday creatures. I've met giant insects, giant bats, giant fish and even giant worms, all expanded to monstrous sizes and used to guard Faerie mounds or commit the occasional assassination. As a general rule, if it's ugly and dangerous, chances are some Faerie Lord has managed to make it bigger and even more dangerous.

Alien Creatures

Auberon once bragged to me that the Faerie had access to worlds with blasters, computers and even star travel. At the time, I was suitably impressed, until Morrolan later told me that such access was extremely limited and only a few of the Faerie (such as the Adversary and Auberon) could actually reach these worlds. However, during some of their sojourns, many of the Faerie have picked up some pretty nasty things along the way. I swear I once glimpsed a creature in a Faerie circle that was the acid-spitting twin of the *Alien* from the movie, and Morrolan says he's seen worse. Luckily, multi-dimensional Faerie pets like that are relatively rare, or we could all be in *big* trouble.

All the stuff I brought with
me from home ... Can you
spot the Secret Weapon?

Secret Weapon



hey tried to kill us at least four times that month. Assassins. Bombs. A unicorn that tried to run Marianne down on the road to Old München. (She was amused by that one!). A clockwork spider with a poisoned needle cleverly hidden in Col. Tarlenheim's apartments.

The Adversary and Bismarck also tightened up their operations. They enlisted the Steam Lords to send reciprocator-armed thugs to guard the LandFortress plants. The Unseelie planted spies in the Seelie Court to root out Compact agents. And the armies of Prussia and her inhuman allies drilled and mobilized for a final all-out strike. We were running out of slack. We were definitely out of time.

It was only then that I finally found out why the Magick had Summoned me to *Castle Falkenstein*. And it wasn't *anything* I'd suspected.

See, even before I'd gone to Germany and been snatched out of the halls of Neuschwanstein, I'd made a fairly lengthy tour of the European continent. One of the places I'd stopped was Florence, Italy. I'd originally intended to hang out on the Via Veneto, eat gelato and pick up girls. And I got in a tour of the great Uffizi Gallery to see the magnificent art collection while I was there. While at the Uffizi, I'd bought a book in the gift shop—to be exact, a copy of the recently found *Codex Pacifica*, the lost and only now rediscovered Sixth Notebook of the great artist and inventor Leonardo daVinci.

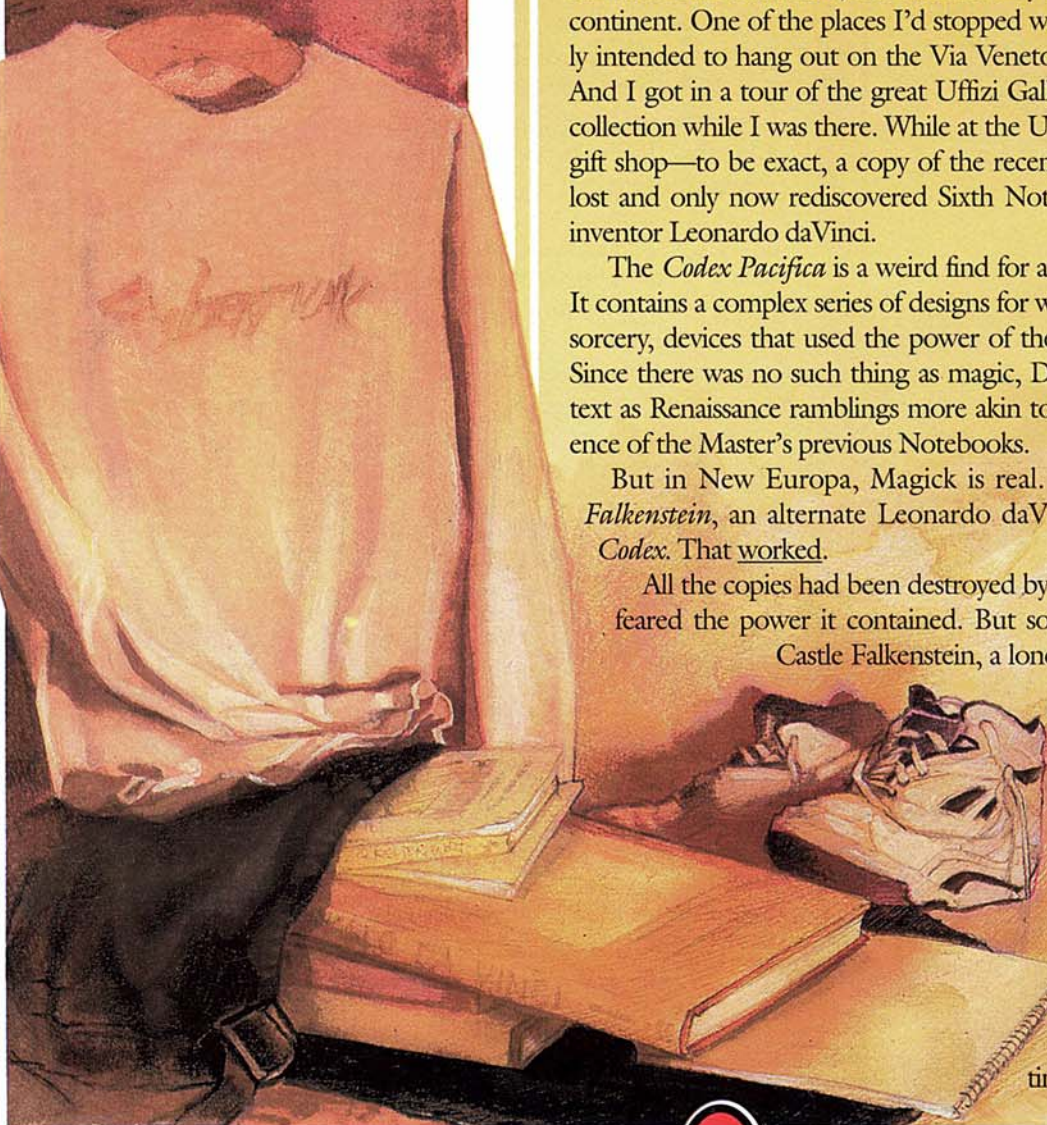
The *Codex Pacifica* is a weird find for any student of the Old Master. It contains a complex series of designs for what appeared to be engines of sorcery, devices that used the power of the arcane to manipulate reality. Since there was no such thing as magic, DaVinci scholars discounted its text as Renaissance ramblings more akin to philogiston than the real science of the Master's previous Notebooks.

But in New Europa, Magick is real. And in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, an alternate Leonardo daVinci had written an identical *Codex*. That worked.

All the copies had been destroyed by the order of a wise Pope who feared the power it contained. But somewhere in the basement of

Castle Falkenstein, a lone Dwarf Mad Scientist poured over the thick book he'd "liberated" from my backpack as it lay neglected in the center of Morrolan and the Faerie Lord's Summonation pentagram. His Italian was rusty, and besides, reading mirror-writing is tough sledding.

Absentmindedly grabbing his tools, he began to tinker ...



The Lost Notebook Of Leonardo

The original concepts of the *Codex Pacifica* are originally derived from Aristotle's *Treatise on Paranatural Cosmologie*, a seminal work which described the nature of "bound force" and its natural outcome, magick. Aristotle had more than a touch of the Gift, and was quite adept at reading the shapes of magickal "knots" in living things (although he was a philosopher, not a practicing sorcerer).

Aristotle's Treatise

In the *Treatise*, Aristotle proposed that the universe was made up of a vast web of energy, invisible, intangible and omnipresent. All material things were created by binding this energy into reality through a series of complex constructs or "knots." Living things were even more complex "knots", and death was the result of the natural tension of all of these knots tugging on each other until one or more unravelled. Those with the ability to see these knots could grasp the weaving of the universe, gathering power to themselves to reshape the world as desired. The big drawback was that these alterations were only temporary; the natural tension of reality pulled "knots" apart, and the bigger the knot, the faster it unravelled.

Copied by other philosophers, the *Treatise* became the foundation of the current ritual and practice of the Art, a body of work that is so complex that groups of wizards eventually evolved into "Lodges," "Brotherhoods" and "Orders", each studying a specific form of construct. Their collected research soon became codified into books of lore and oral tradition, jealously defended against rival orders by each branch of magecraft in what is now known as the scholastic tradition of magick.

The Codex Pacifica

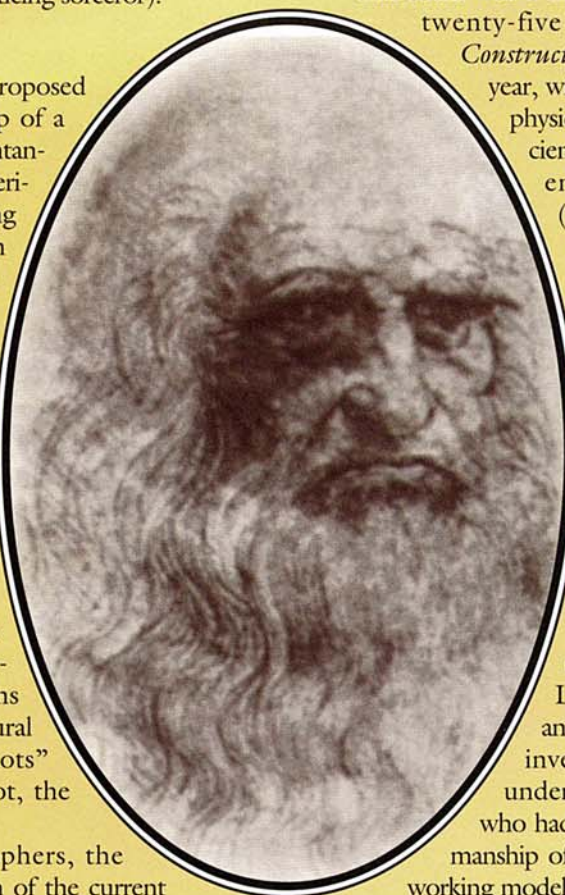
Around 1495, Leonardo daVinci was given a copy of the *Treatise* by a philosopher acquaintance. DaVinci was intrigued by the concepts involved, and

having some measure of the Gift himself, began to study the principles. As an engineer, however, Leonardo's thoughts soon turned towards the idea of an inherent "knot" involved in the actions of machines, a knot that could replicate other knots in an automated fashion. By 1500, he had actually designed a series of small theoretical devices; magical engines that could weave their own spells. He published

twenty-five copies of his *Codex on Constructa Automata* the following year, with the idea of constructing a physical model as soon as a sufficiently advanced metallurgic science could be developed (Leonardo had no truck with the Dwarfs, whom he considered clannish and dull).

Upon publication, the *Codex* caused a tremendous uproar in the Church—it didn't take much to imagine the effects a magickally driven industrial revolution would have on Renaissance New Europa. The Pope promptly had all copies of the *Codex* rounded up and burned, arrested Leonardo on heresy charges, and exacted a promise from the inventor to cease his research under pain of death. Leonardo, who had had no luck devising craftsmanship of the level needed to make a working model, agreed grudgingly and went on to invent more mundane inventions, such as the submarine, the helicopter and the tank.

A freak spell and the principles of magickal resonance have once again reconstructed the long missing Notebook, however, and the concepts of Engine Magick are now the ultimate state secret of the Kingdom of Bayern. So far, only three people (Rhyme, Morrolan and myself) know how to reconstruct the "knots" of Engine Magic. But our secret could reshape the fate of all New Europa.



For more on Engine Magick, see pg. 215

The Engines of Sorcery

The first hint we had that Rhyme was up to something was when he blew out the lower west wall of the Castle in an explosion bigger than usual.

The entire massive edifice of the Main Keep rocked like a bomb had hit it. I picked myself up off the floor of the Throne Room (where the King, Morrolan, Tarlenheim and I had been pouring over reports from our spies in Berlin), and looked over at Ludwig. "I fear," said the King as he climbed to his feet and dusted plaster off of his vest, "that this time Master Rhyme has gone too far." Tarlenheim shook his head. "That wasn't his typical explosion, Sire," he responded worriedly. "I suspect we might be under attack."

"No," objected Morrolan with utter finality. "That's not an infernal explosion. It's sorcery—I can feel it. In my bones." He started to run out of the room at top speed, his face twisted with alarm.

"Or," I remember saying as I raced to join him, "he's finally cracked the secret of pure fusion." And at a dead run, we loped down the stairs towards where a distant high-pitched keening could be heard.

As it turned out, it was almost that bad.

In the center of the cluttered space that made up Rhyme's workshop was a tremendous screaming fountain of rainbow light. At the bottom of the maelstrom sat a small, spherical clockwork whirligig merrily spinning off sorcerous chaos and earsplitting special effects.

Rhyme was cowering in a corner, his eyes tightly closed and his head protectively covered by a big hard-backed book. "Hey, that's mine!" I objected, pulling it from his hands and looking at the slightly scorched cover.

Morrolan leaned over the fountain of magical energy and made a few brief passes with his hands. "I do not believe this," he marvelled. "He's created a self-sustaining Illusion spell! A bit sloppy, with a lot of Material harmonics, but even so ..."

"He did it with this," I said, holding the book open to a page covered in grimy fingerprints and waving it



under the wizard's nose. His eyes tracked it absently, then focused. With a gasp, he snatched it out of my hands.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed in horror and astonishment as he feverishly poured over the glossy coffee table book. "It's ... it's the Sixth Codex!"

"In hardcover," I added. "It cost me sixty thousand lira ..."

"Thomas. Please. Shut up." Slowly, with a careful finger, Morrolan reached into the blur of magical fireworks and tapped the lever that operated the magical "engine." The keening stopped abruptly and the room was once again quiet, lit only by a few murky gas lamps.

Then he sat down on the floor with the Book in his lap, and began to carefully, methodically, explain to us what the hell Rhyme had just done. And what the *Codex Pacifica* really meant.

We had a Secret Weapon at last. If we could figure out how to use it.

Over the next few hours, Morrolan read the Codex from cover to cover (his Italian was a lot better than either mine or Rhyme's).

"There are over two dozen various types of devices Leonardo imagined in this manuscript," Morrolan explained to me as he rapidly scanned the pages and took notes. "All of them are means of creating a spell-knot by mechanical means." He then went on to add that, unfortunately, the scale of the spell created by the device (which he called a Sorcerous Engine or Magical Automata) was directly related to its size; the bigger the Engine, the more powerful the spell.

By himself, Rhyme could only build small Sorcery Engines. What we needed was something big enough to affect an entire army, specifically, the army Bismarck and the Unseelie were probably going to be sending right down our throats in a matter of weeks, maybe. To do that would take an army of Rhymes.

Or a city *full* of Dwarfs.

Sorcerous Automata

In the first few heady hours of discovering the *Codex Pacifica*, Morrolan and I wrote down almost everything we could about the wondrous Engines of Leonardo. The first thing we realized was that, as a rule, Sorcerous Automata (as the Old Master called them) are only good for performing one spell, and a simple one at that. But they do it very well, and keep doing it until the motive power driving the Engine (clockwork, water, air, steam) runs down. Leonardo never did figure out a way of creating a magically powered Engine, by the way; it seems that even with magick the Laws of Conservation of Energy still forbid Perpetual Motion Machines.

We also don't know how many of these Engines really work, due to some personal quirk, Leonardo had no truck with Dwarfs, and so was never able to construct his devices. So Morrolan, Rhyme and I have been forced to build small working models of each one of the drawings in the Codex; a hazardous proposition since neither daVinci or we have any idea exactly what effect was supposed to happen when you hit the switch. Sorcery is not an exact science, and never will be; this is as close as it gets. Another problem is that while Dwarfs can build these, they are magically blind and so can't calibrate them. This means you have to have a mage nearby to do the fine tuning. Once again, a long, arduous process of hit and miss.

But we *have* built a few Engines, including:

Illusion Engine

What Rhyme built on his first try. The design produces an illusion, but *what* that illusion is varies wildly. You have to tinker with all the little bitty parts while a sorcerer tells you what to do to get the desired result. A fun parlor toy, but we're working on it.

Magnetic Engine

Most people think we use a levitation engine to move the gigantic steam-powered airships of the Bayernese Aeronavy. They're wrong. A Levitation Engine would be too risky; lose it and the whole ship crashes. Instead, a helium gasbag spun from Dwarfen metal-thread holds the ship aloft. The Engine locks onto the magnetic lines of force that naturally radiate from the Earth, and pushes or pulls the ship along them. For more on this, take a look at my notes on the *Bayernese Aeronavy* (pg.128).

Heat Engine

Generates a powerful globe of heat in a specific area (and you need a sorcerer to help adjust this or you might burn down a city). We have used this one to heat boilers and steam plants; the catch is that you have to get into the boiler to rewind the Engine.

Levitation Engine

Generates a field of null-weight around the engine and anything attached to it. Right now, these are very rare, because you must have a reliable power source to keep them going.

For more on Sorcerous Automata, see pg. 215

Mark Of The Unseelie Court

Feared by all but well known to only a few, the inner cabal of the Unseelie Court also has its own symbol of authority.

Based on a twisted version of the traditional Wizard's *Summonation Circle*, the Mark of the Court combines these arcane elements with the glyphs for bringing the Wild Hunt into being (the three monstrous creatures at the axes of the triangle) and the personal mark of the Adversary himself (a snake wrapped around a chalice of poison).



Hunted!



We went back down to Rhyme's workshop, where he was still tinkering with his clockwork-powered Illusion Engine. With some coaching from Morrolan, he'd gotten it fine-tuned to where it could project a reasonable image of a pretty girl. He was just adjusting it to edit out the clothes when we knocked on the big iron doors.

Morrolan got right to the point. We needed to travel to the nearest Dwarfish city, a Dwarf hold, and convince its King to help us build a large Sorcery Engine. Would Rhyme guide us, and help us negotiate with his people?

I wasn't all that surprised when Rhyme flatly refused. "I've me reasons, I have," he grumbled sourly. It took another three hours of cajoling, bribery and eventually a downright threat by Morrolan to change the recalcitrant Dwarf into something small and slimy before Rhyme relented. "But you'll be having to protect me, you will," he warned. "And I'll not answer to the consequences, either."

Besides, as Morrolan pointed out quite practically, controlling the ability to create Sorcerous machines might be the only way to forge an alliance with the reluctant Dwarf Kings.

So it was agreed: Morrolan, Rhyme, Marianne and myself would travel by horseback to the nearest Dwarfhold, a place called *Kazak Corom*, located deep in the high reaches of the Alps. Meanwhile, Colonel Tarlenheim, Auberon and the King would continue to gather the forces of the Compact and get ready to face Bismarck and the Unseelie. The next morning, we set out for the mountains.

The first few days of travel went rapidly; our horses were fresh and the trail open. We saw little sign of anyone, human or otherwise, a good sign as we were worried that either Bismarck or his Unseelie allies might be following us. The terrain rose steadily higher as we approached the Alps, thick leafy fall trees giving way to the tall conifers of the mountain forests, and we soon passed the last signs of human habitation as we reached the craggy rocks and meadows of the high peaks.

So far, so good.

Then came the sixth night, moonless at first and as dark as the inside of a sack. The way had become difficult; the little-used path was littered with broken boulders and we were forced to fumble our way through the deep, silent forest, moving slowly and carefully so as not to lame our mounts. Finally, after an hour of laboriously wending our way, we reached an open clearing just as the moon rose. In the distance, not more than a few miles away, we could finally see the towering spire of the peak that held *Kazak Corom*.

Then we heard the sound. A distant, terrifying howl, like all the hunting beasts from Hell were racing towards us. And above that, the deep, chilling note of a spectral horn gathering the legions of the damned.

The Adversary and his friends were on to us.

The Wild Hunt was coming.



The Wild Hunt

There are renegades in Faerie. Bad ones. Although the Compact prohibits the Faerie of either Court from making war upon Mankind (and vice versa), it does not prohibit the random murderous attack on lone individuals. These renegade acts are allowed by the Compact on both sides: a flesh-starved troll slays a huntsman on a lonely road, or a foul-tempered miner crushes a Knocker under his hobnailed boots; without these exceptions, both sides would have been forced into genocidal conflict long ago. So it is that both sides treat the perpetrators of these incidents as murderers, not warriors, to be brought to justice or destroyed by either the Courts or Humanity (if possible). And the peace of the Compact is kept—so far.

But there are a few groups that operate outside the Compact, renegades too dangerous to round up, too powerful to destroy. The Wild Hunt are those renegades, Faerie terrorists who sweep out of the dark night to harry, torment and slay hapless victims. Because they are renegades, they are beyond the limits of the Compact. Yet, because they are so dangerous, the Wild Hunt is nearly impossible to eradicate, even with the powers of Sorcery and Technology arrayed against it.

The Hunt Summoned

The Hunt rides only at night, taking varied forms as it will. Most often, it is appears as mass of black, misshapen riders, astride the glowing-eyed stallions favored by the high Faerie; other times, it is a swirling, chattering mass of horrific shapes. Sometimes, it takes the form of a pack of spectral hounds with flaming mouths and eyes, led by a huge horned Huntsman; all of these forms can fly at will. The very nature of the Hunt's shapeshifting also disguises those who participate in it, making it nearly impossible to take retribution once the Hunt disperses.

The Hunt is a state of mind more than a thing, an alliance of Faerie turned to Evil. A Hunt builds up over a number of hours or days as one or more powerful Faerie

Summon it together; members begin to gather aimlessly at a single gateway between Faerie and the mortal world, milling into what is called a Host. As the most powerful Faerie arrives, his will gives the Host its Hunting Form; the Leader always takes the form of a Horned Man or Daemon Stag, and leads the Hunt on its aerial forays.

The Unseelie, who hate all mortals and their allies, most often Summon the Hunt, but it has also been raised by powerful Seelie bent on vengeance or destruction of their enemies. Even peaceful Seelie can occasionally be swept into a Hunt, caught up in the bloodlust and fury it arouses, one reason the Seelie Court is loath to delve too deeply into the makeup of a Hunt after it occurs.

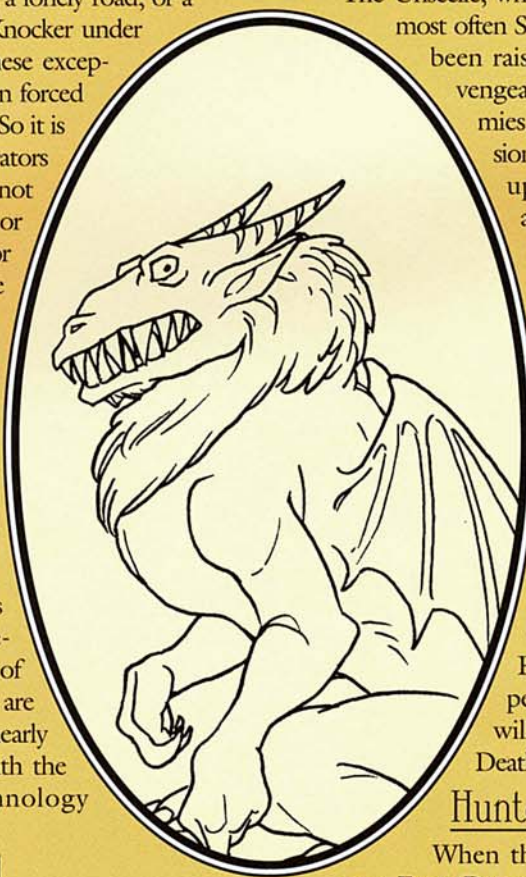
The Hunt lasts for only the span of one night, from full darkness to first dawn, and is rarely Summoned more than one night running. It may be Summoned to pursue a single victim, or may simply be Summoned to wreak havoc upon the mortal world. It may even be Summoned to slay other Faerie, but only if a mortal can be persuaded to ride with the Hunt willingly to create a state of True Death for the victim.

Hunted

When the Hunt comes after you, you run. Even Dragons think twice about standing against it; when Summoned, the Hunts' members gain the ability to fly as fast as the wind as well as the traditional poisoned fangs and/or elfshot bows of the Huntsmen. Only the Dwarfs can stand against the Hunt; nearly impervious to magick and the Hunt's fell poison weapons, they readily attack it with Cold-Iron whenever a chance offers itself. Humans can also slay individual Huntsmen with Cold Iron, but are certain to be overwhelmed by the sheer weight of numbers and torn apart limb from limb.

If they're lucky, that is.

For more on the Hunt, see pg. 175



A Dwarfen Rescue!

They came on a horde of fire-breathing, flying stallions. Their leader took the traditional form of the Horned Man, a titanic figure rippling with muscle and the oily, slimed skin of a long dead corpse. With him rode his twisted, monstrous crew, spiked and taloned, dripping poison from saw-edged weapons and strangely ornate bows. At their heels slavered a pack of glowing-eyed hellhounds that hurtled through the clouds like they were running on a freeway.

We rode for it.

Poisoned elfshot *whinged* all around us, splattering off rocks and trees with fiery sparks. I leaned down on my horse and dug in my heels; side by side, the four of us thundered over the open ground, through the trees and back into the forest. Behind us, we could hear the sound of screaming demon horses and the howls of their horrible riders momentarily thwarted by the dense brush.

Then we were through the last stand of woods, with only the barren mountainside ahead of us. As we galloped up the steep rock slope with all the fiends of the Pit after us, we could see two huge metal doors set deep within the side of the peak. Carved runes decorated the arches surrounding them, and two stone obelisks marked the end of the path. We reached the doors just before the Hunt.

Rhyme threw himself down in front of the archway, ran to a lever set within the center of the twin portals, and yanked it up and down furiously. From somewhere deep within the mountain, we could hear a deep, sonorous tone. Tense seconds passed as the Hunt gathered around us. They brandished their awful weapons as the Hunt Master grinned a horrible, toothy smile ...

Then the great bronze doors rolled back with a ponderous thunder. And about two hundred Dwarfs swaggered out to confront the Lord of the Unseelie.

As we gasped for breath, their leader strode forward and took up position between us and the Master of the Hunt, idly slapping the haft of his huge iron hammer. The spectral Unseelie apparition rode closer and hissed something in a threatening voice. The Dwarf King took another step forward, raising the great hammer. I could see in the cold moonlight that there was a peculiar quality to its metal; black and smooth, carved with heavy runes, it seemed to reek of power.

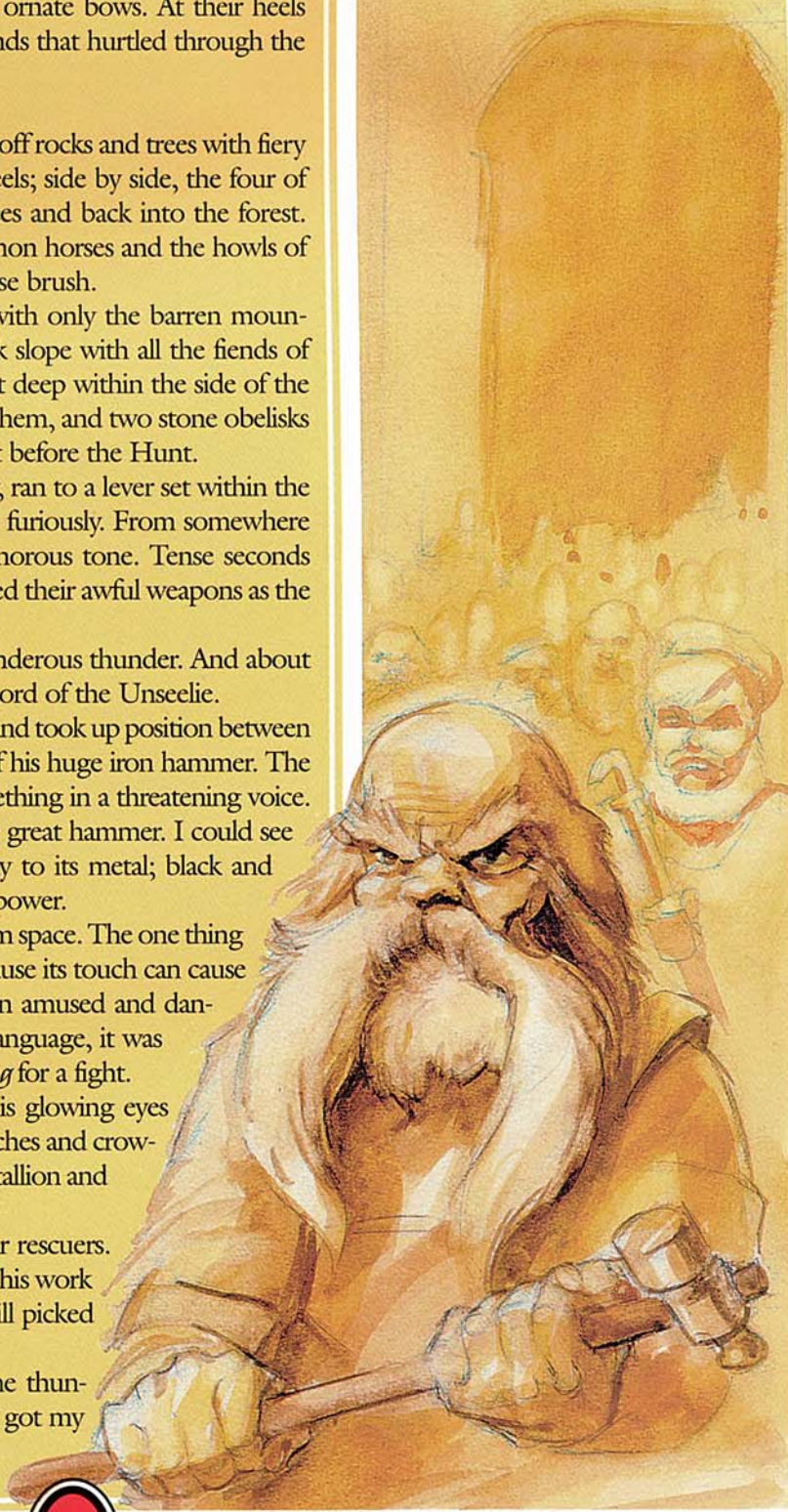
The power of *Cold Iron*. The star metal: the Iron from space. The one thing that any Faerie, even an Unseelie Lord, fears most, because its touch can cause the True Death. The Dwarf King said something in an amused and dangerous voice; even though I couldn't understand the language, it was obvious even to me that this was one Dwarf just *spoiling* for a fight.

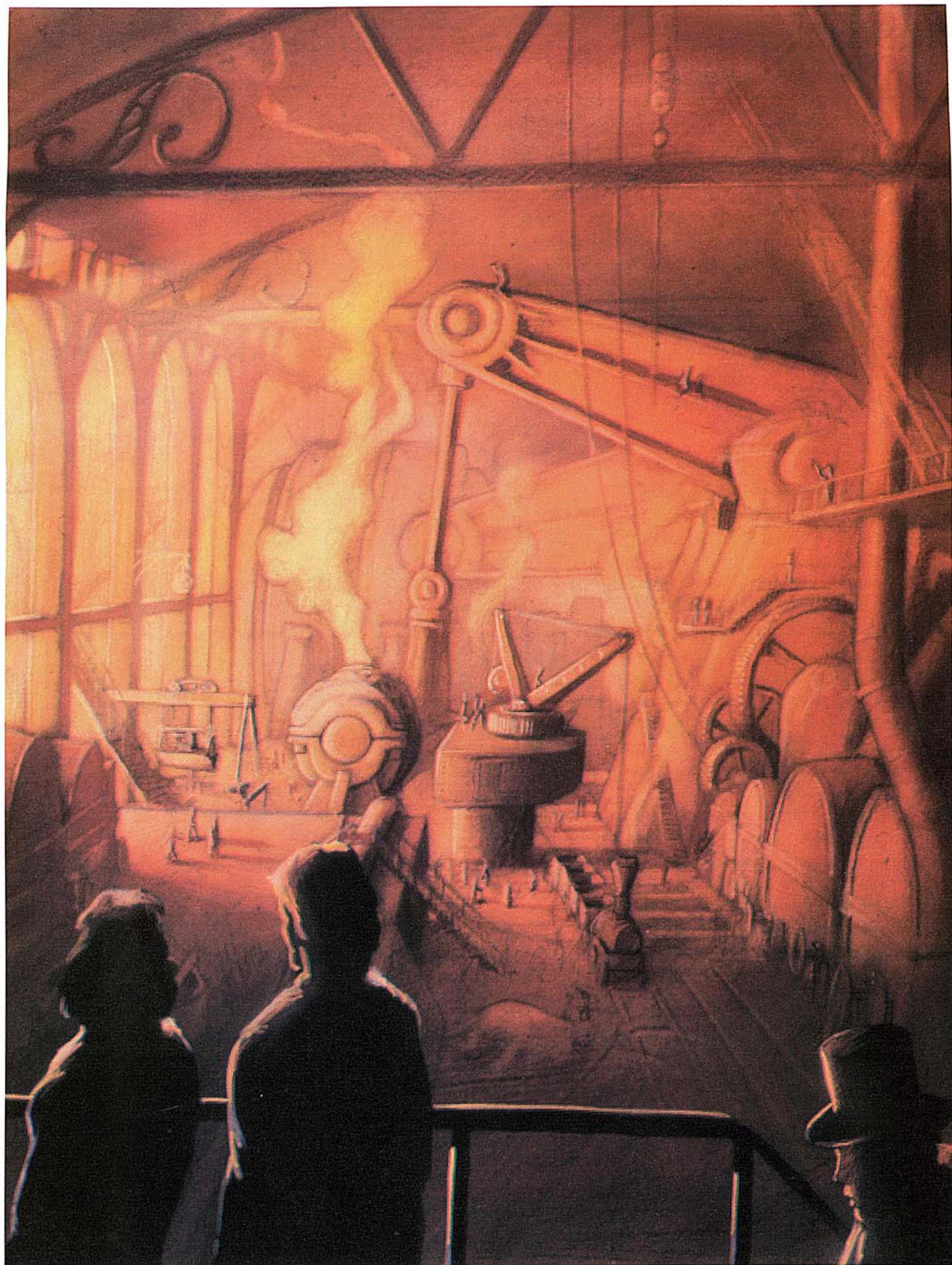
It was also obvious to the Master of the Hunt. His glowing eyes raked the army of Dwarfs, taking in the huge iron wrenches and crow-bars cradled in their hands. With a snarl, he whirled his stallion and hurtled into the sky, the rest of his Host behind.

We heaved a sigh of relief, and turned to thank our rescuers. All except Rhyme, who hung back, his head shaded by his work hat. Not that it helped. The Dwarf King's eagle eye still picked him out of our crowd and fixed him in a furious glare.

"You're not out of this yet, Rhyme No-Name," he thundered as he raised his huge black hammer. "You've still got my daughter to answer for!"

The Dwarfen king and his associates. Not people to tangle with.





A Delicate Negotiation



ell,” grumbled Rhyme apologetically, as our rescuers surrounded us with a lot of large weapons, “I told you I couldn’t be answering for the consequences.”

“You didn’t tell us you’d knocked up the Dwarf King’s daughter either,” I hissed back. He grimaced.

We descended a long spiral staircase deep into the heart of the mountain. After some time, we broke out into a vast underground gallery, packed with gigantic machines, steaming boilers and about a thousand Dwarfs. Huge open archways framed one side of the cavern; on the other side, a glowing river of lava meandered past the factory floor. Workcrews scooped up the molten metal with huge, steam-powered shovels and ladled it into waiting molds; others “dwarfhandled” lines of ore cars and tiny locomotives around a complex network of tracks.

The Dwarfs led us through the chaos of the open workspace, until we passed through one of the lava-side archways. A narrow span of rock bent over the seething river and ended at a towering spire of rock in the center of the flow. At the top was a flat platform and a mighty throne carved deep into the rock. And next to the throne stood an astoundingly beautiful Faerie woman. With two very young Dwarfs at her side. Looking at her, I couldn’t blame him. While I couldn’t exactly see what a statuesque blonde beauty with floor length hair and perfect features would ever see in my squatty Dwarf companion, there was no mistaking the distinctly Rhymian features on the short, grumpy twins hiding in her skirts.

The Dwarf King climbed the steps to glower down from his throne. “Give me one good reason why I shouldn’t split your head wide open, you Nameless hooligan,” he rumbled. Rhyme may have been a grump, but he wasn’t a coward. He marched forward and planted his grimy boots toe to toe with the King’s. “I would have married her, you great hairy tyrant,” he roared back. “You just refused to have a Nameless engineer for a relative!”

Morrolan stepped smoothly into the gap. “Sire,” he said with a slight grin, “I think I may have a solution to your—ah, domestic predicament.” The Dwarf King’s eyes narrowed. “How can you, wizard, set to rights the damage he’s done? It’s past repairing!”

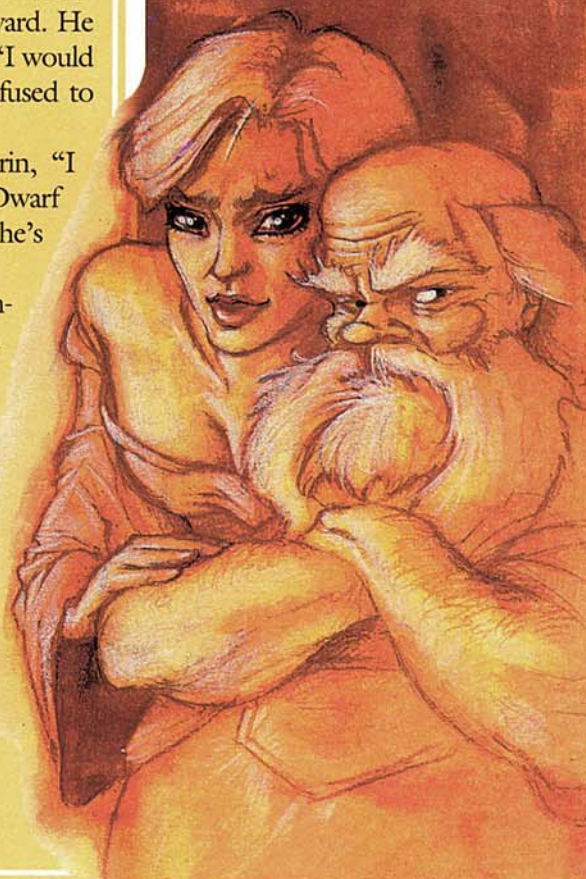
“Exactly,” Morrolan continued calmly. “But imagine if you had a son-in-law with a *Name*—the Name of a Great Dwarfish Master. The First Master in fact, to harness the power of Sorcery itself.” He turned back to where Rhyme defiantly stood, arms akimbo. “Show him, Rhyme—*Enginemaster*.”

The Dwarf reached into his toolbox and drew out the tiny glittering construct. He carefully wound it up and placed it on the stones before him. A thin hum filled the air, and a tiny image of a dancing, spinning female form filled the air above the busily whirring Engine. This time, I instantly recognized the Dwarf King’s daughter.

A vast silence seemed to fill the cavern as the implications sank in. Finally, the Dwarf King nodded. “All right, wizard,” he grunted. “This is worth saving his sorry neck.” Then his eyes glittered as he again took in the tiny Engine. “But you didn’t brave the Hunt just to settle Rhyme Enginemaster’s affairs,” he said suspiciously. “Why are you here?”

“Sir,” I began carefully, “we’d like to make a deal ...”

The Dwarf King and his daughter. Now I know why Rhyme was so willing to risk his neck.



Dwarfholds

A Dwarfhold is a Dwarfish city, usually, but not always, under a mountain, where thousands of Dwarfs live, work and occasionally play. Holds are always underground, with only a few openings to the surface, either in volcanic vents or at the mouths of caves. It's a safe bet that if you encounter a steaming fumarole in a place where there hasn't been volcanic activity in centuries, you're looking at the opening of a Dwarfhold. Since Dwarfs are nearly invulnerable to fire, they particularly like to place their holds next to the nearest glowing rock bed or geyser. "Volcanic caves are better illuminated," Dwarfs like to say, bringing a whole new meaning to the term lava light.

In the Good Old days, a *proper* Dwarfhold was filled with workshops and benches, roaring hearths, and hundreds of bustling, busy craftsmen plying their trade. From time immemorial, the Dwarfholds were the sources of the most wondrous jewelry, big swords, and clever artifacts for the nearest wealthy king. Then the industrial revolution hit the Dwarfs. It was love at first sight. Dwarfs and steam-power go together like pork and beans. They love metal, and what better way to enjoy their favorite thing next to beer than by forming it into huge gears, pumping pistons and massive boilers? A Dwarf with a big machine is one *happy* Dwarf, let me tell you.

Modern Dwarfholds

A modern Dwarfhold is like a tiny Industrial Revolution all on its own. The cavern floor which once was bare rock is now covered in neat railways, on which small steam trains chug to and fro with their loads of metal and coal. Their tiny workbenches are always cluttered with lathes, dies, stamps and drills. Huge galleries cut deep within the walls of the central cavern, and

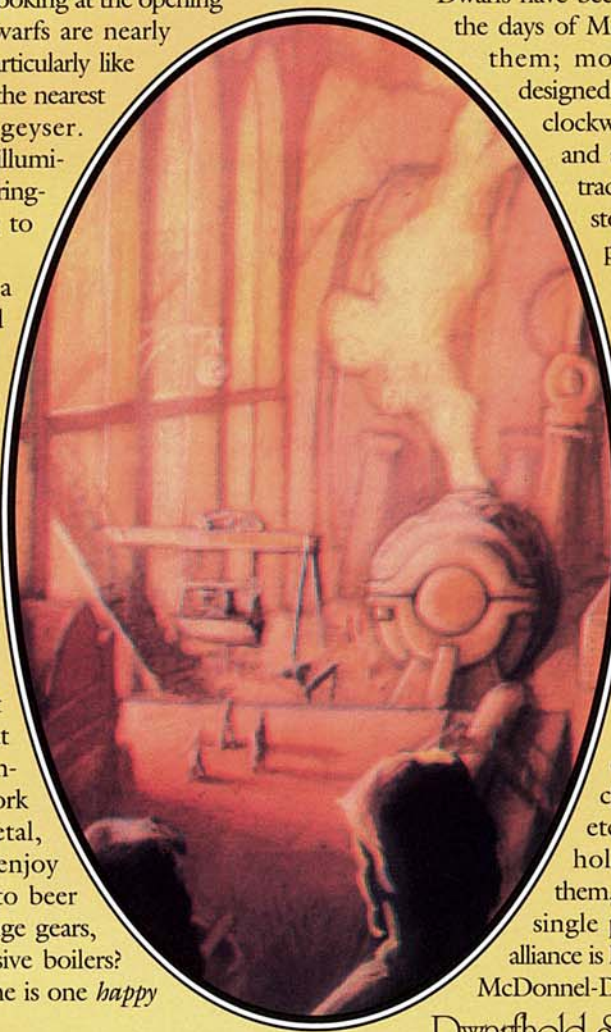
great iron windows open to the outer faces of the mountain for ventilation and light. Smokestacks jut from the tops of the highest peaks, belching smoke and steam in a passable simulation of an active volcano. In fact, the roomy lava caverns and convenient huge hole in the center is one reason why dormant craters are the equivalent of Dwarfish prime real estate.

Dwarfs have been trading with humans since the days of Mesopotamia, and it's marked them; most things they make are designed to be useful to humans: fine clockworks, machines, rare metals and artfully crafted jewelry. They trade for wheat, vegetables, livestock (Dwarfs are very fond of pork cutlets) and massive shipments of beer, all of which are very hard to raise in a cave. You could guess from the happy accident of beer and sausages in the same place that the Germanies (and Bayern in particular) would be a natural home for most of the Dwarfs in the *Castle Falkenstein* world.

Interhold trade is in the form of skills or raw materials. Since most holds specialize in one or two areas of craftsmanship (steamfitting, clockwork, toys, metallurgy, etc.), it's common for several holds to trade skills between them, or to join up to complete a single project. A joint Dwarfhold alliance is like a merger of U.S. Steel and McDonnell-Douglas.

Dwarfhold Society

Dwarfish society is also different from that of other members of the Fair Folk. Where the rest of the Faerie have a loose anarchy with a king chosen from the most powerful, Dwarfholds have Kings whose positions are most like that of the Boss of a factory. In fact, Dwarfholds are most like a huge manufacturing corporation, with each member specializing in a particular kind of work and drawing room and board based on skill and seniority. A



King is King only because he's managed to convince a pack of other dwarfs that his business acumen and skill can lead them in a successful enterprise. I suspect Ted Turner might have made a great Dwarf King.

The true measure of Dwarfish rank is to have invented or discovered a process that no other Dwarf has ever achieved before. To accomplish this means that you have won a Name, a last name that is a reflection of your feat; Rhyme won himself the Name of Rhyme *Enginemaster* for creating the first Sorcery Engine. The new Name follows your birth name, which is given by your mother. Since Dwarfish mothers are always flaky High Faerie types, this often leads to lots of rough, tough Dwarf engineers with birthnames like

Glitterrock or *Moonbeam*. When you have a first name like that, a good last Name becomes *doubly* important. Besides, winning a Name is the best way to become a Dwarfish King and start your own Hold.

Dwarfholds being storehouses of rare metals, gems and craftsmanship, it's no accident that Dragons often prey on Dwarfish cities. Dragons have been known to follow the careers of exceptional Dwarf craftsmen, collecting their works (and sometimes the craftsmen) the way we collect rare china. There's little love lost between the two races, and a Dragon is one of the few things that will cause an entire hold to grab its weapons and prepare for mayhem.

That, or getting the King's daughter pregnant.



The Threat of War



ven as I bargained for the support of the Dwarf King, a desperate meeting of the Compact had convened to discuss a secret communiqué that had arrived at Castle Falkenstein from the Iron Chancellor that very night. In typically Bismarckian fashion it was direct and brutally to the point:

"To King Ludwig of Bayern and the Members of the self-styled Second Compact. You have inconvenienced my plans long enough. Cease your interference or face my armies and my Vengeance.

—Bismarck"

"Ach, it's clear enough," commented Tarlenheim grimly as he scanned the ultimatum. "Between this and the armies our spies tell us are massing upon the borders, it would be obvious to all that the Iron Chancellor plans to eliminate the Compact and its allied nations once and for all."

"Indeed," murmured the King softly, almost as if to himself. "It makes sense. To accomplish their aims, Bismarck and the Unseelie must surely eliminate any other adversaries that might be arrayed against them. The Dragons, because the Unseelie will not be able to control them. The Dwarfs they shall enslave if possible, or destroy them if not. The only wizards Bismarck will allow will be those willing to work for him. Eventually, the Adversary will have gathered enough power to provoke his own war, this time against the Seelie Court. And it shall not matter to him if all humanity is to be annihilated in the process, if only it brings his hated enemy Lord Auberon down as well

"So, by throwing the gauntlet into our faces, we are forced to face him, or look like cowards to our allies. And yet—should we fail—if Bismarck succeeds against us, the rest of the Continent will also fall, step by step, until the Chancellor and his dark allies rule the earth, even as Tom Olam has said ...

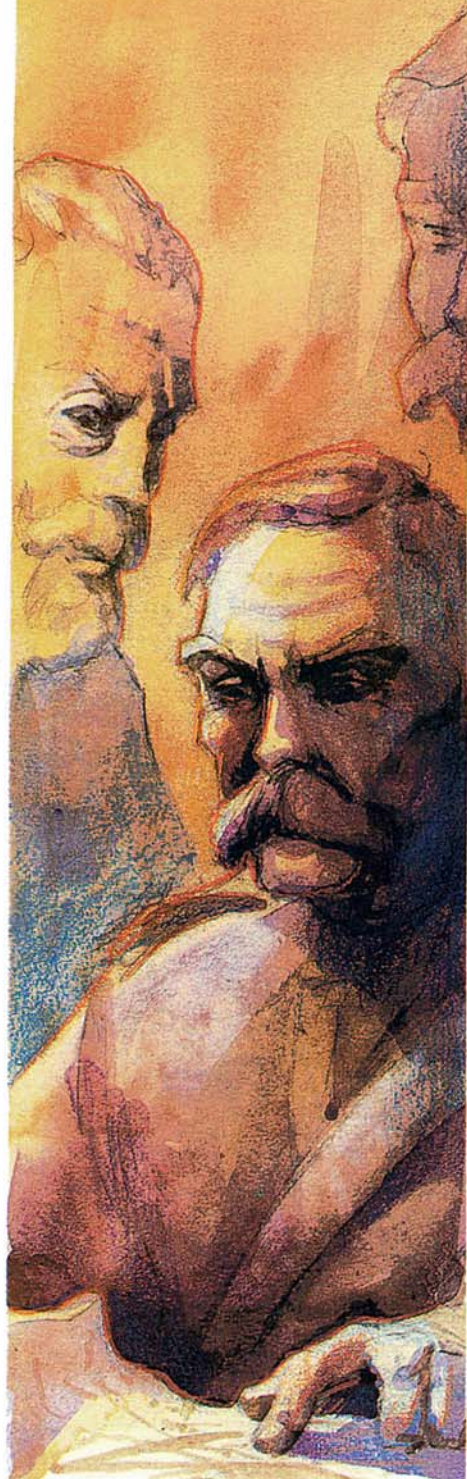
"So we shall stand against him," King Ludwig finished, turning back towards Tarlenheim. "Colonel," he asked. "If your intelligence is correct, what is the most likely place for the Iron Chancellor to deploy his forces?"

"From what we can ascertain, Your Majesty," replied the Colonel, as he unrolled a heavy battlemap, "Bismarck has no fear of either the Austrians or ourselves. Confident of his superior forces, he will surely attempt to strike at a point where he can engage both at once and defeat us soundly." Tarlenheim pointed with one gauntleted hand at the map. "Here," he said at last. "On the plains of Saxony, near Dresden. Or, if we're unlucky, possibly in Bohemia."

"Then it's settled," affirmed the King. "We face him like soldiers, on the battlefield. Let us prepare, then."

The problem was, no one *else* would be ready to fight. The Austrians were still using antiquated muskets and practicing cavalry charges that would be suicidal against the Prussian LandFortress corps. The French couldn't even hold onto Mexico, much less fight a technologically advanced war on two fronts. The Russians moldered in isolation, still smarting from their defeats in the Crimean and refusing to ally with anyone. And the Steam Lords in Parliament could easily block any chance of British intervention on our part.

Meanwhile, Bismarck was getting ready to invent the *blitzkrieg*. And Bayern and the Second Compact were going to get squashed in the process.



Soldiers of the Steam Age

The armies of the Steam Age owe much of their organization and style to the Napoleonic Wars of the earlier part of the century, with roots going back all the way to medieval knighthood. Most Steam Age aristocrats have a proud history of military service; in fact, to some, if you haven't served, you're considered to be a coward, a shirker, or worse.

The modern (for 1870) army structure is a 100-man company commanded by a captain, his second-in-command (usually a lieutenant), and at least one ranking sergeant. Eight to ten companies joined together make a **regiment**, the backbone of an army, commanded by a colonel, with a lieutenant colonel under him. By putting regiments together, you make a **brigade** (the famous Light Brigade was made up of four regiments of hussars, lancers and dragoons), commanded by a brigadier general. You can combine several brigades to make a **division** (commanded by a full general), several divisions to form a **corps** (pronounced "core" and headed by a Commander-in-Chief), or several corps to create an **army** (usually run by the King, Emperor or a hand-picked general). These combinations rarely last more than a single campaign.

Regiments

It would be impossible to list *all* the regiments in New Europa; most are just a number tagged onto a regimental occupation, like the *11th Hussars* or the *22nd Lancers*. The most prestigious regiments are always the **King's (or Queen's) Own**, who historically guard the Throne. These regiments, all cavalry, are made up of aristocrats and nobles. The next rank are the **Regular Cavalry**, made up of **hussars** (light skirmishers with the flashiest uniforms), **dragoons** (mounted riflemen who get off their horses to shoot), **cuirassiers** (who wear metal breastplates) and the **lancers** (who use horse lances in shock

cavalry charges). The cavalry are the glamor boys of the Army; they don't slog through the mud like the infantry, they get to wear the best uniforms, and they must be proficient in sword, horsemanship, lancing and firearms. Cavalry officers constantly drill with their long sabers, invariably becoming very good at duels and melees. With their reckless charges, flashing

blades, glamorous uniforms and swaggering dash, the cavalry is where everyone wants to be, which is why you have to be an officer to be in a cavalry regiment and a noble to get into the most famous units. The

next most important regiments are the **artillery**, who handle cannon and mortars. As a side note, the Prussians count their *Landwehr Fortress* regiments among the artillery; each Fortress takes at least fifty men to steer, stoke and shoot, plus another fifty to keep it in repair. They have, with remarkable pre-science, called these *Landwehr Panzer corps*.

Below the artillery are the **line infantry**, made up of **grenadiers** (who are supposed to be tall so they can throw their grenades farther), the **fusiliers** (light musketeers who are rapidly being replaced by the **carbineers**, with their light rifles), and the **regular rifle** companies (who, obviously, use regular rifles).

Trailing along are the **supply corps** who make sure the Army has something for its stomach to travel on, and the **engineers** (who specialize in blowing things up).

Non-Human Soldiers

There are also a surprising number of non-human regiments. The High Faerie have a proud and warlike culture and take great pleasure in participating in human conflicts. They also like the idea of wearing



Armies of the Steam Age

flashy uniforms and galloping around on horses; since *Burke's Peerage* considers all Faerie to be the social equivalent of high nobility, they are almost always posted to cavalry or cuirassier's regiments. Companies of strutting elflords, clad in glittering uniforms that combine Faerie and hussar finery, are no longer rare on the streets of major cities. Not only the heart-throbs of many a young human lass, they are also feared as savage and implacable fighters. There are High Faerie soldiers in almost all Armies; the exception are the Prussians, with their chauvanistic "Germanic humans only" mentality. While High Faerie often join human regiments, they are more commonly found in special all-Faerie units of aerial hussars or lancers (they are required to provide their own flying horses). This type of regiment has become so common that it has gained its own military designation as a "Flying Squad."

Dwarfs also show up in the Armies of the Empires, participating mostly as artillerymen (Dwarfs have a natural feel for hurling big chunks of metal in the air and landing them accurately on top of their enemies) and as engineers. Dwarfs also like to tinker with mechanical devices, so it's not surprising that many of them take posts with the Navy or the Bayernese Aeronavy (pg. 126).

Barracks Life

Life as an officer in the armies of the Steam Age is much like being part of a rowdy gentleman's club. Unmarried officers are billeted in immense barracks, usually converted from old hotels or estates. A soldier's

days are filled with saber and weapon drill, horsemanship practice, and parades, the evenings with gambling in the barracks, duels, wenching in the local fancy houses and general hellraising. Married officers usually return home to their patient spouses, who eke out a living on the pitiful housing allowance granted ranking commanders. It's no wonder that the majority of high ranking officers are also from the nobility; no one else could afford to raise a family on the low salaries paid to field officers. Officers are also expected to provide their own supplies in wartime, and to furnish their own uniforms to boot!

But never fear, the action heats up when war is at

hand—regiments muster and prepare, scouts are deployed to infiltrate enemy positions, hussars and dragoons lead daring skirmishes, and dashing lancers bravely charge fortified positions. (Thankfully, New European artillery is blessedly inaccurate!). That's the time when a military man can earn his spurs with secret missions, impossible feats of derring do, and tales of heroism that will thrill the ladies—once you're safely back in Society!

Selected Regiments of New Europa

Name	Nation	Service	Restrictions
Life Guards	Britain	Mixed	Nobles only
Royal Horse Guards	Britain	Cavalry	Nobles only
16th Lancers	Britain	Cavalry	None
Royal Irish Lancers	Britain	Cavalry	Irish only
Royal Scots Greys	Britain	Cavalry	Scots only
Coldstream Guards	Britain	Infantry	Gentry
Royal Highlanders	Britain	Infantry	Scots only
10th Bengal Lancers	Britain	Cavalry	Served in India
7th Irish Lancers	Britain	Cavalry	Faerie only
Garde du Corps	Prussia	Cavalry	Nobles only
Garde du Cuirassiers	Prussia	Cavalry	Nobles only
3rd Reserve Hussars	Prussia	Cavalry	None
King Friedrick's Lancers	Prussia	Infantry	None
Zoaves	France	Infantry	Served in Algiers
8th Hussars	France	Cavalry	Nobles
Chasseurs d'Afrique	France	Cavalry	Served in Africa
Imperial Guard	France	Mixed	Nobles only
Les Chasseurs de Faerie	France	Cavalry	Faerie only
La Garde Nationale Mobile	France	Infantry	None
8th Infantry	Bayern	Infantry	None
Royal Guard	Bayern	Cavalry	Nobles only
1st Faerie Lancers	Bayern	Cavalry	Faerie only
Chevaliers Guardes	Russia	Cavalry	Nobles only
Pavlovski Guards	Russia	Grenadiers	None
Garde Arcane	Russia	Cavalry	Faerie only

In Uniform

It's in uniform that a New European male can really shine. That's because uniforms in the world of *Castle Falkenstein* aren't designed to fight wars in. They're designed to make a fighting man look cool.

Dressed to Kill

From the tight military trousers with inseam trims of red, gold or blue, to the brilliant, high-colored tunics rich with braid, epaulets, loops of frogging, gold buttons and intricately-looping cuff embroidery, uniforms are where the dowdy old Victorian male gets to strut his stuff. On top of all this martial finery, you get the trimmings. Medals with bright ribbons, sashes with military emblems and Orders. Shiny helmets with crests, spikes and flourishes. Long riding gloves and high, shiny boots with ornate spurs. And glittering sabers with jeweled hilts and gold filigree that scream out for a heroic clash of blades. Face it: you wear this stuff and you can't help but feel like Errol Flynn at the *Charge of the Light Brigade*.

Style & Panache

In a culture where honor and dash are everything, no one wants to hunker in a trench wearing camouflage netting. No, you want to be on top of a huge black charger, rescuing princesses or something. Or

striding into a grand ball with a dazzlingly beautiful lady on your immaculately uniformed arm. If you have to fight and die for King and Country, at least you might as well do it with maximum style and panache.

On top of that, it seems like every unit in the world has its own uniform, the more outrageous the better. The Prussians sport high metal helmets with aggressive spikes on the top. The British love ornate frogging and tall bearskin shakos (a type of hat). If the French Infantry is known for its trademark scarlet trousers, their Zoaves go them one better with their Moroccan-inspired fezes and long curved sabers.

Kings trade uniforms and memberships in exclusive military groups like we trade baseball cards. When you get a medal for heroism here, it's the size of a small hood ornament, often dripping with gems and gold, and it comes on a huge ribbon. And you feel like a hero, even if it's only an award for perfect attendance.

Personally, I really prefer to wear a uniform most of the time; it's flashy, can be worn in almost any social setting up to and

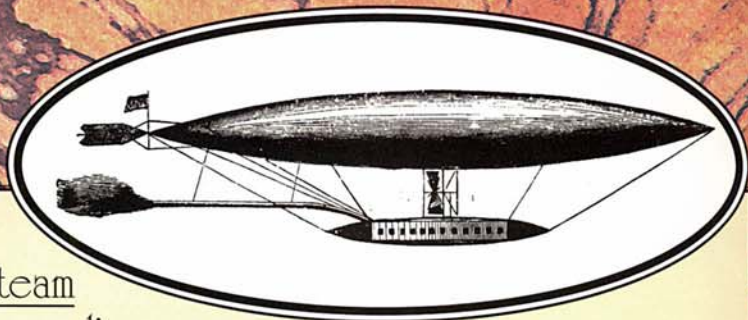
including Court, and allows me to carry a saber without anyone commenting. With Marianne's help, I've even made a few improvements in cut and fit that make a uniform almost as comfortable as everyday street clothes. I may never go back to jeans and sneakers again.



Uniforms of Selected Regiments

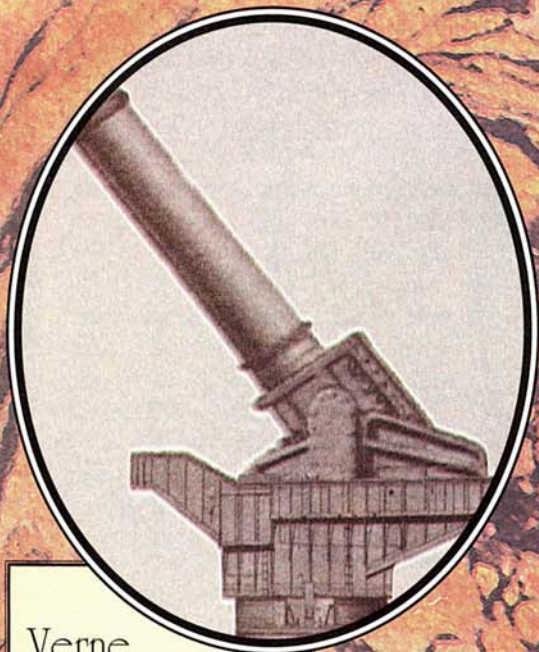
Name	Description
Life Guards	Red coat, blue pants w/red stripe, "pith"-style helmet, boots
Royal Horse Guards	Blue tunic, white pants, epaulets, bearskin shako, silver curraiss
16th Lancers	Dark blue tunic, pants, white trim, gold epaulets, shako
Royal Highlanders	Red tunic, green/blue kilt, socks, tam o'shanter
10th Bengal Lancers	Blue coat, pants w/scarlet trim, sash, boots, turban or helmet
7th Irish Lancers	Grey tunic w/silver frogging, pants, high boots, shako
Garde du Corps	Blue coat w/red collar, black pants, black spike helmet
Garde du Cuirassiers	Blue coat with gold trim, epaulets, black pants
Zoaves	Short blue Algerian tunic, blousy red pants, spats, sash, fez
8th Hussars	Brown tunic w/silver frogging, red pants, shako or kepi, boots
Chasseurs d'Afrique	Sky blue tunic, baggy red pants w/blue stripe, red kepi
Imperial Guard	Green frogged tunic, red pants, black shako, boots
Les Chasseurs de Faerie	Sky blue tunic w/gold frogging, red pants, kepi
La Garde Nationale	Blue coat w/red epaulets, blue trousers, kepi
8th Infantry	Green tunic, pants w/silver buttons, high boots, helmet
Royal Guard	Blue tunic, gold epaulets, dark blue pants, helmet
1st Faerie Lancers	Grey-blue tunic w/gold trim, black pants, chrome helmet
Pavlovski Guards	Brown greatcoat w/red trim, pants, black spiked helmet
Guardie Arcane	Black greatcoat w/silver trim, black pants, kepi

Secret Weapons ^{of THE} Steam Age



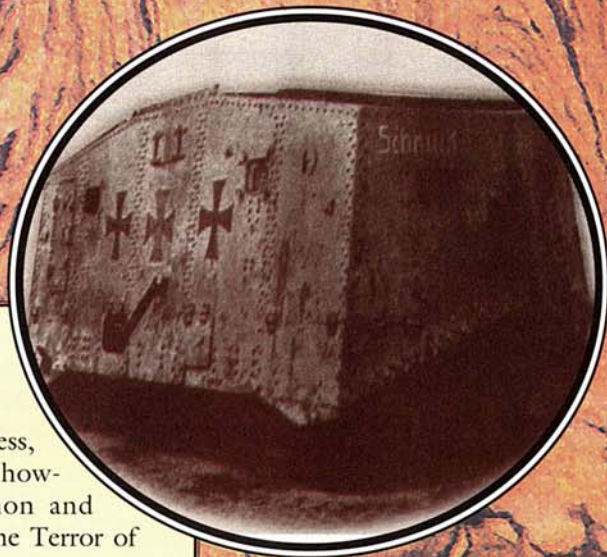
Steam
Zeppelin

A primitive airship of limited range, but the most advanced Steam Age "bomber" short of the Bayernese Aeronavy's aeroships.



Verne
Cannon

Capable of hurling multi-ton shells over a thousand miles away. The ICBM of New Europa.



Prussian
Landfortress

A mobile fortress, armed with howitzers, cannon and very heavy armor. The Terror of New Europa.



Torpedo Rams

Speedy turbine-powered steamships armed with deadly explosive torpedoes. Shown: French ram *Valente* (LFT), British ram *Achilles* (RT).



Turbine
Dreadnought

See picture next page.

The most powerful armed vessels on earth, with maximum armor plating and advanced rifled cannon in turrets. Backbone of the British Navy and undisputed master of the Eight Seas.

Navies of the Steam Age

In the days of the Napoleonic Wars, sea battles were fought in great lumbering sailing ships. These "ships of the line" were enormous gun platforms, carrying stacked ranks of primitive brass cannon. The idea was to sail alongside the enemy's ships and open fire with a broadside, hammering away until one of you went to the bottom. Thus were the careers of **Nelson** and **Hornblower** (yes, he really did exist) established, as well as that of the legendary Faerie-French captain **Corrik leBecque**, who defeated the Prussian Fleet at Point Flanders in the titanic Battle of the Inner Sea in 1812.

That was yesterday. While there are still a few of these nautical behemoths still afloat, the modern navies of the Steam Age represent a quantum leap over the old wooden broadside bangers. In fact, the ships of New Europa represent a quantum leap over the warships of our own Victorian Age, with their sloped and heavily armored decks and advanced turbines.

The **British**, of course, have the edge on everyone else when it comes to warships. Most of their **cruisers** and **dreadnoughts** are turbine powered, with rear-mounted paddlewheels on the earlier designs and screws for the most modern. Breech loading guns are mounted in low turrets, which are designed to be raised above the slanted armor deck that surrounds the superstructure. With their sloped upper decks, British ships have an extremely low freeboard, but this is made up for by a wide, stable hull and an astounding amount of armor plate reaching down to the waterline. Their ships aren't fast, but they're very hard to knock out of action.

Unable to compete with the British floating fortresses, the **French** have instead concentrated on speed and agility. Their **torpedo rams** are small, lightly

armored, and bristling with weapons. The French Admiralty's theory is simple: It doesn't matter how much armor you have if you can't stop a torpedo below the waterline. Working along this line, Science Minister Verne has recently embarked upon a campaign to design an advanced submarine torpedo boat, but so far has met with little success.

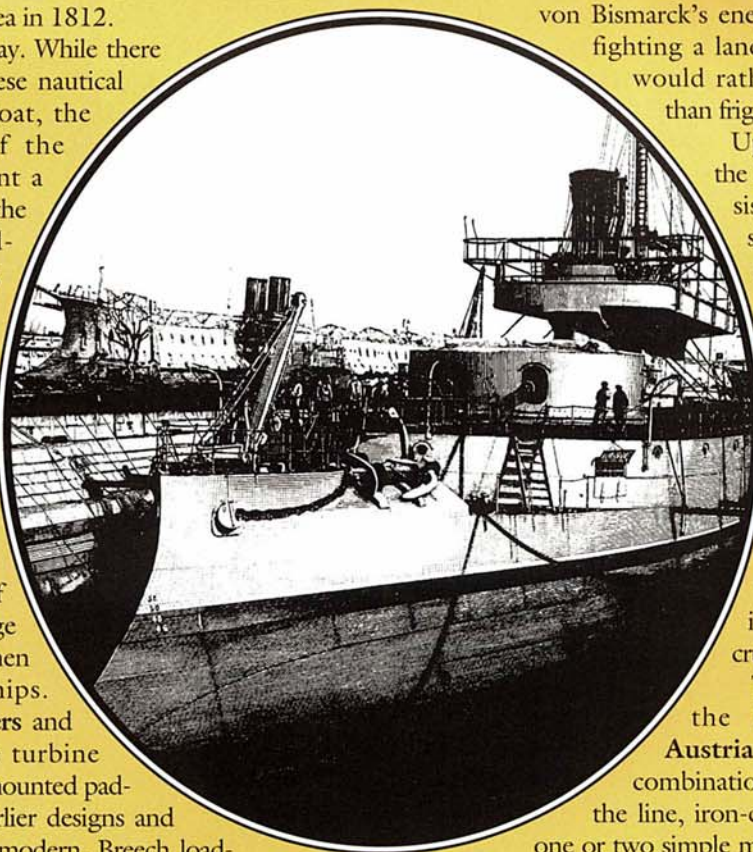
The **Prussian Navy** is rather similar to the British, but not as sophisticated. Almost all of its few ships are paddlewheel-powered, shallow-water **ironclads**, with less armor and more primitive turrets. As most of von Bismarck's energies are devoted to fighting a land war, the Prussians would rather build Fortresses than frigates.

Up to a few years ago, the **Bayernese Navy** consisted of a few elderly sixty-gun sailing frigates of Napoleonic War vintage, with a liberal amount of iron armor plate bolted on. With the invention of the aership, however, Bayern has concentrated on taking its entire navy airborne, producing a surprising number of aro-cruisers in a short time.

Trailing far behind are the fleets of **Russia**, **Austria** and **Italy**, mostly a combination of ancient ships of the line, iron-clad sailing ships, and one or two simple modern warships about equal to Prussia's weakest battleships.

A Steam Age Navy is roughly structured around the British pattern: The smallest unit is the **squadron**, consisting of one or two large warships and a screen of smaller torpedo rams and "frigates." The squadron is commanded by a commodore. Several squadrons make up a **flotilla**, and several flotillas a **fleet**. Several fleets, each commanded by an Admiral, make up a **navy**.

A single warship is under the command of a **Captain**, with the day-to-day duties being served by an **Executive Officer** (of Commander rank). All other



Navies of the Steam Age

duties are overseen by enlisted or officer rank **Chiefs** for Gunnery, Engineering, Mess & Supply, etc., depending on the size and importance of the ship.

Not all naval officers are human. Although during the Age of Sail many sons of the Danu distinguished themselves as privateers and captains, you don't often find the **High Faerie** aboard modern warships; the huge concentrations of iron in the hull make shipboard life impossibly painful for them. But some of the **lesser Faerie**—Mermen, Selkies and so on—have joined the modern Navies of New Europa as auxiliaries and scouts, travelling with their chosen ships. While many captains complain that the only reason their Selkie seamen are aboard is to surf the ship's bow wave, very few commanders are willing to turn down an able-bodied seaman who can detect underwater mines and act as a long range aquatic scout.

Dwarfs are the most common non-humans to be found aboard warships; it's almost as if the modern Navy, with its steam boilers, complex engines and complicated armaments, was meant for their metal-loving, engineers' souls. Dwarfs love big ships, and most shipboard Engineering departments have at least a couple working away in the Turbine Room, covered in grease, smeared with soot, and happily grouching about how "their" engines won't take the abuse anymore. In all but the British Navy, they've pretty much displaced the Scots as the premier shipboard engineers!

Yo Ho, Yo Ho, A Sailor's Life For Me ...

So what's life like before the mast? For the navies aboard the older wooden sailers, life is an endless round of caulking leaks, holystoning the deck and repairing

frayed rigging. The food is bad, the rats rampant, and the boredom unending. Some of the more senior vessels in the fleets of the Steam Age actually participated in the Battle of Trafalgar—and they look it. Serving aboard one of these holdovers from a bygone age is considered to be the dead end of a military career; slow,

badly armored and armed with antiquated cannon, the old ships of the line are rarely brought into battle and even then only as reserves. If you get assigned to one of these, you can look forward to a life of swinging at anchor in some backwater port waiting for action; a sort of 1870's version of the movie *Mister Roberts*. Most of the old Bayernese Navy, the French Fleet and parts of the Austrian Navy fit this description.

Full Steam!

Life aboard the newest ironclad cruisers and battleships is far less miserable. Serving in one of these heavily armored "damned teakettles" (to quote American Admiral Farragut, who also coined the "Damn the torpedoes!" line during the short-lived Civil War) is a mixture of the most up-to-date technology (for 1870, that is) and constant danger. The boilers are prone to explosions under Full Steam, the new rifled cannon are often untested and their gunners undertrained: in short, all the signs of a navy under massive transition to a modern age. Life in the British navy is the best; the food is good, you get to travel to exotic ports all over the world, and the ships themselves, no matter what problems they sometimes have, are clean, efficient and relatively safe. If you don't mind bunking in with twenty guys from the Forward Turret Gang, the modern navy is actually a fine place for an adventuresome human (or non-human) to make his fortune.

Selected Warships of New Europa

Name	Type	Nation
HMS <i>Bellerophon</i>	Dreadnought	England
HMS <i>Minotaur</i>	Battleship	England
HMS <i>Royal Sovereign</i>	Battleship	England
HMS <i>Prince Albert</i>	Cruiser	England
HMS <i>Hotspur</i>	Cruiser	England
HMS <i>Cyclops</i>	Cruiser	England
HMS <i>Trafalgar</i>	Cruiser	England
<i>Suffren</i>	Battleship	France
<i>Richelieu</i>	Battleship	France
<i>Triophante</i>	Cruiser	France
<i>Victorieuse</i>	Cruiser	France
SMS <i>König Wilhelm</i>	Battleship	Prussia
SMS <i>Prinzess Irene</i>	Cruiser	Prussia
IMS <i>Prinz Eugen</i>	Battleship	Austria
IMS <i>Lissa</i>	Cruiser	Austria
<i>Ekaterina</i>	Battleship	Russia
<i>Admiral Lazarev</i>	Cruiser	Russia
HMS <i>Maximilian Rex</i>	Battleship	Bayern

The Last Battlefield



On June 15th, 1866, Bismarck, true to his word, declared war on the Austrian Empire, the Kingdoms of Saxony, Hanover, Bayern, Hesse, and the Second Compact.

Bismarck immediately dispatched Prussian General von Falckenstein to deal with the scattered Kingdoms of the west in a surprise attack, while the main Prussian force was sent to attack Austria directly. Von Falckenstein immediately attacked the unprepared Hanoverians, who retreated in disarray until they were stopped by the Inner Sea. In the pitched battle that followed on June 29th, the Hanoverians barely defeated von Falckenstein, but, starving, out of ammunition, and with their backs against the wall, they surrendered the next day. Only a lack of ships to transport his troops across the Inner Sea (thanks in large part to the Compact's nautical sabotage of the month before) kept the General from moving southwards into Hesse and taking Wurtemberg as well.

On June 16th, Saxony was crushed by a lightning strike by the Prussian 1st Army, driving its way south towards Vienna. The Crown Prince of Saxony fought bravely, but was forced to flee south with his remaining army, joining the Austrians mustering in Bohemia. The leader of the Austrian forces was old General Benedek, competent enough in his own doddering way, but no match for the lightning tactics of the Iron Chancellor and his hand-picked general, the cagey and brilliant Helmuth von Moltke. Unsure of his plans and fatalis-

The Final Battle: King Ludwig, Auberon and the Colonel await Bismarck's attack. I wasn't there, but I was able to work up this sketch from a photograph taken at the scene.



The Battle of "Königseig"

As far as I can tell, the Battle of Königsgrätz (later referred to by the Steam Age press as the Battle of Königseig or *King's Victory* after King Ludwig and the Second Compact's eleventh hour win over the forces of Otto von Bismarck) is one of the critical battles of the late Steam Age. First, it was the first battle in which modern technology played almost as large a role as the tactics of the generals. Second, it was the pivotal battle in which the ambitious Chancellor von Bismarck was able to establish the new Prussian Reich as the major player in Central Europe.

The outcome of this battle had several significant effects on the timeline of New Europa, the major one being that the Unseelie were forced to redouble their efforts to create a puppet totalitarian state. Otto von Bismarck, as usual, landed on his feet; although defeated in the final battle, the Prussians were in no danger of being invaded by the weakened victors and were able to hang onto the port town (yes, remember this *is* New Europa) of Hanover, giving them access to the Inner Sea and a shot at invading France.

Is the story over? Tom's letter ends in the year 1870, which is when, in our world, the victorious Bismarck would have invaded the Second Empire of France. I don't really know the outcome, but so far, the Iron Chancellor hasn't been able to take down his enemies, thanks to the interference of the agents of the Second Compact.

—Mike

tically convinced of certain defeat, the elderly Austrian refused to mobilize his forces until goaded into action by events.

Meanwhile, Moltke and Bismarck were busy *making* the events.

On June 22nd, the Prussian blitzkrieg stormed into Bohemia, and both sides maneuvered to gain advantage until they met on the Bohemian side of the mountain pass at Gitschin on June 28th. In the ensuing desperate struggle, the Austrians won, but at a heavy cost in casualties. The next day, the defenders were broken in a counterattack as Prussian LandFortresses and reinforcements arrived to clear the pass. The Prussian 2nd Army poured in, sweeping all before them, leaving a huge hole in the part of Benedek's flank he'd hoped the 10th Corps would protect. In disarray and depression, he decided to abandon Bohemia.

Realizing early in the war that Bayern only had to defend a narrow mountain pass at the upper Elbe against a thinly scattered Prussian 2nd Army, Tarlenheim and King Ludwig had decided to take a dangerous gamble. Leaving the only land route into Bayern protected by the 1st Faerie Lancers, the mages of the Compact, several Dragons and a small force of Greater Faerie, they elected to march the majority of the 50,000-man Bayernese army eastward to join the Austrians who were preparing to make a stand in Saxony. The blitzkrieg invasion of Dresden had forced them instead to send their troops by train through the Nürnberg railhead to join the Austrian forces at their new rallying ground. There, the combined armies would make their stand against the onrushing Prussian war machine.

So it was that on July 2, 1866, the Armies of Bayern and the Second Compact joined the Austrian forces which had withdrawn to a defensive position at the fortress town of *Königsgrätz*.



It had taken seven weeks to gather the hosts that met in mortal combat that day near the old river fortress. Now over a quarter of a million men clashed on each side — a half million or more troops arrayed with the most staggering technological might Steam Age New Europa could produce in the largest battle of modern times. The fighting had been terrible and the Prussian forces unstoppable. Early in the day, all of Benedek's carefully laid plans had fallen apart as the Prussian's LandFortresses rumbled easily across the shallow river the old General had counted on to bog them down. Now, their artillery unable to be repositioned in time and reduced to savage hand-to-hand skirmishes in the wild terrain, the valiant defenders of Königsgrätz fought on towards a hellish dusk. Inch by bloody inch, the Bayernese forces and their allies had been driven back against the hill they were defending; now there was no place to run, and no future other than defeat.

King Ludwig and Colonel Tarlenheim stood exhausted on a low bluff overlooking the ruined plain. Below, the shrieks of the wounded and the stench of carnage floated up to them through a lull in the battle. They had just fought off the third cavalry charge of the day in a savage action that had cost them dearly.

Wind whistled as Lord Auberon slowly floated down on to the rock they were leaning on, arms akimbo. "I have raised the wind and storm against them," he said shortly. "Perhaps it will be enough to bog down those accursed Fortresses of theirs." But he sounded doubtful. To the northeast, they could already see the billowing black clouds of the Prussian

Steam Fortresses bearing down on the few thousands Bayern had been able to assemble after the last assault. The plain seethed with milling Prussian infantry.

"Have you heard then from Master Olam and the Dwarfs?" Auberón asked quietly. Tarlenheim shook his head. "No," he replied. "There's no rescue there. Short of a miracle, we'll face the full force of Bismarck's army by dusk.."

"Then we are dead men," said Ludwig finally.

"Sire," began Tarlenheim, "there is still a chance that—"

Ludwig grinned a wicked grin, almost as if something locked inside him had finally been released. "No, old friend," he said cheerfully, "let's not waste our breath on words of false hope. If we're dead men — well, I've been given up for dead before. What matters is that we give those spike-helmeted bastards a fight to remember. Whether we live or die, Otto von Bismarck is going to go to his grave knowing that the men of Bayern made him pay dearly for his Imperial ambitions." He raised his heavy war sword skyward, and a cheer rose from ten thousand throats.

"Let this be our last battlefield!" Ludwig shouted. And the armies of Bayern thundered downhill to glory and doom—

Ride of the Valkyries!

And then the sky exploded! Hurtling out of the scudding clouds above the muddy battlefield sailed three majestic aerial warships: a strange fusion of dirigible and dreadnought, boldly emblazoned with the swan symbol of the Second Compact! Their guns hammered out of the sky, slamming into the milling Prussian troops and their titanic Steam Fortresses. One of the aerial battleships peeled off and aimed directly for the lead Fortress, bombs raining from racks in its undercarriage to slam down on the war-machine's unprotected top; it exploded into a rain of molten metal fragments. Still another great skyship shelled the Prussian artillery formations, scattering them like chaff.

Their ranks slammed by the unexpected assault from above, the terrified Prussian forces soon lost their nerve and broke, running away under the thundering guns of the aerial fleet. The Battle of Königsgrätz was over.

Auberón rocketed up into the sky to hover nearby the largest of the three airships. To his astonishment, he spotted me standing on the upper deck, waving wildly at him. "Looks like we made it just in time," I shouted.

"You could have been a little more prompt," retorted the Elf King tartly. "Are you *kidding*?" I grinned back. "I couldn't *believe* it! Those Dwarfs built all *four* of these things in just two weeks! I never saw anything like it!"

From his post on the open observation bridge, Morrolan hailed the Faerie Lord. "What do you think of Master Olam and the *Enginemaster's* creations?" he shouted.

"The Enginemaster?" asked Auberón, his skull pounding from the close presence of so many tons of metal hovering effortlessly overhead.

"Rhyme!" shouted Morrolan in delight. "He's earned himself a noble Dwarfish name—Rhyme *Enginemaster*! The bloody little grouch is a hero of the Dwarfish people!"



The Bayernese Aeronavy

As related elsewhere in my notes, the Bayernese water navy of 1864 was (and still is) a joke. Several elderly ships of the line, with obsolete sailing rigs and added-on steam boilers, comprise the pride of King Maximilian's old warfleet, anchored in grand near-extinction at the Royal harbor at *Frankfurt am Inner sea*.

The future of the Bayernese Navy is in the air. The current aerocruisers and corvettes represent an entirely new way of thinking about naval defense that is unprecedented either here or back home. Imagine, for a moment, if the entire WWII Pacific Fleet had been capable of flying en masse to Tokyo and bombing the living daylights out of the Japanese.

An Aerial Battleship

Armed with lightweight, rapid fire cannon, high explosive bombs and gatling guns, the Bayernese aerowarship is truly something to be feared. With a ceiling of several thousand feet, surface ships can't hit it. Yet its bombs can punch through battleship decks and heavily armored LandFortresses with ease. Even the Prussian's new Zeppelins can't touch it; one shot from an aeroship's 1.46 caliber rapidfire cannon can punch through a Zep's defenses like tissue paper.

The Bayernese aeronavy wouldn't be possible anywhere else but here in the *Falkenstein* world. Only the Dwarfs would have had the ability to create lightweight alloys ten times stronger and lighter than titanium. Only scholastic sorcery could figure out a way to ensorcel hydrogen so it won't burn as easily.

And only a refugee from the 20th century would even think of the idea in the first place. Sure, it was a dumb idea.

But it was a dumb idea that *worked*.

Magnetic Engine

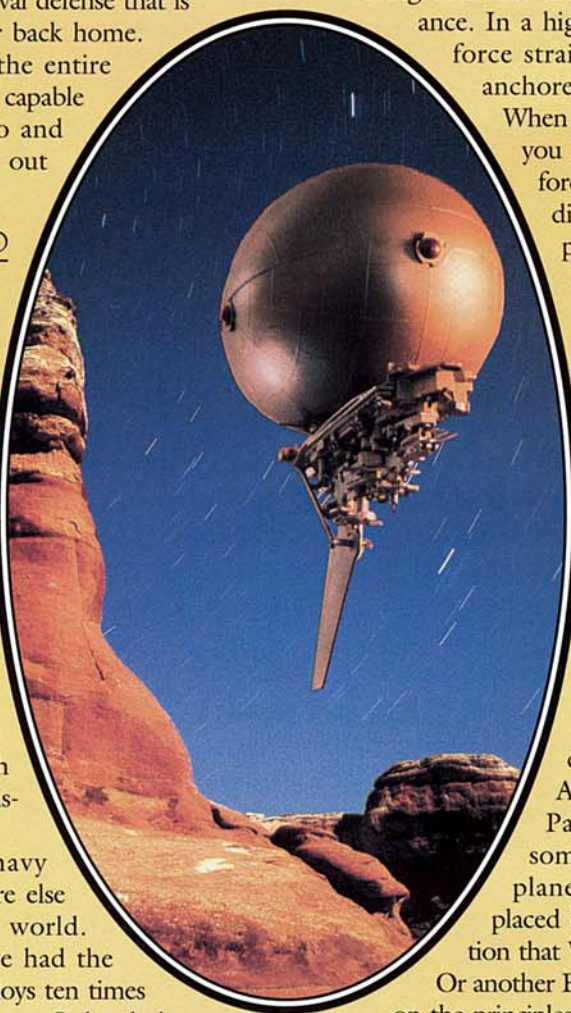
But the most amazing part of a Bayernese aeroship is the Magnetic Engine that is the core of its power. Powered by a steam turbine that moves its spellcasting machinery, the sorcerous Magnetic Engine doesn't actually hold the aeroship up; that's what the metal-clad gasbag does. But it allows the aeroship to lock onto the magnetic lines of force that girdle the Earth, using them for movement, stability and guidance. In a high wind, you just direct the force straight down and the ship is anchored to the earth like a rock.

When you need to go somewhere, you lock onto the nearest line of force, either pushing off in the direction you want to go, or pulling yourself towards a nearby line. By pushing and pulling, aeroships can travel up to a couple of hundred miles an hour, depending on the size of the Magnetic Engine and the mass of the ship.

In this year of 1870, Bayernese aerocruisers and corvettes span the globe, protecting our new international interests wherever they lie. Several great aeroship liners have been built in the last few years, regularly carrying passengers to America, the Orient and the Pacific. One day, of course, someone will develop the airplane and the aeroship will be placed in the same precarious position that World War II warships faced.

Or another Engine Magician may stumble on the principles that guided Morrolan and I to create the first great Engine. But that may take years. In the meantime, Bayern rules the skies, challenged only by the great dragons who are our allies. And it's all my idea. Even if I did steal it out of a science fiction story I read once.

Sometimes, I feel a little like James T. Kirk of *Star Trek*, violating the Prime Directive.





The Aftermath Of War



he battlefield burned and steamed in the dying twilight. Picking their way among the tortured hulks of bombed LandFortresses and small bands of wounded and dead, Count von Bismarck and his retinue toiled slowly up the hill where we stood waiting in the vast metallic shadow of the aerial battleship we'd dubbed *HMS Königseig*, or *King's Victory*.

"Your Majesty, High König Ludwig Wittlesbach of Bayern," rumbled the Iron Chancellor as he drew up to face us. "This day is yours, and yours alone. Will you accept a truce?"

Ludwig drew a long, tired breath, his pale eyes sweeping over the churned mud of the field; the screaming men and horses; the blasted craters filled with blood; the twisted, steaming hulks of once mighty war machines. His gaze finally fell again on Bismarck, waiting at ramrod-stiff attention before him, scabbarded saber still clenched in one gauntleted fist. He shook his head. "This is no game, my lord Count," he said shortly. "Our people have both suffered enough." King Ludwig spread one hand out over the swath of destruction and carnage. "Go, Count von Bismarck. Leave this place. *And never come back.*"

Bismarck's face colored; his mustache quivered with rage. For a moment, it looked as though he would explode. Then, with a barely muttered "By your leave, then," the Iron Chancellor whirled on his heel and marched down the muddy hill towards the remnants of his battered army.

It was over; at least, this round. Although defeated in *this* battle, the Prussians could still hold off the exhausted victors and beat an orderly retreat. In the end, when all the diplomatic fencing was over, Saxony might again be restored to freedom, but Hanover and Hesse-Casell would most likely still remain firmly gripped in Prussia's talons, the spoils of war. And Austria, once the dominant power, would stand revealed as the paper tiger it really was.

The new axis of power would rest with the mighty aeronavies of Bayern. And the Second Compact.

The King slowly turned to me. "Captain Olam," he said gravely, "I hear you can see the future; Morrolan has as much as told me this. Thanks to you, the battle is over; the day is ours. But what will happen now?"

"I don't know," I confessed. "What I know is what happened in my world. It's all I've got to work with." Counting on the fingers of one gloved hand, I listed the possibilities one after another. "You've stood tall against Bismarck, and beaten him this time." I began. "Now, he won't be able to conquer Austria or the German Kingdoms; he'll have to start over. That'll give Emperor Franz Josef a few years to improve his army, or make an alliance with Napoleon III of France. And that puts an end to the Unseelie's plan to dominate New Europa through the Iron Chancellor, at least for now.

"Without Prussians ruling all Germany, young Prince Wilhelm II won't be able to start the First World War. Without the Great War, the French won't take revenge on the Kaiser with the heavy reparations that will bankrupt Germany in the 20's. Without a crushed Germany, a certain crazed housepainter won't be able to start the next war. And without World War II, the Soviets won't be able to take over Eastern Europe; there won't be a Cold War, and maybe, just maybe, we avoid the deaths of literally millions of innocent people, as well as the destruction of an entire way of life. Maybe this time the lights don't go out all over Europe. Maybe this time we learn how to settle our problems with words, not swords. Maybe this time the Unseelie don't succeed in helping us destroy ourselves.

"But right now, we have a flying navy, Engine Magick, and the time to set things right again. I mean, we can't ask for much more than that." I shrugged.

Ludwig chuckled, and for a moment, the pain and weight of unknown years vanished from his face. "You are a wonder, Tom Olam," he said with a wry grin. "A wonder indeed." He laughed again briefly, then slapped me on the back. "Now, my young visionary, let us go see how right you will be."

And we started down the long, bloody hillside towards the future we'd created.



End Game

That was all four years ago.

Time moves a lot faster here, I suspect. From what Auberon's told me, there really isn't much of a correlation between time back home and time in New Europa; he claims that travelling through the Faerie Veil distorts the fabric of relativity, making time mutable. Auberon also claims to have personally tutored Einstein, so I usually take his theories with a grain of salt.

Meanwhile, I've been incredibly busy. I've travelled around the world at least once, including a whirlwind tour of the Continent, a journey across America that started with an airship crash, and a hop to the Far East where I negotiated a truce with the Dragon Emperors (who, by the way, really are Dragons). Most of what I've been doing involves the Second Compact: the loose brotherhood of sorcerors, Dragons, Seelie and humans who have united under King Ludwig's leadership. The last few years haven't been easy; von Bismarck is still up to his old tricks, and his agents are constantly trying to undermine our hold on Engine Magick and gain it for themselves. The Agents of the Compact are also constantly forced to stay just one step ahead of the Unseelie's plans, and we barely managed to head off the Steam Lords' attempt to place all of Ireland under a geas of Eternal Servitude last year. But we're winning the Good Fight. So far.

Which brings me to what I've been leading up to: I can't go back yet. These are my people; I've lived with them, fought for them, risked my life for them. Maybe someday I'll go back, but this is where I belong right now.

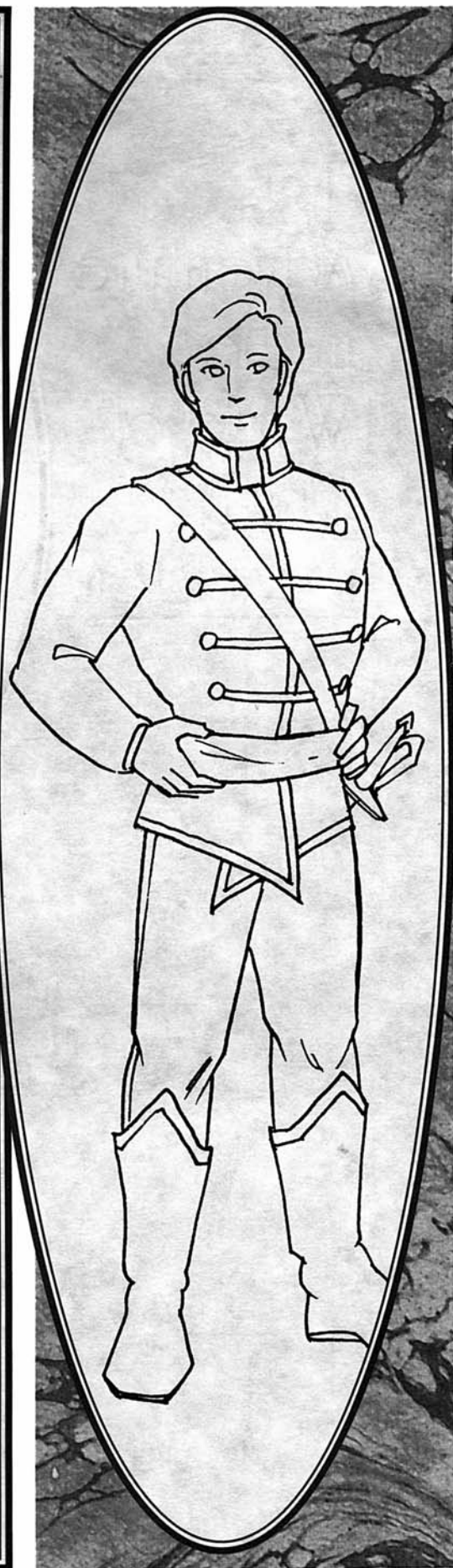
But I sent this package back in my place. To warn you. You see, something Morrolan said long ago stuck with me. Something that chilled my bones and still keeps me awake nights. He once said he suspected that the Unseelie were *already in my own world*. And that they were *winning*.

So I lie awake at night, staring at the ceiling, thinking about home—and remember things that didn't make much sense to me back then; the senseless violence, terrifying cruelty, and mindless fear—but that now, having fought the Dark Court for so long, have an almost familiar foul stench to them. As though something somewhere was moving the chess pieces of a world with long, scaly fingers, plotting distant moves with reptilian coldness, bending and twisting something good and real into a warped and horrible world of its own dead design.

My sword's no good against the Unseelie in our world. But my words may succeed where steel can't. Take this book; my drawings and stories and tales and adventures. Let our world know that somewhere just on the other side of an insubstantial veil, there is another place; a place where what is good and fine and honorable has not died, and where Heroes still win against Evil. Take all the Games and Characters I've talked about and use them to tell everyone back home that there is still a land where bravery and justice prevail; that there still exists a place where a Golden Age glitters bright and untarnished in the sun.

Tell them of Castle Falkenstein.

Tom Olam
Castle Falkenstein, Bayern
March 5th, 1870



High
Adventure
in the
World of
Castle
Falkenstein



The Great Game

C A S T L E

130

F A L K E N S T E I N

The Prince & I Write The "Great Game"

"Good Lord, man, you simply cannot propose a capital Idea like your Game and then remove it from play! As a Gentleman, you owe it to all of us to carry on, despite this minor setback. I'm sure a man of your talents—with my help, of course—can devise a way to work this out without those silly dice!"
—HRH, the Prince of Wales

I was at a party at Cowes (the favorite hangout for yachting Euro-nobility) late one evening. Things were starting to flag, and everyone had run through all the usual games (whist, hide-n-seek, flirting) popular among the fast Neo-European set. In desperation, someone remembered that I came from beyond the Faerie Veil, and asked me what kind of party games we played back Home. So I started to explain roleplaying games.

"It's like pretending," I said. "One person proposes an imaginary situation. Everyone else at the party tells that person what he or she would do in that case." "But that's not all that exciting!" protested my hostess. "We all know what we'd do in any situation!"

"No, no," I explained. "Most of the time, you're playing a character; a persona whose role you act out in the situation." "So you pretend to be someone else?" asked one of the members of the party (I think it might have been Bertie, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales). "Jolly!" said someone else. "It's like a charade!" Everything began moving along swimmingly as I launched into a detailed description of roleplaying and fantasy gaming.

Then I mentioned the *dice*.

I distinctly recall that one of the ladies fainted.

After the furor died down, my hostess and Morrolan explained: Victorians don't play with dice. At least, not the proper ones. Dice are used by the riffraff and the demimonde, and maybe that bounder Napoleon the Third with his rascally foreign ways. But no gentleman would ever play a game with dice, and certainly wouldn't mention dicing games in the presence of a lady!

Oops. There was a long silence while I pondered a way to resolve the problem. Finally it came to me. Victorians don't play dice. They play cards. Card games seem to drive New European society. Steam Agers play endless games of bridge, whist, canasta, poker ... the list goes on and on. Dice are the devil's work. Cards are ok. Culture. Go figure.

So that's what I did. I rewrote the rules of roleplaying to use cards instead of dice. Sure, it sounds pretty weird to me too. But then, these are people who still duel over affairs of honor and put modesty coverings on table legs. I live here, and I have to get along with these people. They're my neighbors. One of them is my King. So bear with me.

What you have in your hands is a roleplaying game I designed for playing characters in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*. As played by real New Europeans, I



“An Adventure Entertainment? What a capital idea! We must make certain that this thing doesn’t become too beastly popular or all the riffraff will want to play as well!”

—HRH, the Prince of Wales

might add. So far, it’s been sweeping the drawing rooms and salons of the capitals of Europa; the King has teased me that I may have done more for Bayernese popularity with this one game than any of the battles I’ve fought for him. And I have to admit that Ludwig with his vivid imagination, love of junk food and night owl habits, makes a perfect gamer.

Once he got past the idea that he wasn’t always going to be a king in the Game, that is.

After the Social Debacle of the Century

Having managed to totally embarrass both myself and my hostess with the Great Dice Fiasco, I decided to let the entire thing lie “doggo” for a while. As it happened, the Prince of Wales didn’t let me off the hook. As I learned to my dismay, “Bertie” has a great number of opinions about practically everything, and game design turned out to be one of them. Lucky for me, he also has a working knowledge of a great many games, particularly those involving cards and chance.

Bertie, I may have already mentioned, was not one of those who looked faint at the idea of dice.

A Princely Idea

We retired to the drawing room to drink port and smoke cigars (I don’t smoke). “We should first endeavor,” began HRH, “to make certain that not everyone is, ahem, equal in this Game.” Bertie, as a monarch in waiting, isn’t big on the equality thing. Too American, probably. I suggested that we give all the Players a selection of Abilities, and have them assign points between them.

“Too beastly complex,” replied Bertie. “We’re not all shopkeepers, Thomas. Hmmm.” He mulled over the idea between drags on a cigar and sips of port. Finally, his eyes lit. “Aha!” he said. “We shall do as you say, but with one difference. Instead of numbers, we shall have each Player decide what things he is good at, and which things he is poor at.”

“And at all other things he would be Average?” I prompted. The Prince sniffed at the word “average.” “I suppose it’s only fair,” he conceded. “Not everyone can be everything. As for these ‘Abilities’ you propose,” he continued, “Why, we shall make them the very attributes any Gentleman or Gentlewoman might possess.”

“What about other things?” I continued. “You know: background, history, possessions? Should we have character classes—er—Professions?”

The Prince set down his port a bit forcefully. “Good Gods, man, let them use a bit of imagination for a change! It’s all very well to arrange a chart of what people can or cannot be in Mister Cruikshank’s *Picture of the British Empire*, but we all know Life isn’t quite that neat.”

“Maybe we could describe some general social classes and professions, but leave it to them as to how they want to play them ...” I ventured. “Exactly.” The Prince warmed to his subject. “None of this, ‘You must be a butcher, baker or soldier.’ They can do that sort of thing every day. This is a work of imagination, and should encourage such fancies.” He leaned forward in his chair, a conspiratorial glitter in his pale eyes. “I myself,” he confided, “intend to take the role of a famous Consulting Detective.”

This was going to go over just *great* at Baker Street.

“And as for the rest of it,” he continued imperturbably, “let them decide. They can decide what Nation and City they come from, their parentage, how they look, dress, speak and act.” Bertie beamed happily as he refilled our glasses. “There,” he said, “I believe we have it all properly ‘sewn up’, as you Americans say.”

“Not entirely, cousin,” said a voice from the doorway. We looked up to see King Ludwig striding into the room.

The King Joins In

“Only one thing is missing,” said Ludwig, as he sat down across from us. “And that is?” replied Bertie, one eyebrow raised. As a King, Ludwig outranked a mere Prince, but Bertie’s never been one to give the stage over readily.

“Why, a grand passion!” exclaimed the King. “It is true that you have created a marvelous stage upon which your actors can play. But they have no script—no reason to act upon the stage! I propose, therefore, that we add three things; call them *raison d’être*—a reason to live. One would be a Grand Passion: something the Player will pursue above all things, whether it is Art, Music, Love or Honor. The second would be a Nemesis: the dark side that he must battle; this could be a sworn enemy or organization which confronts and confounds the Player. And the third—this would be the Player’s Goals. Every hero needs something to strive for, a reason to battle a Nemesis and pursue a Passion.” He sat back smiling. “There, what do you think?”

Bertie savored the idea and liked it. “Only your melancholy, romantic German temperament would have thought of it,” he said. “But let me add one small fillip to an already grand idea. I propose we give our Player three goals: one Social, one Professional, and one Avocational. That way, Goals could be thrown into conflict against each other, or work indirectly to accomplish each other.” The two monarchs grinned at each other like two canary-stuffed cats.



So that’s how I embarked upon the hazardous career of an 19th century game designer. Before we move on to the other dark things which were decided upon that Fateful Night, let’s take a few moments to look over some of the ground rules of the Great Game, and what things you’ll need to play it properly.

Entering the Great Game

The Great Game: a euphemism for the play of intrigue and adventure that is the shadow side of life in the Victorian Age. Also used to refer to the business of politics and covert espionage. First coined by Rudyard Kipling in his novel Kim in 1901, the phrase came originally from a conversation we had in Punjab in '95...

—Notes from *The Unexpurgated
Memoirs of Auberon of Faerie*



Welcome to the world of roleplaying. Or, as it’s called over here, the world of an authentic **Victorian Adventure Entertainment**. In the pages to follow, I’m going to show you how you can become an adventurer in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, how to fight Evil Unseelie Lords, meet Dragons, thwart Masterminds and all the other things I get to do for real on a daily basis. But unlike *me*, you won’t be in danger of getting decapitated by a saber or eaten alive by a Troll.

Things You’ll Need to Play the Game

You’re going to need two decks of standard playing cards to play this game. The reason is twofold. First of all, as I explained rather painfully in the earlier passage, proper Victorians don’t play with dice. (It’s kind of hard to locate a 12-sider in 1870 anyway, so this doesn’t bother me much.)

Second, as you’ll discover, cards will allow you to do a lot of other tricks that dice won’t, such as working within suits and applying symbols to roleplaying aspects of the Game. Sure, you can tell fortunes with dice. But it isn’t as much fun.

You’ll also want some paper and pencils to take notes, draw maps and so on. In New Europa, there isn’t really a “character sheet” or any official record; this is because xerography doesn’t exist yet. You may want to come up with one, or you may just want to use one of those nifty blank books that are sold in most stationery and drug stores, like we use here.

Terms You'll Need to Know

Words I'll Be Using Throughout This Text

- **Host:** The person in charge of the Game. Called the Host because he/she invites everyone over to the house to play. The Host not only describes the events and reactions of the world to the Players, but also will be called upon to adjudicate the rules (such as they are), and play the roles of characters who encounter the Players in their Adventures. If you're going to be a Host, you'll want to check out the sections on pages 167 through 180 for ideas on how to be a successful master of the Game.

- **Player:** You, the other person playing the Game. A Game usually has about six Players.

- **Dramatic Character:** The person the Player will be portraying. Your "pretend" personality.

- **Fortune Deck:** A standard deck of cards used to determine outcomes of Fate in the Game.

- **Sorcery Deck:** A second deck of cards used to simulate the existence of magical power in the Game. I usually use another color of cards or another style of deck than my Fortune Deck.

- **Abilities:** Skills and natural Abilities that are used to judge how good your Character is in the Game.

Instead, you'll adventure from the safety of your own drawing room, much like many New Europeans who now play Adventure Entertainments as a regular pastime. You'll do this through the power of imagination, your ability to project yourself into the role of another person in another place and time—a **Dramatic Character** as it's called here—a fictional persona you will adopt and roleplay through each new situation that Character encounters. It's the ultimate form of Method Acting, if you will, and once you know the tricks, you can do it anywhere: in your automotive as it chuffs down the road, on the train to Paris, or even in the comfortable passenger lounge of your aership as it speeds high over the Alps.

One of you will become the **Host**, a player in the Great Game who has all the good parts: judge, jury and creator of the fantasy world everyone else will share. As Host, it will be your job to pose the Situation that all the Players will become involved in, whether it's a desperate mission to restore a Lost King to a throne like I did, or to battle the forces of the marauding Fredonian Air Pirates as they swoop down upon a helpless city you have all sworn to defend. The scope of your adventures in New Europa will have no limit except those of your own mind—and the few rules I'll outline in these pages to help keep things consistent and authentically Steam Age.

As Host, you have a lot of tools at your disposal; you'll get to create all of the characters the other Players don't (including the parts of the Bad Guys), using them to shape and create the Adventures you conceive. You'll also have this world as a tool. The stories, pictures and descriptions I have brought together in these Notebooks for you to enjoy, besides being a record of my own adventures, they are a good source of information on just how the world of *Castle Falkenstein* works. They are also a pretty fair example of how Diaries and Journals work as well. Lastly, you'll have these rules I have cobbled together from the many Adventure Entertainments I have personally "hosted" for my Steam Age friends at parties and gatherings all over New Europa, a background of experience that I give you to use in your own Adventures.

The rest of you will become **Players** in the Great Game: the actors of a joint story that everyone will have a hand in writing. As a Player, you'll use your wits, powers of visualization, and acting skills to make your hour upon the Grand Stage a memorable one. You'll also use a **Diary** or **Journal**: a special book in which you'll record the hopes, dreams, plans and schemes of your Dramatic Character as he

adventures in the Steam Age. The Diary will be your way of becoming part of the creative process that makes up a good Adventure, and may even provide hours of entertainment if you choose to read them aloud to each other!

So gather your band of stout comrades together and prepare to take up saber and revolver in the name of Adventure. The night awaits, the moon is high, and the Wild Hunt rides upon its unspeakable mission. There are Villains to confound, Masterminds to defeat, intrigues to unmask and Justice and Right to be upheld. To quote Mister Sherlock Holmes—*The Game's afoot!*



In the Victorian Literary Tradition

Roleplaying in the World of Castle Falkenstein

In the Steam Age, there are no movies, television or video games. Instead, the chief form of entertainment for almost everyone is reading. In the spirit of the Golden Age, your *Castle Falkenstein* adventures should always be treated as a kind of fictional work (in fact, Hosts are encouraged to create their own "Books" using the kind of diaries or blank books available in most stationers' stores), with these works of fiction coming in two forms: Novels and Serials.

Novels, Serials and Your Part

A **Novel** is a single long series of connected Adventure sessions (called Chapters) which all lead to a single conclusion. Each Chapter is linked to the next, so that it cannot be taken as an independent part of the overall Novel. A good example of a Novel is Jules Verne's *Around the World in 80 Days*, where each Chapter depends on the next and the action overall moves towards a definite conclusion.

A **Serial**, on the other hand, is an unconnected series of Adventure sessions (called **Installments**). Each Installment is self-contained, but linked by using the same characters in each Installment. A good example of Serials are the Sherlock Holmes stories by A. Conan Doyle. Although each Installment of the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (which were serialized weekly in the *Strand* magazine) was a complete story in itself, each used the same characters, i.e., Watson and Holmes as the protagonists.

As the Host of a *Castle Falkenstein* Game, your job will be to "write" a Novel or Serial to connect your game sessions. Your job will be to determine the action for each Chapter or Installment, figure out the important Scenes that must be played in each part, and populate your literary work with a cast of interesting Villains, Henchmen and Supporting Characters, while your players take the roles of the Heroes and Heroines of your Literary Masterpiece.

But first, you'll have to learn more about the style of the Story you're going to write.

True Love! Death Traps! Hairsbreadth Escapes! Fates Worse Than Death!

The Secret of writing a Story (whether Novel or Serial) in the world of *Castle Falkenstein* is hidden in the structure of the old Saturday afternoon matinee cliffhangers: a breakneck dive into a world of larger-than-life battles, narrow escapes, fiendish deathtraps and spine-tingling peril. It's also hidden in the swash-buckling tradition as well: a mixture of fearless derring-do, thrilling swordplay and always witty dialogue. And finally, the Secret of writing a Falkensteinian adventure can be found in the great "costume epics" of Hollywood and the huge body of popular literature that includes historical romances, post-Napoleonic military adventures, and the infamous "bodice ripper" novels found at every supermarket checkout stand.



Tom's Favorite Steam Age Vids

Prisoner of Zenda

One of my personal favorites. There are at least three versions on video, the original black and white with Ronald Coleman (the best), the flashier color version with Stewart Granger, and a very obscure "comedy" version with Peter Sellers.

Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

There must a hundred versions of Holmes on screen (and almost none of them look like him, by the way). The best, of course, are the classic black and white versions with Basil Rathbone.

The Private Life Of Sherlock Holmes

A strangely moody version filmed by Billy Wilder and starring Robert Stevens. Worth it for all the wonderfully "steampunk" tech and Prussian spies. And Genevieve Page is (in my opinion) gorgeous.

Seven Percent Solution

Holmes done with verve and wit in the most original version of the Great Detective, scripted by Nicholas Meyer.

The Lost World

Dinosaurs! Monsters! Victorians! How can you miss? Loads of fun!

20,000 Leagues under the Sea

Classic Disney with some of the best steamtech around. And James Mason is great as Nemo!

Royal Flash

Not to be missed (if you can find it). Otto von Bismarck (Oliver Reed) vs Harry Flashman (Malcolm MacDowell) in a *Prisoner of Zenda* spoof with real bite.

Master of the World

Vincent Price chews the scenery in this wonderful picture of a true Victorian Mastermind, airship master Robur.

Great Train Robbery

Sean Connery as a wonderfully heroic Villain pulling off the greatest robbery in Victorian times.

Wild Wild West

Now-classic 60's TV show with Victorian-Age cowboy-superspy James West and lots of neat gadgets.

The second best all-time way to get an idea of the style of a *Falkenstein* adventure is to go to your local video store and rent several of the videos listed in this section. The best all-time way is to go down to your local library and check out the Literary Tradition of the Victorian genre for yourself!

The Elements of Victorian Melodrama

In the world of Steam Age Adventure, reality is much more black and white than in our own time. As a result, certain elements will crop up time and time again in a *Falkenstein* Game. These elements are the backbone of the "melodramatic" style of Victorian literature, useful plot devices that truly capture the feel of the genre that masters like Dickens, Doyle, Collins and Verne made famous.

By using these Elements as part of your Story, you can capture the authentic style and flavor of swashbuckling, melodramatic Steam Age adventure. With these tools at your command, your "stories" will be guaranteed to be packed with the action, thrills and desperate endeavor this genre calls for.

The Elements of Victorian Melodrama always include:

A Fiendish Plot:

Villains always have a Fiendish Plot. The Plot is always fairly straightforward; Masterminds want to destroy something, harm millions of innocents, or take over the world, spies want to get a secret, a Mad Scientist wants to release a deadly creation Man Was Not Meant To Know upon the Earth. Fiendish Plots must always have a deadline—a limited amount of time in which the Heroes can stop the Plot from happening; if they fail, Terrible Things will happen. The first step in any *Castle Falkenstein* Adventure is to determine the Fiendish plan, or at least clues leading to it. So it's important that the Host scatter at least four or five clues to the nature of the plot along the way.

An Insidious Peril:

A Fiendish Plot without a time limit, the Insidious Peril is a plot that will take many months or years to accomplish. The Heroes must discover the nature of this Peril before it can be developed into a final Fiendish Plot. Again, the Host must make sure to scatter clues to the nature of the plot along the way for the players to find.

An Imprisonment in Durance Vile:

Villains should never try to kill the heroes outright. That would be too simple. Villains will always try to capture the heroes first. Thus, when a Villain shoots or stabs a Hero, instead of dying, the Hero always falls unconscious so that he or she can be placed in a state of Durance Vile (i.e., locked up without hope of escape). The Hero is then either imprisoned in a Dungeon (so that he can attempt to make an escape), or placed in a Death Trap he must deal with. A Heroine (unless an Adventuress) is usually locked up in somewhat nicer quarters and faced with a Fate Worse Than Death.

A Fate Worse Than Death:

In a true melodrama, Villains *never* kill attractive females. No, they menace them with a Fate Worse Than Death. This usually means some form of unwanted sexual or romantic advance. An Honorable Villain will always try to marry or otherwise establish a long-term relationship with a Heroine. A Dishonorable Villain will attempt to "have his way" with a Heroine; this is usually more a form of ravishment than outright rape, involving the "bodice-ripper" assaults of forced

kisses, a rough fondle and a lot of threats of worse to come. Should worse to come actually happen, it always happens Offstage, the scene going to black just as the kicking and screaming heroine is knocked out, swoons or is physically overpowered.

A Death Trap:

A Death Trap is a situation that places the Heroes in danger of Certain Doom, but in a way that they are fully aware of every step of that Certain Doom. A Death Trap never kills instantly. Instead, it involves some kind of long term threat of Rube Goldberg proportions: an explosive device, a fall into a pit, a monster about to be loosed, whatever. A Death Trap is never a simple affair; it must have at least two or three steps leading to the certain Death: a candle must burn through a rope to release the huge saw blade, or the heroes are first covered with honey, then staked out for fire ants. The Villain always leaves the scene of the Death Trap, but before leaving the Villain must always explain his Fiendish plot and gloat.

A Hairsbreadth Escape:

Every Death Trap must have a built-in Hairsbreadth Escape, in fact, a *good* Death Trap should have two or three ways to Escape. One should always be a possible Rescue (just in case you don't want to kill the Heroes off right away and need an excuse to save them when they don't figure out how to escape). Another is a hidden weapon, advantage, ally or tool (such as a rusty nail that the Heroes can use to fray the ropes binding them). The third option is finding a way to break the Death Trap, by gumming up the works, shutting it off, or otherwise breaking the chain of events that will release the Certain Doom.

A Great Romance:

Unlike any other romance, a Great Romance has a "larger than life" element. The Beloved must be the most beautiful or handsome person the Hero/Heroine has ever met, and they both should instantly fall in love. There should be at least one night of passionate romance which is better than anything the Hero has ever experienced. However, the Hero must never actually achieve a permanent relationship: the Beloved is killed by the Villain, makes a Heroic Sacrifice to save the Hero, is lost mysteriously, or in the end must leave to "recover from the ordeal," to "pursue Another Destiny," or even return to a spouse or ailing relative.

A Duel to the Death:

At some point, the Heroes should have a chance to go one-on-one with the Villain, a personal challenge that is directed towards only one of the Heroes. This is the ever popular Duel to the Death, in which Villain and Hero match steel or wits in such a way that one or the other will most certainly die at the hands of the other. The Duel could be with swords or pistols, or a subtle chess game with poisoned pieces. The Duel to the Death is always a one-on-one challenge levelled directly at the Hero; to refuse is Cowardly, and to gang up on the Villain Unspeakable.

A Perilous Battle:

Unlike a Duel to the Death, a Perilous Battle need not be one-on-one. But it must always be held in a situation where the surroundings are perilous: a narrow bridge high above a chasm, atop a speeding train, on the crumbling battlements of a high tower, or in a sinking Submarine. A Perilous Battle gets its importance from the external peril, not the actual fight. The real question is, will you fall, get run over, or drown while you fight for your life? The Host should constantly have Heroes and Villains struggling not to slip and fall, or be swept off their feet by high winds or water.

And A Heroic Sacrifice:

Every good *Falkenstein* adventure should offer the Heroes a chance to make a Heroic Sacrifice: to do something that will probably mean Certain Doom or

Great Steam Age Literature

I could go on about Victorian Literature sources for days; the list is endless. But here are, in my humble opinion, the ones you *really* need to read first.

From the Earth to the Moon
20,000 Leagues under the Sea
& Around the World in 80 Days

The classics from Jules Verne (I got him to autograph mine). Read 'em. Now.

Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

There's never been a better picture of the Steam Age than this. And the mysteries are still challenging, even after 100 years.

The Invisible Man

From H.G. Wells, of course. Like Jack the Ripper with invisibility, a story of Science gone Bad.

The Time Machine

Set somewhere around the turn of the century, the feel is still classic Victorian Mad Inventor. And the George Pal movie is great too!

The Man Who Was Thursday

G.K. Chesterton's tale of anarchists, Scotland Yard detectives, secret societies and mysterious Leaders. Hard to find, but worth it.

The Flashman Series

George MacDonald Fraser's insane romp through Victorian life and history with the villain of *Tom Brown's School Days* as hero.

The Prisoner of Zenda

Anthony Hope's classic adventure-romance novel, set in swashbuckling Ruritania.

The Age of Innocence

Edith Wharton's novel of sex, society and scandal in Victorian New York. Good for the non-adventure side of the Steam Age.

Oliver Twist (or anything else by Charles Dickens)

A little out of the 1870's period, but still pretty good for feel.



Capture, but allows an innocent person to escape or be saved. This would be something like holding the gates to the Castle singlehandedly against a mob until the Princess can get away, or throwing yourself in front of the assassin's knife to save the brave young Heroine, or rushing into the burning building to save the small child trapped there. Like Death Traps, Heroic Sacrifices should always have a chance for a Hairsbreadth Escape; even if he can't Escape, there should be something granted to the Hero (perhaps extra Fortune cards for his next character, or another advantage of some type), so that the sacrifice will not be in vain!

The Props of Victorian Fiction

As the "writer" of your own Steam Age fictions, you're going to discover that your Victorian predecessors have also left you a rich heritage of fantastic props and fanciful literary devices unique to their time, including:

Great Thumping, Hissing Machinery:

A great staple of the genre. In 1870, industrialism is still something new and unique, and its products still very experimental. Technology is still as much a craft as it is a science, and the machines of the time reflect this: great, clanking monsters made of iron and brass (the only easily worked metals of the time), held together with huge rivets and each fitting carefully hand-machined. It's also not unusual to see ornate flourishes and gilding all over the casing of a factory machine: just another sign of the craftsman's art.

Steam is the dominant power source of the Age, with jets of superheated vapor shooting out of primitively fitted boilers and coal smoke blackening the sky above. Gears are huge and complex assemblages, pistons are monstrous oil-sealed juggernauts, and everything is noisy, big and grease-spattered. Remember: when describing anything that has to do with the technology of the Steam Age, whether it's a vehicle, a factory or even a "Calculation Engine," if you make sure you emphasize the fact that it's big, noisy, made of iron and baroquely, primitively ornate, you can't possibly go wrong.

High Flown Speeches, Capital Letters and Too Many Italics

Language in the Steam Age is also big, expansive and ornate; this is an age when the Queen of England underlines, italicizes and capitalizes almost everything, and she's not considered unusual. The Victorian mind automatically leaps to the grand phrase, the romantic gesture and the heroic expression. Don't be afraid to make long speeches, espouse undying love, and uphold high principles. If your villains snarl and say, "*Curse you!*", your Heroines sigh and are unfailingly noble, and your Heroes show manly resolution and demand that "*You unhand the lady, cur!*", you'll be halfway to understanding the Steam Age mindset.

Strongholds, Citadels and Secret Fortresses:

The Steam Age is a time in transition between the archaic and the modern, and this really shows up in the architecture of the times. Factories are built side by side with ancient castles, and even the newest buildings have a rococo feel that defies rhyme or reason (Neuschwanstein is a perfect example of this). Steam Age buildings shouldn't just be buildings. They should be Schlosses teetering on cliffs high over the Rhine, stately villas baked in the Roman sun, or secret fortresses in the Balkans. There should be trap doors, secret panels, hidden entrances, remote hunting lodges, ancestral castles and great estates galore throughout your Entertainments. Don't settle for a mere building when you can have a palace.

Amazing Vehicles:

The Victorian Literary tradition is from a time when everyone dabbles in Science and invention; the very idea of the experimental method is a novel concept, and knowledge for its own sake is still considered to be a luxury only the rich could

afford. So it's not surprising that in this time, technology is something to truly inflame the imagination. Submarines are just as impossible as flying machines to the Steam Age mind, and both populate the pages of popular literature. A lowly automobile is as exotic to a 19th century mind as a stealth fighter is to our jaded 20th century tastes. The lesson is: Don't walk when you can have a steam-powered tread-mill tank carry you; don't take a boat when you can ship out on a windmill-driven luxury liner; and don't settle for a balloon when you can travel by Zeppelin.

Infernal Devices:

And while we're at it, don't forget the darker side of Science, the Infernal Devices and Inventions of the Villains of the Age of Steam. For every amazing new technological breakthrough to Improve the Lot of Man, there is obviously Forbidden Knowledge whose secrets Man Was Not Meant To Know, the reflection of Steam Age man's ambivalent feelings to this new world of change overthrowing the Known Order. When human passion and Scientific power unite, the offspring of such is often dark and dangerous, threatening all the average Victorian holds dear. So remember to always show that darker side as well, of Science twisted to Evil ends and Gone Bad.

And Strange New Worlds:

The Age of Steam is also an Age of Exploration: All Afrika lies unknown, as well as much of the Orient with its ancient and mysterious civilizations. Men are striving to reach the Poles by airship, to explore the bottom of the sea by submersible, and penetrate the deepest jungles by automotive and rail. There is so much that still is unknown; and who is to say what new lands can be found in the heart of Borneo, the Australian outback, or the very center of the earth itself? Treat the world as a new and unexplored place, ripe with bizarre adventure, and you'll have hundreds of new places to journey to in your quest for Steam Age excitement!

The Building Blocks of Your "Story"

So far, we've been looking at the elements that need to be in your Story to make it work. But now we're going to need a few more things to fit those elements into a coherent whole. Going back to the Game's cinematic roots, we're going to borrow some terms that are usually used to describe things as done in a movie rather than a book. This is because while a *Castle Falkenstein* story is a literary invention, it is always "performed" by the players and the Host more like a play or film.

On and Offstage

The first building block in constructing a *Falkenstein* story is the idea of **Onstage** and **Offstage**. Events that happen Onstage are events that both the players in the game (in the roles of their characters) and the Host (the roles of all the Villains and the Supporting Cast) mutually participate in.

Offstage events are those which take place when the Host and the players are separated, or when a Game session is not in progress. Offstage events can be played three ways: As a separate event between two players that doesn't involve the Host; as a mutually agreed "passage of time" between Host and a particular player or group of players; or as a special omnipotent view described by the Host to allow the players to see something they normally wouldn't have been able to see (such as a flashback described by a third person who was there).

Scenes

Castle Falkenstein adventures are played in **Scenes**, the next building block of a story. A Scene is a discrete piece of activity that takes place in a single setting; for example, a Scene could take place in a dungeon, or on a castle wall, but the same

"I've a loaded reciproca-
tor in one
hand, a saber in
the other, and a
deucedly good
Helical Rotor
Ornithopter to
get me where
it's needful.
What say we
take a flight
over the
Channel and
beard the
unscrupulous
bounder in his
very lair?"

—Captain Fortune

Moving Around the Scene

As a rule, you probably will never need to get this precise. Multiply the feet per second value by the number of seconds and that will give you a maximum speed.

Running Speeds (based on Athletics)

Speed	MPH	Feet/sec
Poor Running Speed	10	15
Average Running Speed	12	18
Good Running Speed	14	20
Great Running Speed	16	23
Exceptional Running Speed	18	26
Extraordinary Running Speed	20	29

Flying Speeds (Based on Faerie

Etherealness or Dragon/Animal Physique)

Speed	MPH	Feet/sec
Poor Flying Speed	50	73
Average Flying Speed	75	109
Good Flying Speed	100	147
Great Flying Speed	150	219
Exceptional Flying Speed	200	293
Extraordinary Flying Speed	250	367

Other Speeds

Speed	MPH	Feet/sec
Galloping Horse	20	29
Automotive	30	44
Train	75	109

And A Tip:

Scale isn't really important in using Stage Directions unless you are using detailed models and miniature figures. In this case, a simple rule of thumb will always suffice: Assume that an average figure represents a six foot-tall man, and measure all distances using that figure as a guide.

Scene could not take place in both. As a rule of thumb, whenever you change Locales (or "sets") in your Adventure (like moving from your flat in Saville Row to a fog-shrouded street), you have changed Scenes. You can only play one Scene at a time. You can't jump back and forth; instead, you play out one Scene as far as you can, then "cut" to another Scene. Each Chapter or Installment is made up of one or more Scenes. A Scene is never any specific length of time; it just goes on until the locale changes.

During the Scene, each person in the scene will have a chance to do things to progress the action along. This is done pretty much free-form; there are no "turns" taken unless the sequence of action is important in some way (in these cases, each character plays his part of the Scene in order of highest to lowest Perception Ability, with equal Perceptions acting at the same time).

Instead of taking turns, everyone in the Scene gets to talk at once as if holding a normal conversation (although as a courtesy, most people let the Host speak uninterrupted whenever he needs to). People not currently in the Scene are asked to stay quiet and not interrupt the Scene until their turn to be Onstage comes. They can, however, elect to play their own Offstage Scene (using their Journals to record the events and dialog), as long as they do not need the Host to play any of the parts in their Offstage Scene.

Locations

Locations are where the action happens. Think of each Location as a discrete place in your Steam Age world; a room where the Scene takes place. You can return to Locations over and over again. Locations can also be considered to be the same as movie sets, but in a *Falkenstein* story are usually represented either by maps of the Location, or by pictures and photographs which can be drawn or pasted into the book you are writing your Story in.

Cuts

You don't have to act out all the action in a Story. Hosts may also skip intervening Scenes and Cut to the next important Scene; for example, if the Heroes are knocked unconscious in the Great Courtyard of Castle Anthrax, you don't have to show the Scenes of them being carried up the stairs into the Castle and through the halls. You can Cut to the next important Scene: waking up in the Dark Tower of the Castle, bound hand and foot to a wall. Only Hosts can make Cuts.

Another Host option is the **Waking Cut**. When a Hero is wounded beyond his capacity, he doesn't die. Instead, he passes out, awakening in the next Scene. How long he is unconscious is up to the Host; if he wants, the Hero may have been in a coma until he was healed a bit, or just a few minutes may have passed.

A third Host option is called the **Cut To—**. This allows the Host to instantly move the action to another group of characters in the drama and play their Scene out. The Cut To— may also be used as a **Third Person Cut To—** or **Flashback** in which the Host describes a scene that none of the player characters are actually in, but which he allows them to view as though they were watching a movie or reading a book while another person who was there describes the events.

Stage Directions

Stage Directions are the physical parameters of the Scene: how big the Location is, how fast or how far characters can move during the Scene, etc. Since Scenes, as a general rule, don't take place over any specific time period, the best way to deal with these questions is to use realistic values like miles per hour or feet per minute, rather than the abstract "feet per turn" used in other roleplaying games. I've provided a crib table (see sidebar) for the speeds of most things in New Europa, but this is a last resort when you don't feel comfortable just making a judgment call.

Heroes & Villains

The "Dramatic Characters" of the Great Game

In the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, there are three important kinds of people: **Heroes**, **Heroines** and **Villains**. All three reflect the style of this bygone age in that they are truly archetypes of Good and Evil, playing their parts on the Grand Stage in a world of relatively unambiguous morality. They are the *Dramatis Personae*—the Dramatic Characters first coined by the great poet and dramatist Robert Browning, those few players who set the course of mighty Empires and turn the Tides of History.

On this grand stage, Heroes do Good, Villains do Bad, and never the twain shall meet except in mortal struggle. In a proper Steam Age Universe, things are either Black or White (and in Capital Letters besides). In this reality, Good Battles Evil, Right Defeats Wrong, and Things are truly done for Honor, Queen and Country.

Heroes and Heroines—that's what you'll be portraying in this world (although we'll also talk about the Bad Guys too). Note that when we say Heroes, we mean *Heroes*, there aren't any unprincipled, unlikable, almost-bad "Anti-Heroes" in Steam Age fiction. This is your big chance to take the stage in the grandest, most heroic way: to Battle Evil, See Justice Done, and flourish your saber on the field of Honor. Make the most of it!

Heroes

Victorian Heroes come in three flavors: Heroic, Tragic or Flawed. To be *truly* Steam Age, are no other options really available. As a Player in the Great Game, you will have to decide which of these three categories you fit into.

A truly **Heroic Hero** believes in honor, fair play and the right thing. You won't find him sneaking up on the Villain, no sir! That's the coward's way! Heroic Heroes are eternally optimistic, strongly principled and very out in the open. They harm others only with great regret and will avoid killing if at all possible. Good examples of Heroic Heroes are Rudolph Rassendyl, John Carter of Mars, Sherlock Holmes or Phileas Fogg from *Around the World in 80 Days*.

The **Tragic Hero** is a heroic character with a dark side, something that has permanently given him a grim view of life. He may have lost a lover, been wrongfully imprisoned or accused, or otherwise ruined by Fate and the perfidy of others. While his principles are the same as any other hero, his methods and style are very different; he wears black, stands (not lurks) in the shadows, and will kill when he feels it is necessary. He is dark, brooding and carries an aura of mystery with him wherever he goes. Yet he will always do the Right Thing and can be counted on to be always as principled as the Heroic Hero. A good example of a Tragic Hero is Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights*.

Flawed Heroes are Heroes who lack something in their basic Morality; they are all too willing to sacrifice their principles for expediency. What distinguishes a





Flawed hero from the modern Anti-Hero? The Flawed Hero knows he's doing wrong, and he regrets it; he tries to make amends whenever possible. If he steals from someone, he secretly puts money in a collection plate the next day. If he sees someone in trouble, he may turn away, but then finds himself returning to help anyway (unlike the Heroic Hero, who immediately steps into the fray). The most important difference between Anti-Heroes and Flawed Heroes is that the Flawed Hero seeks Redemption; he *wants* to do the right thing, but he either hasn't mustered up enough Fortitude yet or Fate conspires against him. When you are a Flawed Hero, you constantly do little acts of good to make up for your failings in other things. A good example of a Flawed Hero is Harry Flashman (from George MacDonald Fraser's wonderful *Flashman* series).

Heroines

Although they always espouse the same high Principles of Heroes, Heroines come in slightly different packages (as befits their feminine natures). In the Victorian tradition, their natures are somewhat more refined and their methods a bit less direct (although that doesn't stop any of them from picking up a revolver and brandishing it with gusto whenever the need arises). And you can, of course, always elect to play a Heroine cut from the Hero mold instead: a Heroic Heroine like Marianne. Heroines come in four principle types:

The Innocent Heroine: This lady is a heroine because she is, at heart, an innocent. She's good because she knows no other way to be. She's honest, forthright, friendly and ladylike. And almost always beautiful. Good examples of this type are Lucy from *Dracula* or Princess Flavia of *Prisoner of Zenda*.

The Clever Heroine: Wit, brilliance and charm are the hallmarks of this heroine. She knows the ways of the world; she can flirt, more than hold her own in conversation, and is well-versed in the manners, mores and fashions of the time. Yet she is also kind, honest and determined to have Justice done. A good example of a Clever Heroine is Irene Adler from *A Scandal in Bohemia*.

The Tragic Heroine: Not the same thing as the Tragic Hero, the Tragic Heroine has had a great Wrong done upon her; her husband has been killed, her family fortunes dashed, or her personal life ruined. Yet she continues to do Right with quiet fortitude and patience, despite her losses. She is noble and honorable. A good example of the Tragic Heroine might be *Madame Bovary*.

The Fallen Heroine: The woman Wronged. Or the woman with a scandalous past: a divorce, a lover, or possibly an illegitimate child. Even with all Society looking down at her or whispering behind her back, she still follows her principles and does the Right Thing. Like the Flawed Hero, the Fallen Heroine wants to be Redeemed, to be accepted by society again after her misfortune. Good examples of Fallen Heroines are the Countess Olenska from *Age of Innocence* or the mysterious Countess from *Seven Percent Solution*.

Villains

Villains. The Guys in the Black Hats. Mustachioed baddies who are Evil Incarnate. To the black-and-white world of Steam Age literature, Villainy exists to be opposed and punished by the Heroes whenever it raises its ugly head, begad! Boo! Hiss!

But not all Victorian baddies are "Snidley Whiplashes," cackling fiendishly over the unpaid rent or tying the Heroine to the railway tracks. Most are urbane, dangerous foes with implacable wills and great ambitions that go far beyond getting the Deed to the farm. They can even be likable, in that way that great Evil can sometimes be very attractive to flirt with. There are two basic types of Villains: the **Honorable** and the **Dishonorable**.

An **Honorable Villain** is just as dangerous as a Dishonorable one, but he's got a few ethics. He will always try to marry or form a permanent relationship

with a Heroine he is threatening with a Fate Worse Than Death. He will never kill a Hero when he is unconscious or unprepared, preferring to capture him openly and hold him in Durance Vile. He will not stoop to torture. An Honorable Villain will also avoid harming innocents if possible, as long as he is convinced they are truly blameless. An Honorable Villain's motives are rarely monetary; they desire Power, Revenge or to Avenge themselves upon the world. However, an Honorable Villain can be Redeemed if Shown the Error of His Evil Ways. Examples of an Honorable Villain might be Captain Nemo, Robur the Conqueror, Count von Bismarck or Duke Black Michael of *Prisoner of Zenda*.

The **Dishonorable Villain** has no such scruples. He will torture or kill a helpless Hero. He will take liberties and "have his way" with any Heroine he has at his mercy. He doesn't care about innocents. His motivations are usually monetary in nature, occasionally tempered by sadism or revenge. And he cannot be Redeemed; he must be, regrettably, Destroyed or Imprisoned. Examples of a Dishonorable Villain would be Fu Manchu, Professor Moriarty, Colonel Augustus Moran ("*The most dangerous man in all England, Watson.*"), the sorcerer Aleister Crowley or Count Dracula.

Supporting Characters

Supporting Characters are all the other people who fill in the background of a Scene. They are the shopkeepers you buy things from, the policeman on the streetcorner, the thugs who accost the Heroes in the alley, and the assorted people who make up the background cast of any drama.

The Henchman or Lieutenant: A junior Villain in training. He works with or for the Villain for his own purposes, and may betray him to achieve his own goals. The Henchman is rarely honorable, and seldom redeemable. A good example of a Henchman or Lieutenant would be Rupert von Hentzau of *Prisoner of Zenda*.

The Innocent: Like the Innocent Heroine, the Innocent is a good person somehow threatened by the Insidious Peril or Fiendish Plot. Innocents exist so that the Heroes can build up enough Moral Rectitude to hunt down the Evildoers and make them pay.

The Stalwart Friend: Always loyal, friendly, and none too bright. He's there to lend a hand when danger strikes, and is often a dead shot with a pistol. A good example of this type is Dr. Watson from the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Servants, Shopkeepers and the Help: Behind the scenes of Steam Age life are the hundreds of faceless shopkeepers, maids, butlers and so on that keep things running.

The Law: In the person of the gendarme, guard or bobby on the corner, the Law represents the forces of official order and justice. There are doggedly clever Detectives to seek out Evildoers, brave and sturdy Policemen to bring them to justice, and stern Judges to pass sentence upon them.

The Lady in Peril: An innocent Lady, threatened by blackmail or worse. A staple of the melodramatic genre, constantly needing rescue from slavers, drug fiends, Masterminds or criminal riffraff.

The Mysterious Woman: The Woman with a Past: a shadowy secret you must struggle to uncover. But she guards her mystery well, and the cost of discovery could be deadly. A good example (although a *little* out of period) might be the notorious spy Mata Hari.

Assorted Thugs and Criminal Riffraff: The assistants of the Henchman and the Villain, or just men and women of low morals and an easy penchant for violence. Rough characters: the denizens of the slums of the New European underworld, with ready reciprocators and the urge to use them in the pursuit of criminality!

Got the idea now? Good, because it's time to move onto the next step: creating a Dramatic Character!

"I never kill
where I
have
kissed"

—Attributed to Rupert
von Hentzau

"You have
undone
me! I am
lost!"

—Lady Cecilia Ashburton

"It is not
cold
which
makes me shiver ... It is fear ...
it is terror."

—From *The Speckled Band*

“You Fiend!
You’ll not
get away
with this out-
rage! Even
now, as we
speak, my asso-
ciates are
preparing to
destroy your
Infernal
Creation and
undo your foul
plan!”

—Inspector Algernon
Montanard of the Sûreté

Q: What is a “Dramatic Character?”

A: To quote the Immortal Bard, “*All the world’s a Stage and all the men and women merely Players.*” If so, this is your hour upon the Stage.

The great Victorian Poet, Robert Browning, described a *Dramatic Persona* (or Character) as a role that a writer steps into for the duration of a poem, play or story. As a Player in a *Castle Falkenstein Adventure Entertainment*, you will too will become a writer, creating the characters who will, if only for an few hours, step out upon the Stage. Your task will be to create a really great character so that when it’s your turn, your performance will be a truly memorable one.

Q: How Do I Create a “Dramatic Character?”

A: That’s the fun part. The first step is to take a look at the Sample Characters on page 145. These are all examples of typical inhabitants of the world of *Castle Falkenstein*. These examples are there to give you a feel for how to make your Dramatic Character properly Steam Age. Besides a Description, the Samples include useful things like suggesting what the Character’s strongest Suits (or Abilities) might be, what they might have among their personal Possessions, what they might be writing in their Journals or Diaries, and lastly, reasons why they might be travelling with the other Characters.

Remember; these examples should serve as guides, not absolutes! You should feel free to alter, amend or otherwise change these characters to match your personal vision as much as you and the Host of your Game agree—or even create new ones!

A Few Dramatic Characters

Here are just a few Possible Dramatic Characters you might wish to play in an Entertainment. They are just a few of the various types of Steam Age personalities I've encountered in my travels. I've also described what I'd consider to be their "strongest suits" (things they should be good at), the (free) possessions they're most likely to have with them, a bit about what might be found in the typical Diary they might keep, and lastly, what reasons they might have for being involved in an adventure.

Feel free to come up with your own variations if you're historically minded. I'm not saying by any means that every Hussar is the same as any other, but this will give you an idea of what's out there. And don't forget that these types aren't mutually exclusive; I've met Noble Adventuresses (like Marianne) and a few Writing Physicians (like John Watson) as well.

Adventuress

You soon realized that there was more than one way for a "mere woman" to get ahead in this "man's" world, and that was to break the rules. So you hitched up your skirts and mastered the skills of sword and revolver instead of the flirt and the giggle. You've fought in wars, commanded warships, and can ride, fence and fight as well (or better) than any man. You also take your pleasures where and when you find them, and no social conventions stand in your way.

- **Strong Suits:** Fencing, Marksmanship, Charisma
- **Possessions:** Sword, brace of two pepperbox revolvers, a fast horse, a man's uniform tailored to show off your figure, and a couple of nice dresses for those moments when you're not on the road.
- **In Your Diary:** Your Adventures in the Wide World, with names of lovers, descriptions of your battles, your greatest challenges, and a list of your Careful Investments that you plan to live on after you Retire.
- **Why You're Here:** You could just be looking for adventure. You may have agreed to work with the others to get vengeance against a mutual Nemesis. There

could be money involved, or a chance to prove that you're as good as any man.

Anarchist

Since you first entered the University you've known the truth: Man was truly meant to be free of the oppressive corruption of petty Laws and Regulations!

To the accomplishment of this noble end, you have dedicated your life to striving to unseat Governments and Monarchies all over the world. Your weapons are many: the Pamphlet and the Book to spread your message to those who have ears to hear it; the Revolver and the Bomb to destroy those who oppose you. One day all men will be free from Tyranny—you shall see to that!

- **Strong Suits:** Marksmanship, Education, Charisma.

- **Possessions:** Sword, revolver, cape, two bombs, a satchel full of tracts, and a copy of Marx's *Das Kapital* for inspiration.

- **In Your Diary:** Lists of Anarchist cells and their locations, detailed plans for Assassinations, and vague ramblings about Anarchist/Marxist theory.

- **Why You're Here:** The cause of Anarchy must be advanced on all fronts! Perhaps you can enlist the others to your side. Perhaps you have a mutual enemy; after all, isn't Prussia one of the most regimented governments around?

Or, who would suspect in this mundane little group that one of you was a dangerous Anarchist? Certainly not the Tsar's Agents!

Brownie

Aye, and you'd be a fine one if you kept to yourself a-playing in the fields all day! A Brownie's life is better spent doing great labors, playing great jokes and setting things right about the house or farm. Behind the scenes of course; it would never do to have one of those great lumping mortals following you around as you worked your miracles, now would it? Next, they'd be leaving you money rather than a bit of cheese and a bowl of milk!



• **Strong Suits:** Marksmanship (with an elfshot bow), Perception, Stealth.

• **Faerie Power:** *Perform a Great Work.* With this power, you are granted the ability to do the labor of many men in a single night. The number of men is based upon your level of Power, and the task must be accomplished from sundown to sunup (that's the tradition).

• **Possessions:** A suit of mouse fur, birchbark, or leaves. If you spend more time in the cities than the fields, you may have a suit of randomly mismatched doll's clothes that were stolen (never given to you). A slingshot and a bag full of elfshot ammunition.

• **In Your Diary:** Lots of elaborate riddles, practical jokes, and silly stories. You're not much on writing: You're only twelve inches tall and the pens are often larger than you are.

• **Why You're Here:** Humans are just a lot more fun than the stately Lords of Faerie. You can play practical jokes or help them, and they don't try to blast you to atomies in return. Perhaps there's one among the group you've chosen to bedevil or help, although you're careful not to let anyone see you. Or perhaps you've decided to tag along and to raise hob with anyone the group encounters, secretly, of course.

Calculation Engineer

The future is in Calculation Science, and with it, Mankind can master the world! You've studied and mastered the skills of the Calculation Engineer, that rare breed that builds and maintains the mighty Engines that shape Science and Industry. Dr. Babbage and his disciple Lady Ada Lovelace are your idols, for they have singlehandedly brought about this revolution of mind over gross matter. One day, perhaps, under their guidance, Mankind will be able to live in a perfect mathematical world entirely created by the agency of the Calculation Engine, a Utopia where all things will become possible through the agency of Virtual Realism!

• **Strong Suits:** Education, Perception, Tinkering.

• **Possessions:** Automatic Abacus, Engine repair tools, a copy of Dr. Babbage's *Manual of Engine Maintenance* and a copy of Lady Ada's *Theorems and Practices of Calculation*.

• **In Your Diary:** Several Jaccard program cards you have written, notes on the operation of Calculation Engines, some new designs to improve same, quotes from Lovelace, Babbage and Pascal.

• **Why You're Here:** Calculation Engines are *everywhere* these days. And if they aren't, they should be! Perhaps you're a Journeyman, looking for new applications of Calculation Science? Or perhaps you travel Europa installing or repairing Engines, or even thwart-

ing others who misuse the Power of Calculation Science in their evil schemes!

Consulting Detective

The game's afoot, and you're on the case! Even before you left school, you learned to hone your perceptive and intuitive abilities far beyond other men. Now you apply those skills to the detection and thwarting of Crime, wherever it rears its ugly head. The cases you take are only the most challenging, to better enhance your deductive powers: those that baffle Scotland Yard and the Sureté alike. The Criminal Mastermind, Foreign Agent and Gentleman Thief are your sworn adversaries, and you will not rest until they have been put down!

• **Strong Suits:** Education, Marksmanship, Perception.

• **Possessions:** Revolver, magnifying glass, notebook, and small laboratory case with fingerprinting powders, sampling jars and chemicals.

• **In Your Diary:** Details on obscure tobacco types, notes on various cases in progress, names of informants and sardonic comments on fumbling police procedures.

• **Why You're Here:** The Forces of Evil are everywhere! Perhaps one of the others is involved in a current case, or holds an important clue. Maybe you suspect one of the others of being a dangerous Criminal or Mastermind, or are protecting them from an unknown assailant. Or perhaps they can help you to defeat your Nemesis, the evil Napoleon of Crime himself?

Dashing Hussar

You're no mere soldier; you're one of the elite military officers of the King/Queen/Empire! A dashing cavalryman whose skill on a fast horse is unmatched, you're also a feared duelist and marksman. Your regiment is the best of the best, and you strut your stuff resplendently in a dazzling uniform, your glittering weapons at the ready to challenge any insult to honor or bravely accomplish any mission required by your commanders.

• **Strong Suits:** Athletics, Fencing, Marksmanship.

• **Possessions:** Saber, revolver, rifle (in saddle), a fast horse and a flashy uniform in your regimental colors.

• **In Your Diary:** Addresses of your many affairs of the heart, appointments for duels and assignations, tales of your daring exploits.

• **Why You're Here:** Your country calls and you obey! Perhaps you're on a secret mission for the Empire! Or one of the others may be an old messmate who's asked for your help. Or maybe one of the ladies is very attractive and since you're on leave right now ...

Demimondaine

Certainly, the Adventuress may be right: You needn't marry a man to get ahead in this world. But why get dirty and wear tacky clothes while doing it? You've learned to make men your playthings, bending their silly, puny wills to accomplish your every whim. With a pout, a smile, and a well-placed word, you can overturn the thrones of New Europa, or shape the course of empires as well as any diplomat. Your lovers are legion, your beauty legend, and all New Europa (the male half at least) is prostrate at your dainty feet.

- **Strong Suits:** Charisma, Comeliness, Connections.
- **Possessions:** Dagger, Derringer, a steamer trunk full of gorgeous Worth originals from Paris, jewelry and makeup cases.
- **In Your Diary:** Names of your many affairs of the heart, appointments for assignations, random Fast Set gossip and the occasional Top Secret revealed by a lover during a romantic interlude.
- **Why You're Here:** Where there's action and intrigue, there's an opportunity for a smart and enterprising woman. Who knows what valuable secrets you may discover with this group? And some of the other characters may be quite wealthy or handsome. Who knows what could turn up?

Diplomat

While others study history, you are among the privileged few who will make history, plying your skills of diplomacy to shape the events of the day. You travel the world on sensitive missions for Sovereign and Country, protecting your nation's interests abroad, negotiating Treaties, stopping (or starting) Wars, and engaging in Foreign Intrigues. Your missions determine the outcome of nations; your weapons are wit, courage and style. You succeed, of course, admirably.

- **Strong Suits:** Connections, Education, Perception.
- **Possessions:** Sword cane, revolver, dispatch case, ministerial portfolio and papers, diplomatic code book.
- **In Your Diary:** Addresses and appointments, notes on Treaties and Agreements, information on other Diplomats and their Mistresses.
- **Why You're Here:** Perhaps your Government has assigned the others to your retinue for a secret Diplomatic Mission? Maybe one of the group is suspected of being a courier for a foreign power. Or perhaps they will make an excellent cover story for the secret negotiations you hope to pursue while abroad?

Dragon Lord

Cat-eyed, slender and immensely tall, for hundreds of years you have periodically come down from your mountain home to walk among Humans in the

manlike form you take for such journeys. Sometimes, it's to gather items for your Collections; the centerpiece of a Dragon's life is maintaining his personal museum of artifacts and wonders. Other times, you seek a mate; it's much easier to locate and seduce a willing Human virgin these days than in the past when you had to flame a village or two to obtain a proper female tribute. Besides, you've gained a taste for fine wines and cuisines, and featherbeds are preferable to stone cave floors. And since you never forget anything or anyone, you've learned to treasure the friends and experiences you've enjoyed over your many human lifetimes.

- **Strong Suits:** Perception, Physique, Sorcery.
- **Dragon Power:** *Firecast.* With this power, you have the ability to hurl great blasts of fire from your mouth (in draconic form) whenever desired. The fire is, of course, a spell; you do not actually require fuel to generate it and it actually never touches your body. You are also able to shapeshift between your pterodactyl-like Dragon form and your human form at will.
- **Possessions:** Fine clothing cut to your very tall human body; capes and cloaks to disguise your form while shapeshifting; a steamer trunk to carry things you have collected over the last few years.
- **In Your Diary:** Lists of items you still must gather for your Collection; notes on possible Human mates; spells you have learned from other mages, and observations about people you have met; travel notes on the best restaurants and hotels.
- **Why You're Here:** As a Dragon, you have an interest in maintaining your Collection; completeness is everything, and determines your status among your kind. If there is a Gentleman Thief, Rogue or Adventuress in the group, perhaps you can hire them to gather items for you? You're also fascinated by human behavior: It's so illogical. Perhaps you'll travel with this group and observe them for a while. Or perhaps one of the females would make a good mate?

Dwarf Craftsman

Certainly, no one can dispute that your people are the greatest craftsmen in all the Worlds. But century after century of making clocks, enchanted swords and hero's armor can become tiresome. You also know that unless you can become a Master, you'll never earn your Second Name. So you've set out into the world of Men to find employment. Perhaps you can come up with a better mousetrap, or even invent a new type of Magick like Rhyme Enginemaster? It's worth a try, and besides, Humans make the best beer around. Even a Dwarf can't improve on that!

- **Strong Suits:** Fisticuffs, Physique
- **Faerie Power:** *Love of Metal.* With this power, you

are granted the ability to shape metal to any shape you desire, to create metalwork of astounding intricacy and beauty. You have no other Faerie Powers; Glamour and Etherealness are denied to you as the price for being able to work Cold Iron. You are also especially resistant to the effects of Magick in all its forms.

- **Possessions:** Toolbox full of saws, hammers, wrenches and awls; work coveralls, heavy hobnailed boots, greasy leather cap and work apron.

- **In Your Diary:** Sketches of designs for bridges, steam engines, automotives, etc., scrawled with ideas for improvements; notes on leverages and gearings; addresses of other Dwarfs you know; human inventions you thought were particularly interesting.

- **Why You're Here:** There's only one way to win that all-important Second Name as a Dwarf, and that's to become a Master at some kind of craftsmanship. Maybe you can work with these humans and come up with something that will earn you your new Name? Or maybe you're already working with (or for) one of them?

Explorer

You've travelled from the snowcapped mountains of High Tibet to the wilds of Darkest Africa. Your goal: to leave no section of the Earth unknown to Man; to uncover all of its secret places, lost cities, hidden temples and fabled treasures. Your writings grace the pages of the popular Press, your learned papers fill the Archives of the Geographical Society, and your exploits are the stuff that dime novelists can only dream of. You travel in the footsteps of Burton, Stanley and Challenger: an intrepid voyager into the Unknown.

- **Strong Suits:** Marksmanship, Athletics, Courage.

- **Possessions:** Huge fighting knife, rifle, 100 feet of rope, backpack with tent, messkit.

- **In Your Diary:** Careful notes of plants and animals you have seen; plans for temples and lost cities; maps of the wilderness; native folklore you have heard; sketches of idols and artifacts; notes on where you have travelled.

- **Why You're Here:** Perhaps you returned from your travels to find one of the others (a sibling/friend/spouse/lover) has fallen into this dangerous crowd?

Or that one of the group has called upon you for your skills with weapons and danger? Perhaps one of the others holds a clue to a missing treasure or lost city among his personal effects?

Faerie Lord/Lady (Daoine Sidhe)

Not for you the never-changing world of the Faerie Veil, with its stylized Court and unending perfection. You hunger for the Mortal world, where love is spontaneous and full of passion, where lovers have real flaws, and where things are never predictable. You're a traveller and observer, but you also enjoy trying every new sensation, whether it's a new food, an unfamiliar song, or an intriguing new friendship.

On this side of the Veil, you truly feel alive—perhaps you will even get involved in real danger and risk your immortality against a Cold Iron blade!

- **Strong Suits:** Connections, Comeliness, Perception.

- **Faerie Power:** *Enchantment.* With this power, you are granted the ability to bend the wills of mortals to your bidding, to charm and enchant them, or to make them fall in love with you.

- **Possessions:** Faerie Silver blade, dagger, flowing Irish-style cape and impeccable clothes.

- **In Your Diary:** Notes on human behavior; drawings of human lovers, interesting scenery and animals you plan to recreate in Faerie for entertainment; songs, poetry and snatches of music you have heard and enjoyed.

- **Why You're Here:** It's so *boring* in Faerie, where anything you desire is instantly yours. And Faerie women/men are so predictably perfect, unlike temperamental and exciting Humans! Here's a chance to risk everything for an unpredictable adventure and romance!

Gentleman Thief

By day, you travel in the same circles as the Nobles and the Gentlemen, where wit and sophistication are the measure of the man. But at night, you slip away from the glittering salons and take up your true calling: Grand Larceny. You're the master of the second story, a high stakes catburglar who preys only on the wealthiest and most exclusive of victims. You can charm an heiress out of her diamond choker or crack a safe with equal aplomb, and never lose your sense of style in the



bargain. From the Star of the Raj to Lady Astor's pearls, you steal the best to prove you're the best.

- **Strong Suits:** Athletics, Charisma, Stealth.
- **Possessions:** Black garments and mask, 100 feet of rope and grapple, a life preserver, lockpicks that will open most doors, and several stylish suits for your social engagements.
- **In Your Diary:** Plans for the many estates and townhouses you visit during the day; notes on routines of household servants and guards; lists of associates who can help you; useful gossip.
- **Why You're Here:** What better way to disguise your true motives than by joining an unsuspecting group of people? Perhaps one is a wealthy Gentlewoman with an unguarded jewelbox? Maybe you concealed the ill-gotten gains of your last exploit on one of the other players and now must recover them?

Gentleman/Woman

You are the bastion of the Empire in England, the maintainers of *gemütlichkeit* in Vienna, the masters and mistresses of Style and Propriety throughout New Europa. Frequenter only the most select Clubs and associating with only the Right people, your dress is always impeccable and reflects breeding and good taste; your entertainments are refined and educated. You are known for your sense of honor and fair play, and your word is your bond. Although you may occasionally run with the "fast" crowd, you are always careful to "keep up the side" and "do the right thing." You pay your gambling debts, don't gossip to outsiders, and stay out of the wrong bedrooms (at least around the servants).

- **Strong Suits:** Charisma, Connections, Exchequer.
- **Possessions:** Cane, sword cane, or a small ladies' derringier, a proper wardrobe of well-tailored suits or Paris gowns, case of calling cards.
- **In Your Diary:** Addresses of close friends and affairs of the heart; appointments for assignations and business; your Solicitor and Broker's addresses; random gossip and personal observations.
- **Why You're Here:** It's so boring making the social rounds. Perhaps this group will be more ... daring? Maybe one of them might make a discrete and interesting assignation? Or perhaps one of the group is an old

friend who has fallen into bad company, and only you can lead him back to the right path.

Inventor

As a professional (or amateur) Inventor, you know that the man or woman who builds a better vermin trap will certainly have a path beaten to his laboratory door! And you've got just the idea that will do the trick! Certainly, it's taken months, perhaps years, of diligent work and privation, but you're almost done with your latest invention, and with only a little more effort, will be able to bring it to an astounded and grateful world. Of course, more funding would be preferable, for even with your first few successful Patents under your belt, you still haven't quite been able to finance all the equipment you need.

- **Strong Suits:** Education, Tinkering, Perception.
- **Possessions:** Large satchel containing assorted tools and equipment; shabby, voluminous Notebook containing detailed plans of your Invention (which you're in the process of constructing); partially filled-out Royal Patent Forms.
- **In Your Diary:** Notes on your Invention; lists of things you need to buy to finish your work; complex and incomprehensible formulas that came to you in the night.

• **Why You're Here:** To finish your Invention, you must gather together the proper financing! Perhaps one of these kind gentlemen/ladies can be convinced to advance you the funds you need. Or perhaps they might be interested in becoming a partner in bringing your Invention to market? They may even be a fellow inventor!

Journalist

The story's the thing, gents, and when there's a story to be had, no one's better at winnowing it out than you! From the haunts of High Society at Marienbad and Cowes, to the dark alleys of Berlin and Soho, you're on the spot, digging up the dirt and taking it to Fleet Street and the presses as fast as you can travel. Certainly your stories about the follies and frivolities of Society don't make you popular with the Fast Set, but with their scandalous ways, they could profit



from a little discomfiture. And you like to think your exposés on Government officials and Social Issues are just your way of making sure Corruption and Injustice don't go unopposed. It's your job to keep the Public informed, and by God, you'll do it no matter what your detractors throw against you!

- **Strong Suits:** Connections, Perception, Stealth.
- **Possessions:** Life preserver or cane, listening tube, an *Abercrombie's Automatic Recorder* (see pages 52, 208), box camera.
- **In Your Diary:** Notes on informants; gossip; stories; notes from the unfinished novel you hope to Make Your Fortune with.
- **Why You're Here:** News is where you make it. With a motley crew like this, you're sure to unearth something interesting! Maybe one of the others will make a good subject for a story (or even your novel). Or perhaps you've heard a few juicy rumors about one of the others that you plan to investigate.

Mad Scientist

They called you *mad* at the University, just because you chose to challenge the limited thinking of your peers! They told you there were things Man Was Not Meant To Know. But you know better: There are no places that the blinding light of Intellect cannot illuminate! You alone dare to advance to the very edges of Science: to create Life, to master Invisibility; to release the hidden Dual Nature within each of us! No frontier is to be denied you— *Science will out!*

- **Strong Suits:** Education, Tinkering, Perception.
- **Possessions:** Revolver (or swordcane), laboratory smock, thick, locked notebook containing your Laboratory Notes for your Creation (which you're working on).
- **In Your Diary:** Notes on where to get chemicals and supplies; passages from books in the Royal Library of Sciences, scribbled ideas on your current project; excerpts from current monographs written by rivals and enemies (with your refutations scribbled on them).
- **Why You're Here:** To continue your work, you'll need others to help you: those with money, connections or an interest in the same areas of Science. Perhaps you went to the University with one of the others, or were involved with one of them romantically. Or perhaps one of the group is a professional rival and you're going to make sure of what he's up to!

Mastermind

Dark and brooding, you have turned away from the world and its foul, corrupting influences. Instead, you have focused your great intellect towards

creating a great Infernal Device with which you hope to gain vengeance upon those who opposed you. All of your efforts have been bent to the realization of your ultimate Goal and its release upon the unsuspecting, wicked world, and you will not be denied your day!

- **Strong Suits:** Charisma, Education, Tinkering.
- **Possessions:** Revolver (or swordcane), huge cape (or fantastic uniform), a thick, locked book containing detailed plans of your Infernal Device, which you're in the process of constructing (see pages 208 through 215 for details).
- **In Your Diary:** Crazy, mad rants about your enemies, plans for using your Device to gain vengeance; wildly Utopian visions of the future; Master Plans to Rule the World.
- **Why You're Here:** To accomplish your Master Plan, you must first gather together a band of allies! After all, who will help you run your Infernal Device when it's completed? Or even help you finance it? This is a good way to find the others who will Understand your Cause. And wouldn't that attractive other person in the group be perfect by your side once you've achieved your Goal?

Nobleman/Woman

You are the inheritor of a proud name and a noble lineage: In your history are the kings, queens and princes of the New European aristocracy, as well as vast estates and honorable titles granted to your ancestors through generations of service to Crown and Country. To you, the family name is all, and you've preserved it intact even if your financial fortunes have fallen on hard times. Although some of your social circle are part of the Fast Set, you still avoid any breath of scandal, trusting in discretion and honor to preserve the Aristocracy against the *arrivistes* that lurk outside the gates.

- **Strong Suits:** Connections, Education, Exchequer.
- **Possessions:** Sword cane, sword (rare) or a small revolver, a steamer trunk full of expensive but tasteful clothes, a personal carriage or automotive, jewelry and makeup cases and least a half dozen Worth of Paris exclusive dresses (if female).
- **In Your Diary:** Addresses of close friends and affairs; appointments for assignations and business; your Solicitor and Banker's addresses, random gossip and personal observations.
- **Why You're Here:** One of the others could be a fallen sibling, intent on ruining the family name. Or even an errant spouse or lover. Or perhaps by working with the others, you hope to restore your family's good name and fortunes.

Performer

Acting, opera singing, interpretive dance: These are the realms in which you excel. More than a mere dancehall chanteuse or actor, your talents are applauded by audiences across New Europa (or so you hope), and your reputation as a skilled performer grows with each performance. You have entertained both aristocrats and peasants, lending your own special interpretation to your chosen performance style, be it opera, drama, or ballet. Now all that you require is a new and more glorious stage upon which to display your talents.

- **Strong Suits:** Charisma, Connections, Performance.
- **Possessions:** Sword cane or dagger for protection, dramatic cape that swirls just right, steamer trunk of costumes, extravagant clothes, wigs and makeup. And a pocket volume of Shakespeare's plays, of course.
- **In Your Diary:** Clippings of reviews, photographs of your performances; notes on theaters and performance halls; references for engagements and invitations to Court.
- **Why You're Here:** The Season's over, and you're between performances. Perhaps this group would be an interesting diversion? Is one of the others a lover or friend? Or perhaps by tagging along, you can convince one of the better connected members of the group to finance your next theatrical debut?

Physician

With your medical bag in hand and your Hippocratic Oath firmly in mind, you chose to embark upon a lifelong mission to heal the infirm and sickly, using the most advanced technologies available. As a modern physician, you know better than most that we live in an age of scientific miracles. Already chloroform and carbolic acid have revolutionized the practice of Medicine throughout the civilized world, and new applications of Pasteur's "germ" theory will soon make infectious disease a thing of the past.

- **Strong Suits:** Education, Physician, Perception.
- **Possessions:** Your old service revolver, a medical bag (complete with amputation saws, scalpels, bandages, carbolic acid and chloroform), and several recent copies of *The Lancet*.
- **In Your Diary:** Lists of daily appointments and patient addresses, names of colleagues to consult, notes on difficult cases, and (if you happen to live with a Consulting Detective) parts of that story you plan to submit to the *Strand* magazine.
- **Why You're Here:** Things have been slow in the practice, and after Afghanistan, you crave excitement. Perhaps one of the party is an old friend or fellow lodger? Or perhaps one of the party (a wife, husband

or fiancée) has fallen into the coils of a desperate situation you hope to free her from?

Pixie

You sleep in a rosebud with a petal for your coverlet; you sup nectar and dew in the moonlight. You also take a great delight in harassing mortals, pricking them with your tiny swords and strewing their paths with glamours and illusions. Sometimes, you can be helpful, especially where matters of romance are concerned, guiding young lovers over obstacles with your Faerie powers. But you also dislike unfaithfulness and can make an adulterer's life a merry hell. In short, you have a lot of fun at humans' expense, but since you're only three inches tall, very fast and mostly ethereal, you usually get away with it. Besides, you're cute.

- **Strong Suits:** Etherealness, Glamour, Stealth.
- **Faerie Power:** *Love Charm*. With this power, you are granted the ability to cause others, either mortal or Faerie, to fall into a consuming passion for another person.
- **Possessions:** Brief, revealing clothing of mist, flowers, or fine Faerie chainmail; a slim, hatpin-sized sword of Faerie gold, or an elfshot bow made from a stalk of thistle. You are always surrounded by a dazzling light.
- **In Your Diary:** If you keep one at all, lots of accounts of scandalous gossip at the Seelie Courts; interesting gossip you've heard from humans; and excerpts of prose and poetry faintly reminiscent of Regency romance novels ("... her bodice heaved with anticipation of his enfolding arms.").
- **Why You're Here:** You may be upon a spying mission for a Lord or Lady of the Courts, observing a member of the party. Maybe you're involved in another character's romantic life, or simply befriending (bothering?) him because he seemed interesting?

Rogue

Some call you a cad and a bounder, but you call yourself a realist, an honest blackguard in a world of sanctimonious hypocrites. You pride yourself in the skills of your trade: a natural talent with cards and dice, gambling and the ruination of the fair sex. You've no compunctions at cheating a smug gentleman out of his stake at the baccarat table, or seducing his unfaithful wife while he's with his mistress. Like a shark, you prowl the waters where the Fast Set frolic, looking for victims, amorous conquests and wealthy lovers to support you.

- **Strong Suits:** Charisma, Comeliness, Connections.
- **Possessions:** Revolver or swordcane, several expensive suits, a deck of marked cards, loaded dice, and a skeleton key that will open most hotel rooms.
- **In Your Diary:** Names of your many affairs,

including tasty items of blackmail, appointments for duels and assignations, bragging tales about your conquests at the gaming table and in the boudoir.

- **Why You're Here:** There's always a chance for easy money and fame when a group of adventurers gets together. Or at least blackmail. And some of the women in the group are quite attractive. Your Eye for the Main Chance has been caught by the sparkle of Opportunity.

Scientist

Not for you the undisciplined experimentation of the Mad Scientist. As a Member of the Academy of Sciences, you understand the true value of research, study and sober reflection over harebrained theory. Your papers are regular features of the Professional Journals, and you fancy you've added a sizable amount of solid research to your area of study. Besides your research studies, you also take time to teach classes at the University and to sponsor graduate work that encourages impressionable young minds of the future to follow the proper path of Science. You know that true scholarship requires patience, discipline, and, above all, due respect for the scientific method!

- **Strong Suits:** Education, Tinkering, Perception.
- **Possessions:** Cane or walking stick, microscopic lens, coat with many pockets for carrying specimens and instruments.
- **In Your Diary:** Notes on ongoing scientific studies; observations on Natural and Physical History you have recently made; excerpts from current monographs written by rivals and co-workers (with your comments scribbled on them).
- **Why You're Here:** What could bring such an odd group together? Perhaps as a student of humanity, you should observe closer. Or is one of the others a student or colleague who's fallen in with a bad crowd? A little field research in progress? Or perhaps one of the others is a friend or relative needing your help?

Secret Agent

Leave the Diplomat and the Hussar to boast of their patriotic accomplishments for Sovereign and Country—you're the one who really gets the job done. When the Diplomat's secret papers need to get recovered, or the Mastermind's Infernal Device must be located and destroyed, you're the (wo)man of the hour, with your stealth, charisma and derring-do. You've also got a pocketful of hidden devices, at least ten secret identities, and contacts worldwide to help you accomplish your dangerous missions and save the day.

- **Strong Suits:** Athletics, Marksmanship, Stealth.
- **Possessions:** Sword cane with assorted Gadgets,

revolver, code book, pocket watch with assorted Gadgets.

- **In Your Diary:** Addresses of your many affairs of the heart; code names of contacts in other countries; tales of your exploits. (in code, of course!)
- **Why You're Here:** Perhaps one of the others is a fellow Agent, or the Agent of a Rival Power? Or an old friend who needs your skills? Or perhaps by traveling with this group, you hope to throw pursuers off the scent? You might even be protecting a member of the group from kidnap or assassination!

Soldier of Fortune

Perhaps you served with dignity and distinction, and mustered out to a retirement too quiet and too soft to be borne. Or perhaps you were marched out on the drumhead, a false accusation and a court martial ringing in your ears. Either way, since you left your regiment, your sword and skills have been for hire to the highest bidder. Your price isn't always gold; sometimes it's Love, a Cause, or a Principle as well. Wherever a fast hand with revolver and blade are called for, you'll be there, either alone, or with a stout band of like-minded companions whose hot blood hungers for action, the reek of cordite, and the clash of steel.

- **Strong Suits:** Fisticuffs, Fencing, Marksmanship,
- **Possessions:** Saber, revolver, rifle (in saddle), a fast horse and your old regimental uniform (which you keep out of sentiment).
- **In Your Diary:** Addresses of contacts and employers; names of willing men who will join you in an Adventure; bank account numbers of your fortunes hidden about the world.
- **Why You're Here:** You'll go where the money is. Perhaps you've been employed as a bodyguard or hired blade by one of the others. Or maybe you were asked to protect someone in the group by an unknown benefactor. Has an old friend or lover asked you for your help? And should an old regimental messmate call upon you for aid, can you refuse?

Steam Engineer

The world can be saved by steam, and you're the (wo)man to do it! Since you were a child, you've been fascinated by all the amazing new technologies discovered every day. But the Gem of them all is Steam: the mighty force that drives the Engines of Commerce and Industry itself! Whether employed in an automotive, an aershio, or a factory, you know that Steam is the way of Tomorrow, and you intend to bring on the future as soon as possible. As an Apprentice to the Steam Engineer's Guild, you learned

how to build the complex turbines and boilers that make up a modern steam-powered device; now, as a Journeyman, you ply your trade wherever Steam Engine Technology is employed.

- **Strong Suits:** Perception, Physique, Tinkering
- **Possessions:** A full set of Whitworth spanners (the best), a dog-eared copy of *Armstrong's Guide to Tolerances and Adjustments of Steam Fittings*, and an official Steam Engineer's Guild membership card.
- **In Your Diary:** Notes and drawings of Steam Engines; arcane formulas for boiler pressures and piston distances; improvements for current Engines; notes on new applications for Steam Power.
- **Why You're Here:** Steam is everywhere, and a Journeyman Engineer can always find work! Perhaps you're maintaining a Noble's expensive automotive, or a Calculation Engineer's Babbage Device? And even when you're not working with a spanner, you can be swinging one alongside a friend in trouble.

Wizard

While others content themselves with amassing treasures on earth, you have set yourself a higher goal. Through years of study and concentration, you have gained power in the Arts of Magick and Sorcery, until you stand a full Adeptus within your chosen Order or Brotherhood. Now you have sworn to use this Power to shape the very universe, to defend humanity against the depredations of those who follow the Dark Paths, or to remold the world to fit your Lodge's greater plans. No earthly power can oppose you now, for the true battleground exists in the Higher Realms where you reign supreme!

- **Strong Suits:** Courage, Education, Sorcery.
- **Possessions:** Revolver (or swordcane), hooded cape, a thick, locked book containing Notes on certain Spells and Preparations, and a Power Focusing Symbol of some type (ring, wand, staff or other object).
- **In Your Diary:** Arcane symbols and notes on ancient lore; information on where rare and powerful Magickal Artefacts may be found; pentagrams and numerology charts, as well as sketches of spell-knots and flux patterns; mystic runes.

- **Why You're Here:** Your scryings have told you that one or more of these people will have a great impact upon the shaping of Reality. Or perhaps you are charged with protecting, stopping or observing one of the others by the Master of your Order. You might be a freelance Sorcerer planning to use the group for your own purposes, or a follower of Light hoping to use the group to avert an Evil shaping.

Writer

You are a chronicler of humanity, recording the events of those around you and reshaping them to a pleasing turn of phrase. Whether in poetry or literature, you take what you see and create new stories for others to read and enjoy. Every person you meet is a potential character, and his life the plot of a novel. Your work may appear in only a few select literary magazines. Or you may even be serialized in popular newspapers (like the writings of Dickens). You may even engage in writing speculative fiction like Mr. Verne or mysteries like that clever American, Poe.

- **Strong Suits:** Charisma, Connections, Education.
- **Possessions:** Life preserver or cane; several notebooks with writings; typewriter or an *Abercrombie's Automatic Recorder*; lots of fountain pens.
- **In Your Diary:** Notes on your current story or poem; letters from literary friends; reviews of your works; invitations to dine out.
- **Why You're Here:** Everyone you meet could be an interesting subject to write upon. Perhaps you're fascinated by one of the other characters and want to learn more. Or perhaps events so far have intrigued you, and you wish to pursue this course further.



But That's Not All ...

Remember: These are only a few possible Dramatic Characters you may want to try. You can also experiment with real Historical Personages or even Characters from any novel set in the Victorian Age. (If your Host agrees!)

“I tell you,
no
secret is
safe
from him, no
place is beyond
his reach,
milord! His
spies are ever-
where, and he
will stop at
nothing. He
has even
employed the
very legions of
the Unliving to
kidnap innocent
people and turn
them into
mind-
controlled
agents of his
will!”

—Lady Elanora Haversham

Q: So Far, So Good. What's Next?

A: Now that you've selected or created a Dramatic Character (or DC), it's time to make that Character your own. The next step to this process is going to be to create a Diary (or Journal, if you prefer). The Diary is a logbook of the Character's lives and times in the world of the Steam Age, a storybook in which he or she is the Main Character.

You won't need anything special for a Diary, unless you really feel like it; a few sheets of binder paper will do. Of course, on this side of the Faerie Veil, everyone keeps a Diary or Journal anyway, and many people use notebooks similar to those blank books you can buy in any drugstore back Home. You may want to do the same, or even make your own book to write your Character's Story in!

Q: What Do I Use My Diary For?

A: *Castle Falkenstein* Character's Diary (or Journal) is one of the most important steps in the Character process. First, it's where you will start the Story of your Persona so far: what he or she is like, what he has been doing and where he's going next. Second, it can be used by both Players and Hosts to write down any Offstage activities that may occur between Entertainments. Lastly, a Diary is used to write down your Character's Goals and what he or she has Accomplished towards those Goals; an "Experience Log" of sorts. So grab whatever you're going to use as a Diary, a couple of pencils, and gather a few friends. It's time to start putting things together for your first Dramatic Character.

Diary Questions

The first step in starting your Diary is to ask a few important questions; questions you should answer as your Persona (not you) would. Then, you'll take all your answers and use them to create a background "story" for the Persona you've designed.

This part of the process can be done alone, but it's a lot more fun if you gather everyone who will be in the Game together for an evening and read the Questions to each other. The final part of this session can even be a "First Meeting" scenario in which the Personas all encounter each other for the first time.

The Name is ...

- **WHAT IS YOUR NAME?** Remember, your name should reflect your homeland and history. If you're from France, names like *Honoré*, *Jacques*, *Henri*, or *Lycette* might be appropriate. Prussians and Bayernese favor names like *Gustaf*, *Hans*, *Helga* and so on. Many people like to skip this step until after they've answered all the other questions first; for them, the name is the capstone of inventing their Persona and can't be done until they really know it well.

Where Do You Come From?

- **WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND WHERE DO YOU LIVE NOW?** In the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, national origins are much more important that they are in the 20th Century. Take a look at my notes (back on pages 28 through 33) for some ideas on a few of the major Steam Age nations (if the one you want isn't listed, talk to your Host and work it out between you).

Physiognomy & Physique? What Do You Look Like?

- **WHAT DO YOU LOOK LIKE?** What's your sex, height, age and other particulars like hair and eye color? While it's pretty much up to you on this one, there are a few exceptions. For example, if you're a Dwarf, you're not going to be taller than five feet tall; if you're a Dragon, you'll never be shorter than six two in human form. Pixies and Brownies are never over ten inches tall. Dwarfs have no female members, so that's not an option if you're playing one. You may also note that some of the Personalities described previously are slanted towards one sex or the other; it's not that there *aren't* female Hussars, or male Demimondaines for example, but it's a lot rarer and may involve a certain amount of explaining in your character background.

What Was Your Youth & Childhood Like?

- **DESCRIBE YOUR CHILDHOOD AND GENERAL UPBRINGING.** Did you have brothers and sisters (and if so, how many and of what sexes)? Were you legitimate or "born on the wrong side of the blanket" (a classic Victorian melodramatic plot device)? What did your parents do for a living? How did you get along (and how do you deal with each other now that you're an adult)? Were you wealthy, poor or bourgeois? Did you go to school, and if so, what kinds (public, private, military or college)? Were there any important family events or traumatic events that shaped the way you are now?



The Memoirs of Captain André LeCorbessier



In this year of Our Lord, Eighteen seventy, I take pen to paper to chronicle my adventures in the Service of King and Country, for Glory and Honor, and for My Posterity. My name is Captain Andre LeCorbessier; I am of this date serving in the Army of his Imperial Majesty, Napoleon the Third, in the capacity of a Captain of the 127th Hussars, barracked in the City of Paris.

In appearance I am tall and well-built, with brown hair and green eyes; I am told that the ladies find me attractive, although not overly so. Perhaps this is why I wear tailored military uniforms and affect a certain military swagger as befits a hussar, for I am anything but shy. My friends, in point of fact, call me bold and adventurous in the extreme, and I could not honestly deny that I am often rash and impulsive as well.

Born the second son of nine children, the offspring of a well-to-do shop owner in the city of Paris. As a child, I was considered not all that exceptional in any particular way but one: I showed a certain aptitude for the Sword, in which I was instructed by my paternal Uncle, a retired Hussar in the Grand Army of Napoleon. It was from him that I gained my fascination with all things Military, and it was on his recommendation that I entered into the exclusive Armand Military Academie in Lyon at the tender age of twelve.

Although arduous, this training served me well, for upon my sixteenth birthday, a messenger came to the Academie bearing awful news: My father had been cruelly slain by street brigands outside of his shop on the Boulevard Elysée. I returned that night to Paris, where I took up the sword offered by my aged Uncle, and set out to avenge his brother. It took me a scant few days to locate and confront his murderers, whom I promptly dispatched. To avoid the retribution of the remainder of their gang (who have become my personal Nemeses and who seek me out everywhere), I promptly entered the Emperor's service and took assignment in Marseille for the next two years.

My Virtues are my unflagging honesty, my Vices perhaps an overfondness for rough battle and red wine. I favor fine clothes, good wine and well-prepared food, while I abhor close-minded gossip and dishonest talk. If I were pressed, I would have to say that above all I value that honesty which is my trademark; next to that, the well-worn saber and pistol given to me by my Uncle (who is my fondest confidant and mentor). Other than this familial bond, I have no other ties, not even a wife or long-time mistress, having devoted my main interests and skills towards my career. To this end, I have become an great fencer, a good horseman [Athletics] and fighter [Fisticuffs]. Along the way, I have also become relatively good in the Social Graces, having been favored with a good Charisma besides. Perhaps my weakest point is that I am Poor in the Arcane Arts, but as a simple soldier, I have never put much stock in wizard's things to begin with.

My Goals in life are simple: to command my own company [Professional], to become recognized for my soldierly skills [Social] and to one day meet and marry a lady of refinement and breeding [Romantic]. Thus, with these Goals before me, I have returned to Paris upon this day of June 5th, 1870, to take up post with the 127th, and, God willing, to at last make an end of the ruthless gang of criminals that hounds me wherever I travel.

What Are Your Virtues? And Your Vices?

• **WHAT ARE YOUR BEST QUALITIES?** Describe the best qualities about yourself (example: honesty, courage, friendliness). **NEXT, DESCRIBE YOUR WORST QUALITIES OR VICES: YOUR BAD HABITS** (bad temper, spiteful, drink too much).

What's Your Style?

• **DESCRIBE THE KIND OF CLOTHING OR DRESS YOU PREFER, AS WELL AS ANY SPECIAL QUIRKS YOU AFFECT AS PART OF THAT STYLE.** Many times, your mode of dress will be affected by the kind of Personality you're playing; for example, you won't often find a Mad Scientist in a Worth ballgown. But take a look through my Notebook, and you'll see all kinds of examples of what people wear in New Europa: gowns, skirts, shirtwaists, uniforms, suits, all kinds of things.

Are You Dashing or Demure?

• **DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONALITY IN TWO WORDS** (for example, *arrogant and headstrong*, or *friendly and outgoing*). This is to give you a thumbnail view of how you relate to the world, a sort of mental summing up.

What Do You Like? Or Dislike?

• **DESCRIBE YOUR FAVORITE THINGS** (foods, drinks, books, music, places, etc.). **NEXT, DESCRIBE THE THINGS YOU DISLIKE** (foods, drinks, books, music, places, kinds of events, etc.).

What Really Matters to You?

• **WHAT PRINCIPLE DO YOU VALUE MOST IN LIFE?** This is the fundamental basis for what your character wants out of life. Some examples would be money, honor, your word, honesty, knowledge, vengeance, love, power, a good time, friendship, fame, discretion or sex.

• **WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION?** For example, a weapon, book, tool, photograph, diary, jewelry, toy, letter, musical instrument, trinket or a pet. What is it you would risk your life to save? Why is it so important to you?

• **WHO DO YOU VALUE MOST IN THE WORLD?** For example, a sister or brother, parent, lover, friend, teacher, public figure, yourself, or no one. Would you risk your own life to save him or it? Why?

You Stand With Me, Or ...

• **WHO (OR WHAT) IS YOUR NEMESIS?** A Nemesis is a very Victorian idea: a person or organization that opposes you, and that you have either set yourself to destroy, or that has set itself to destroy you. All great Victorian characters have a Nemesis: Holmes had his Moriarty; Rassendyl, his VonHentzau; Captain Nemo had the whole world. What's yours?

• **WHAT ARE YOUR ALLIANCES?** Alliances are friends that you are sworn to help, organizations or causes you support, groups (like regiments or professional societies) you belong to. What are yours?

Ah, Love!

• **DESCRIBE YOUR ROMANTIC LIFE.** High Romance is a big part of Victorian life, what with secret assignations, doomed love affairs, feuding families and various affairs of the heart. Describe your situation: Are you involved and with whom; is your love requited or not; are there obstacles between you?

And Ambition!

• **WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS IN LIFE?** Describe one **Social Goal**, one **Professional Goal**, and one **Romantic Goal**. For example, a Mastermind's Professional Goal might be to rule the world; his Social Goal might be to gain

“My tale is
strange
indeed,
but all of it true.
For these last
ten years before
my escape, I
have been
imprisoned in a
world beneath
the one upon
which we stand,
a Lost Land of
ancient crea-
tures and prim-
ieval Men, a
place out of
Time and the
knowledge of
Science.”

—Dr. Derek Burke-Pierce,
Explorer of the Unknown

Exceptional or Even Better Abilities

Obviously, your next question will be the one that Lady Redmondson asked me two seconds after I finished explaining how to gain Abilities: "But what if I should want a character who is Exceptional, or even Extraordinary at something?"

My answer? *With every great ability comes a price.*

- For every **additional Great** Ability chosen, you must take *one* additional Poor Ability. This must be taken from from an Ability listed on pages 159 through 163.

- For every **Exceptional** Ability chosen, you must take *two* additional Poor Abilities. These must be taken from Abilities listed on pages 159 through 163.

- For every **Extraordinary** Ability chosen, you must take *three* additional Poor Abilities. This must be taken from from Abilities listed on pages 159 through 163.

As you can see, it's pretty hard to create a character who is superior in all things (so much for Friedrich Nietzsche's superman). Just like in real life, things always balance out.

recognition as a genius, and his Romantic Goal might be to have the most beautiful woman in the world as his wife. What are *your* Persona's Goals?

What You Good At? Poor At? Exceptional At?

Just like in real life, some people's abilities in the *Falkenstein* universe are better than others; someone might be an exceptional athlete, for example, and a poor mathematician. And of course, there's always the guy on the street, the archetypal Joe Average. In the Great Game, this idea is formalized into six levels of Ability: **Poor, Average, Good, Great, Exceptional** and **Extraordinary**.

The goal of this question is to determine what Abilities make *your* Persona stand out from the common man. We're not concerned with the things you're Average at; we want to know what you're really good or bad at. So:

- **DESCRIBE ONE ABILITY THAT YOUR PERSONA IS GREAT AT.** You can select any Ability from the list on pages 159 through 163, or create your own, with the Host of your Game's agreement

- **DESCRIBE FOUR ABILITIES YOUR PERSONA IS GOOD AT:** Once again, you can use the list on pages 159 through 163, or create your own. **IMPORTANT: All Wizards automatically must begin with a Good (and *only* Good) Sorcery Ability.** So you can automatically count off one of your Goods already if you're planning to master the Arcane Arts.

- **DESCRIBE ONE ABILITY YOUR PERSONA IS POOR AT.** This ability *must* be selected from the list on pages 159 through 163.

VERY IMPORTANT: Any Ability that you have not made a point of selecting out is automatically considered to be Average. For example, if you were to decide your Persona had Great Courage, Good Education, Connections, Athletics and Charisma, and Poor Sorcery, your Comeliness, Exchequer, Marksmanship, Fencing and any other Ability both listed or unlisted would *automatically* default to Average.

Your Host also has the option of weighing a particular Ability higher or lower on the curve because a related Ability may also be weighted (for example, if you're Poor at Athletics, it makes sense that you wouldn't be Great at Juggling. You'd be Poor at that too, right? Remember, common sense should always be the ultimate arbiter in a roleplaying game.

And Last ...

- **WHAT EVENT OR ACTION IN YOUR LIFE DO YOU REGRET MOST?** Did you commit a crime? Abandon a lover? Or perhaps did not do what you knew in your heart was right?

- **WHAT EVENT OR ACTION IN YOUR LIFE ARE YOU PROUDEST OF?** What have you done that you think merited applause from the crowd? What gives you a sense of satisfaction when you think of it?

Now, Tell Your Story

- **WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING FOR THE LAST FEW YEARS OF YOUR LIFE?** Now comes the storytelling part. You now know quite a bit about your Persona's values and personality. What would he or she have been doing over the last few years and how would his life be affected by his adventures? Take all the answers to your questions and write them out in a short Account of Your Life and Times.

Worried about your writing skills? Don't worry; this is a Diary; it doesn't have to be Great Literature. (You'd be amazed at the horribly written Memoirs and Personal Accounts I see for sale every day in New European booksellers' shops.) Just gather together the answers to your questions and dive in. Feel free to embellish your language with Victorianisms, write in quill pen or paste old photographs into your Diary to represent family, friends and enemies, and put it all in the most ornate notebook you can dig up. Enjoy!

Typical New European Abilities

Here are just a few typical Abilities associated with people in the Castle Falkenstein world, and descriptions of what can be done at each level of Ability. You can, of course, create new Abilities as needed, as long as your Host agrees. Remember: Abilities which are not written down differently in your Diary are automatically Average.

Athletics [♣]

Training and experience in physical activities, sports, horsemanship, balance, etc. Poor would mean you could barely swim, throw well, balance, etc. Juggling would be out of the question, as well as most team sports. An Average would mean you were about the level of most people: You can swim, balance well, hold your own in team sports, etc. Good would mean you are a strong amateur athlete, skilled at most team sports, but not yet ready for Olympic or professional competition. Great Athletic Ability means you are equal to any pro or Olympic athlete. Exceptional means you are an athlete of incredible abilities, equal to any world class Olympic or professional competitor. Extraordinary means you are one of the best athletes that has ever been, a veritable Hercules of physiological achievement.

Charisma [♥]

Likeability and the ability to relate to others. Poor Charisma means people feel uncomfortable around you, and tend to avoid you. Average Charisma assumes that you're like most people: a few close friends, a few enemies, and most people are willing to give you the benefit of the doubt. Good Charisma means you are a likeable sort, and most everyone you meet will feel comfortable talking to you and enjoy your company in turn. Great Charisma means you are

one of those people who makes friends very easily; you are always the most popular person around, with friends everywhere. Exceptionally Charismatic people are known for their wit and popularity; others will go out of their way to be introduced to them and to gain their favor. In many cases, their Charisma has given them a minor amount of fame. Extraordinary Charisma means people are in awe of you; they are dumbfounded at your wit, wisdom and brilliance, and you are known widely as one of the most attractive people in Society.

Comeliness [♥]

Basic physical attractiveness. This assumes clean clothing and hygiene. Poor attractiveness assumes you are less good looking than the majority of people, although not necessarily ugly. Average assumes you are unremarkable in appearance: not homely, but not all that appealing either. Good assumes you are considered to be pretty or handsome, while Great Comeliness assumes you are good looking to the point where you might be able to make a living off of your appearance, and that others are constantly commenting on it. Exceptional means you are one of the world's most attractive people; your looks are celebrated and others consider it to be a topic of conversation. Extraordinary means you are one of the most beautiful people ever to have existed, a veritable Helen of Troy or Adonis.

Connections [♠]

The level of society you are likely to come in contact with, and by inference whether you know a particular person; also whether you will be permitted to enter another societal level. Poor Connections assume you know only the true demimondé: thieves, criminals, street trash. Average Connections assume you socialize with the "common man": shopkeepers, businessmen, everyday people. Good Connections assume you know people of a better quality: important local figures, minor officials, minor luminaries and socialites. Great Connections assumes you socialize with the very lions



of society: celebrated writers, artists, noblemen, famous beauties and reknowned gents. Exceptional assumes you socialize with the very crème of Society: Lords, Ladies, Kings, Princes and Potentates. Extraordinary means you *are* the very crème of Society: a King, Queen, Prince or Emperor.

Courage [♥]

The ability to show resolution and coolness in the face of danger or adversity. A Poor ability would mean you faint at the sight of blood, are easily intimidated, and rarely speak up for yourself. Average assumes you are sometimes squeamish, but are adept at facing down most everyday intimidations or dangers, such as rude clerks and threats from ruffians. Good means you are cool even in life-threatening situations, can face down even armed ruffians, and can even withstand moderate physical pain or privation for hours. Great Courage allows you to withstand extreme physical pain or privation for hours; you laugh in the face of whistling bullets and no mere man can make you show the white feather. Exceptional Courage allows you to withstand extreme physical pain or privation for days; your will almost never breaks and you have no problem facing down all but the most terrifying opponents. Extraordinary Courage means your will is literally unbreakable; you never doubt, fear or visibly suffer.

Education [♦]

The amount of formal education you have had. A Poor Education assumes you have no education: You cannot read, write or do sums. The facts most people know by rote escape you; you know only things that immediately happen to you or others tell you. The only language you know is your native tongue (which you speak poorly), and all other languages must be gained via Special Abilities. Average Education assumes you have a standard primary school education: You can read, write, do sums, and know some basic history, geography and science. You speak your native tongue well, and know a little of one other language (which you speak with an atrocious accent). A Good Education assumes you have gone to one of the better schools: a prep school or boarding school. You can not only read and write, but have read the Classics, can do simple calculus and other higher math, and have some knowledge of History, Philosophy, Logic, and current Science. You speak not only your native tongue, but also Latin and at least two other languages well (choose at start and write in your History). A Great Education is equivalent to a University Degree. You can do all types of higher math, can quote the Classics from memory, and know a bit of History, Philosophy, Logic, Physics, and Chemistry. You speak your native

tongue, Latin, some Ancient Greek, and at least three other languages. An Exceptional Education is equivalent to an advanced University Degree, a Doctorate or higher. Not only can you easily use higher math, but you know a lot of History, Philosophy, Logic, Physics, and Chemistry, as well as being familiar with all of the most fashionable theories and scientific discoveries. You have probably published at least a couple books, and fluently speak all major European languages without an accent. An Extraordinary Education assumes you are one of the smartest people alive; you know almost all subjects, and can speak all but the most obscure languages fluently (even these you can at least make yourself understood in). You have probably written several mathematical proofs and maybe made some of the major scientific discoveries of the age.

Etherealness (Faerie Only) [♠]

The Faerie power of malleability: to turn into mists, pass through walls, fly on a yarrow stalk, and otherwise transcend material reality. This also covers the ability to actually take another shape, rather than using a glamour to appear in another shape. Poor Ability means you could reach through walls but not pass, become liquid or float in the air without flight. With Average Ability, you could pass through wooden walls only, become like a thick fog, fly slowly, and shapechange to any form of similar size and shape for up to one hour. Good Ability allows you to take the form of any creature your size up to one day, pass through stone or brick walls, become a thin mist, and fly at bird speeds. With Great Ability you could take the form of any creature of your size indefinitely, pass through all but steel walls and become nearly immaterial. Exceptional Ability allows you to take any desired form, no matter what size or shape, for up to one day, and pass slowly and painfully through steel walls. Extraordinary Ability allows you to take any desired form, no matter what size or shape indefinitely, become totally immaterial, fly at incredible speeds and pass through anything but Cold Iron.

Exchequer [♠]

This is not just the actual amount of money you have on your person, but also your general economic status. A Poor attribute means just that; you have money rarely if ever, and cannot produce ready credit. If it costs more than a few pennies, you can't afford it. Average assumes that you have a basic, middle class income: You can buy decent food, pay rent on a modest flat or cottage, and perhaps have an outing on holidays. If it costs less than a few pounds or marks, you can afford it. A Good Exchequer assumes you are considered to be well off: You own or rent a moderately-sized

home or townhouse, dine out several times a week, can afford a club and to attend the theater and other entertainments once or twice a month. Your parties are small but tasteful. If it costs hundreds of pounds, you might shy away from the expense. A Great Exchequer means you are considered to be wealthy: You go out to dine nightly, attend the theater in your own box, are a major player in your club, own estates and perhaps a townhouse in the City; you may even keep a mistress. You throw lavish parties on a monthly basis, and your soirees are known throughout your social circle. You can buy small yachts and unless it costs thousands of pounds, you don't even flinch. An Exceptional Exchequer assumes you are extremely wealthy, on the scale of kings and potentates. You buy palaces and fleets of yachts. You establish private clubs. If it costs hundreds of thousands of pounds or marks, you might think twice. An Extraordinary Exchequer means you are one of the wealthiest people alive; you are worth millions of pounds/marks, and never think of money at all.

Fencing [♣]

Your Ability with swords and other bladed duelling weapons (not including knives, which use Fisticuffs). In general, a Poor Fencer has probably never picked up a sword before; an Average Fencer knows a few basics like how to hold the weapon and how to spar a little; a Good Fencer is skilled enough to hold his/her own in a duel; A Great Fencer can defeat most opponents, and has a reputation for his skill; an Exceptional Fencer is one of the few greats with a blade, and is known and feared by reputation. An Extraordinary Fencer is one of the greatest swordsmen ever born, equal to Zorro or Scaramouche.

Fisticuffs [♣]

General knowledge of fisticuffs and street fighting. Also covers use of "found" weapons: clubs, bottles, non-specialized knives. To use more specialized hand-to-hand weapons, such as martial arts weapons, you will need to create a Special Ability for that form.

Glamour (Faerie Only) [♥]

The Faerie power to create illusions, to bend the minds of mortals. All Faerie have this power to greater or lesser extents, based upon their type of Kindred. Those with Poor Glamour can only create

momentary plays of light and shadow, and a real illusion is beyond them. Those of Average Power can create shapes, lights, and take on the seemings of anyone or anything they wish. Great Glamour powers allow you to create huge, realistic illusions like Faerie caves, small palaces, etc. Exceptional powers can create realistic, illusory Faerielands, while Extraordinary powers create entire kingdoms of illusion.

Kindred Powers (Faerie Only) [♣]

Each race of Faerie has its own abilities and powers, integral to itself. Russalki can raise storms, Brownies do incredible feats of work, Selkies change into seals, Knockers can smell gold, Mermaids can sing, and Nightmares can cause ... well, nightmares. This Ability describes how well you are able to use your Powers, relative to others of your kind. Because these Powers vary so much between each race, their examples are a bit more subjective and require more judgment than other Abilities. Examples are shown in the *Host's Guide to the Faerie*, pg. 174

Marksmanship [♣]

Skills with ranged weapons like pistols, shoulder arms, crossbows, etc. (darts, spears and other thrown weapons use the Athletics Ability). As a rule, a Poor Marksman has probably never (or rarely) ever fired a gun; an Average Marksman has used a gun a few times on a range, in the Army, or

on a weekend shoot. A Good Marksman hunts frequently, or may be a career military officer who has seen combat or a frequent duellist. A Very Good Marksman has some reputation as a hunter or duellist in his circle, or has spent a great deal of time in combat. An Exceptional Marksman is one of the best alive, and has a fearsome reputation as a hunter, duellist or warrior. The Extraordinary Marksman is one of the best ever, the match of Wyatt Earp or Robin Hood.

Perception [♦]

Your ability to perceive your environment, to pick up clues and minutiae, including the emotions of others. Also your native Intelligence and wit; how fast you are on the uptake. Poor Perception means you are oblivious to your surroundings; you are like an "absent minded professor" constantly bumping into things, missing details, etc. Average Perception assumes you are

EXCHEQUER & CASH

As Oscar Wilde says, "*There were none to be had, not even for ready money...*" But what is ready money? I've deliberately made the topic of cash sort of vague because most of the time I try to avoid the bookkeeping money entails in a Game. But you'll probably want to know exactly how much money your Dramatic Character has ready in his pocket when he starts out:

EXCHEQUER	ON HAND
PR.....	2c
AV.....	20c
GD.....	50c
GR.....	100c
EXC.....	200c
EXT.....	500c

c= currency used in your home of origin. Double this amount if English.

capable of noticing fairly obvious details: expressions, things lying around in plain sight, partially closed drawers, badly fitted secret doors. Good Perception means you notice little things: something odd about an expression or a glance passing between people, secret doors or compartments that are not skillfully designed by someone of less than Excellent Tinkering abilities, faint marks or hurriedly hidden objects. Great Perception assumes you are aware enough to notice all but the smallest details: a smudge here, a place where a well-hidden secret door "probably" ought to be, a change in expression that would escape most people. Excellent Perception means almost nothing escapes your eye: faint scratches, fingerprints, the smallest change in expressions, places where even the most skillfully hidden object or hiding place might be. Extraordinary Perception means *nothing* evades your eagle eye.

Performance [♥]

Your skills at singing, dancing or acting creditably; this also includes instrument playing, juggling, or any other type of performing. Poor Performance Abilities mean you can't carry a tune in a bucket, have two left feet, and make as credible a Hamlet as Prince Albert would make a Texan. Average Performance Abilities means you can carry a tune, dance without embarrassing your lady friends at a ball, and have done a bit of acting, juggling or other stagework in school recitals. Good Performance Abilities mean you can get a part in a local play, your friends ask you to sing or play the piano whenever you get together, and you've been encouraged to take to the stage by those few friends of yours rash enough not to consider performing to be one step above prostitution and knavery. Great Performing assumes you are a local performer of note, having played the best houses in the city you live in, as well as a few travelling shows about New Europa. Exceptional Performing Ability means you are well-known about the Continent, may have played at most of the major halls and theaters, and may have even been invited to some Court functions (assuming the court is a scandalous one like Napoleon III's). Extraordinary Performance Ability means you are one of the few world famous performers of the Age, a veritable Jenny Lind or Franz Liszt, known far and wide. People mob you for autographs, and even Queen Victoria would like to meet you.

Physician [♦]

The ability to diagnose illness, administer medication, perform surgery (at higher levels of skill), deliver babies and bandage wounds. Poor Physician skills mean you can't fix a cut without help; sticking plasters and smelling salts are about your speed. Things like Obstetrics and Surgery are far beyond you. Average Physician apti-

tude allows you to wrap bandages, administer medicines, take temperatures and recognize most common maladies like colds and influenza. You could even deliver a baby, assuming there were no complications, or tend a bullet wound or sword cut. Good Physician Abilities mean you can set fractures, perform simple surgery, diagnose slightly more obscure maladies like the Cholera and the "French disease," and administer medications for same. You can deliver a complex birth, perform an appendectomy, or amputate a limb. You probably also have a medical practice of some sort. Great Physician Abilities assume you are quite good at diagnosis, regularly perform surgeries and amputations, and possibly teach at a Medical College somewhere. Exceptional Physician Ability assumes you are a regular contributor to *The Lancet*, are on the staff at a major hospital, and have several medical discoveries or practices named after you. Extraordinary Physician Ability assumes you are one of the best healers of the Age, capable of diagnosing any disease, and of saving lives all others have given up for lost.

Physique [♣]

Your strength and stature, as well as one measure of your ability to take damage. A Poor Physique assumes you are of weak strength and puny stature. Whether fat or thin, you are still weak and poor of endurance; if it weighs over 60 lbs, you can't lift it, and you can forget about breaking anything stronger than a pencil. Average Physique is that of the generally fit man in the street: You can lift at least a hundred and fifty pounds, can break small sticks and rip small books apart. A Good Physique means you are quite fit and have a stature more imposing than most people: You are taller and better built, capable of breaking walking sticks in half and tearing apart an average library book. A Great Physique means you are considered to be very strong for your sex: the equivalent of a bodybuilder. Your stature is imposing and you stand out in crowds; you can bend iron bars with effort, and tear apart a good-sized dictionary. An Excellent Physique means you are probably among the strongest persons of your sex on earth. Your sculpted body ripples with muscle and sinew; you can bend steel rods in your bare hands, and rip apart the British Peerage Directory. An Extraordinary Physique means you are one of the strongest men or women ever: You can break boards, bend Dwarfish silver rods, and rip apart *Burke's Peerages of New Europa* with an offhand effort.

Social Graces [♠]

Your ability to master the complex social rules and manners that make up everyday Steam Age life. Social Graces include your ability to fit into social situa-

tions, to know what to do when confronted with an unfamiliar table setting, or an equally unfamiliar social encounter. Social Graces also includes your ability to cut a dash on the ballroom floor and your knowledge of Burke's Peerage and the proper modes of address for all occasions. Social Graces are a very important Ability to have if you expect to do more with your life than muck about in the sordid gutters of some lower-caste rookery somewhere. A Poor Social Graces Ability assumes you can't waltz, don't know any proper manners, and can be expected to wipe your nose on the tablecloth. An Average ability means you know enough manners to get by on the bourgeois everyday level: You can waltz passably and know most of the proper terms of address. Good Social Graces Ability assumes that your manners are sufficient for most of the Fast Set: You can attend the Theater without making a scene, appreciate a good witticism, and waltz well. Great Social Graces assumes that you have exceptional manners and a small reputation for being graceful and suave among your social circle. You waltz very well, and are never at a loss for what to say or do in almost any normal social situation. Exceptional Social Graces assumes you are something of a minor social phenomenon: You are often asked to dine out, you waltz exceptionally well, and can hold your own in any conversation including an exchange with a Dragon or Faerie Lord. Extraordinary Social Graces assume you are a veritable Lion of Victorian Society: eagerly sought after by hostesses everywhere for your witty repartee, your ability to make the party exciting, and for your divine waltzing skills. You don't have Social Graces—you *are* Social Graces!

Sorcery (Faerie automatically Poor) [♦]

Your Ability to "see" the fluxes of energy that make up supernatural reality. This is the foundation of being a Wizard, the "second sight" all mages possess. Humans must have at least a Good Sorcery ability in order to perform magic. A Poor Ability assumes you are psychically "blind"; you don't even know there is a supernatural. An Average ability means that you are generally aware of the arcane through the occasional "feeling" or sensation of unearthly powers; you still cannot "see" the knots that make up subethric reality. Good ability allows you to hazily perceive subethric knots, but certain levels of complexity still elude you. Great means you clearly see all the knots and fluxes within a few hundred feet of yourself. Exceptional ability means you are acutely attuned to the realm of the subethric; you tend to see objects as knots and weavings of energy rather than as material objects, and you can spot the inner structures of these for as far as you could normally see. Extraordinary

ability means you are one of the best wizards ever born, the caster of spells that live in legend.

Stealth [♣]

Your ability to move undetected; to perform actions unobserved or unnoticed. A Poor Stealth means you are never able to hide or sneak; you're always in the wrong place; you loom in the shadows and trip over the Persian carpet. With Average Stealth, you can perform simple deceptions: walk quietly, open a door silently, pick up and pocket an object while the owner turns his back. Good Stealth ability means you are relatively accomplished at sneaking; you can move down a hardwood floor or forest path without making noise, open slightly creaky doors silently, and take something from someone else if their attention is momentarily distracted. Great Stealth assumes you can creep around quite well, can open even creaky doors easily, and pull feats of pickpocketing and legerdemain equal to an amateur magician. With Exceptional Stealth, you are equal to any Chinese Temple Monk; you walk over rice paper without a trace, can make objects vanish right in front of someone who is intently watching, and silently open doors that have been unopened in a hundred years. With Extraordinary Stealth, there is no sign of your passage, you're always silent, and you can take things out of other people's hands even if they're watching you.

Tinkering [♦]

The ability to use, repair, alter or work on mechanical or electrically operated machines. Poor Tinkering means that you can't fix anything: you must ask for help to change a carriage tire or open a strange doorknob. Things like Steam Technology and Calculation Engines are beyond you. Average Tinkering is that of the home handyman: You can repair broken faucets, patch together ropes or cables, or rewire a broken electrical connection; you even understand the basic principles of a Calculation Engine. Good Tinkering Ability means you are a mechanical hobbyist: You can make your own simple electrical or mechanical devices, and repair simple Steam Engines and other tools. Great Tinkering abilities assume you are quite good at wiring up electrical circuits, working on or building Steam Devices, and repairing/scratchbuilding various machines, including complex ones like Calculation Engines. Exceptional Tinkering Ability assumes you could actually become an inventor of some note: You know the inner workings of Steam Technology, Calculation Engines, electrical circuits and complex machinery. Exceptional Tinkering Ability assumes you are the equal of any Edison: You could possibly construct Nemo's *Nautilus* or invent transparent aluminum.

Improving Your Lot

An oft-asked question of Hosts is "How do you improve the Abilities of Dramatic Characters?" The Great Game is a bit different than some roleplaying games in that there are no "experience points" or other numerical trading stamps. Instead, Players work *with* their Hosts to determine what Abilities they want to improve and what will be required in *actions* (not points) to make them better.

In real life, you just don't collect random "experience points" to get ahead and then apply them to selected skills. You get better because you do things. So it makes sense to apply this little lesson of Life to your Entertainments as well. How do you do things to improve? By telling your Host what you are doing each Game session to improve.

Mastering (& Improving) Existing Abilities

To improve an already existing Ability, start by telling your Host what your character will be doing to improve himself and let him tell you how long it will take to accomplish that improvement. For example, the Player and the Host could agree that if you fight a dozen duels with people who are at least one Fencing rank above you, you will improve by one rank. Or that if you exercise every day for six months, your Physique will improve by a level or two. Obviously, to get to the next level should take even more effort. As you progress, the Host can start to give you hints of your progress: allowing you to accomplish more than before, or by making Feats seem easier than the last time you tried them.

Your Diary or Journal should also be used to write down your Character's Goals and what he or she has Accomplished towards those Goals. As each Entertainment session draws to a close, the Host

should gather together each Player's Diary and note what improvements may have been made in his notes as well.

Secret Improvement

Another way for improvement is for the Host to secretly decide what it would take to improve a character's Abilities in an area, and improve the Ability secretly (shifting the Ability's value up a level) until the Player catches on and says, "*I say, have I become better at this?*" I personally like this one; so far in real life, I've never noticed anyone *telling* me that I've gotten better; one day, after a lot of work, I just am (you should see how much desperately trying to stay alive has improved my Fencing, for example).

Some Improvement Hints

Here are a few examples of ways you can do this in each area, plus a few General Guidelines to aid Hosts in making their decisions:

Fencing, Fisticuffs or Marksmanship:

Go fight in a war. Take lessons under someone better than you (although you won't every get better than they are that way). Fight duels. Practice every day. This is a good one for the Host to sneak up on a Player who's working hard to stay alive in a combat situation. **General Guidelines:**

About eight to ten battles per increase in Ability, with each new cycle of battles requiring opponents and situations tougher than the last.

Athletics, Physique

Work out in the gymnasium. Practice balancing each day for hours. Lift big weights. Swim and run a lot. Take up a physical sport. **General Guidelines:** About six months of strenuous activity for each increase in Ability with each new increase requiring greater amounts of weight, time, effort or activity.



Exchequer:

Get a better job. Invest wisely. Discover a gold mine. Hope someone leaves you a fortune (that's up to the Host). This one requires that you do something that will generate as much money as the description of that level of Exchequer—conceivably, a great investment could raise you two or three economic levels instantly. The amount of improvement is up to the Host, who must judge just how much money you made.

Education:

Go back to the University. Study hard every night. Engage in conversations with learned people. Hire a tutor (although again, you won't be able to raise your Education higher than his). **General Guidelines:** Two to three years of study for each increase in Ability, with greater effort in study for each new level of Education.

Perception:

Use your wits more. Make a point of saying your character does perceptive *actions* instead of relying on his Ability. **General Guidelines:** This is a good Ability for the Host into secretly improve, as Players use their minds instead of their Abilities to roleplay.

Physician:

Much like Education, these skills require continuing study. But they also involve practice; you have to use Medical Skills as well as study them. **General Guidelines:** One year of study and at least eight (or more) successful diagnoses or major operations performed for each increase in Ability, with a greater effort in study and complexity for each greater level of Ability.

Connections:

Much like Exchequer, you can jump a few levels with only a few lucky breaks. Do something that makes you famous. Write a great novel. Marry someone of higher status (you won't ever get your Connections higher than theirs, and it will usually be one level lower simply because everyone knows you're marrying up).

Tinkering:

Take an apprenticeship under someone (although you won't become better than he is this way). Try using your tinkering skills every chance you get. **General Guidelines:** About six to eight months of mechanical work for each increase in Ability with new increases requiring working on devices of greater complexity.

Charisma or Social Graces

Practice being a better or more refined person. Do acts of kindness and charity. This is one best handled by the Host observing the Player doing more charismatic or mannered things, and awarding increase based on how charismatic the character acts, not just on his Abilities.

Courage:

Do heroic things. Face dangerous situations. This is one of the Abilities that is best improved by the Host *secretly*, as you do other things that test your Courage, like fighting duels. **General Guidelines:** About six or more exceptionally courageous acts for each increase, with new increases requiring greater heroism.

Comeliness:

Improve your wardrobe. Wear makeup. Have surgery done (very hard to do in the 19th century). Have a Wizard transform your features. Comeliness is the hardest Ability to improve, because if you're ugly, you're ugly. However, this could be secretly improved by the Host for things such as improving your Physique (at least now you have a great body), or your Charisma (you don't look any better, but people perceive you as handsomer).

Sorcery:

These abilities require practice as well as study, yet they are very hard to master over time. **General Guidelines:** Two or three years of study and at least eight exceptionally successful spellcastings performed for each increase in Ability, with greater effort in study and complexity for each greater level of Ability.

Performance or Stealth

As in any natural ability, *using* it is the way to improve it. Practice being sneaky. Practice acting or performing. **General Guideline:** At least eight or more exceptionally successful uses of the Ability for each level of improvement, with greater feats to reach the next level of Ability.

All Faerie Powers:

These Powers are very similar to using any natural Ability; the more they're used, the more they improve. **General Guidelines:** At least seven or more exceptionally successful uses of the Power for each level of improvement, with greater feats to reach the next level of Ability.

Learning New Abilities

Setting the Starting Level: In most cases, unless otherwise specified, all new Abilities begin at Average; you can do what the man on the street with no training can do and no more or less.

However, occasions may come up when an Ability will be weighted by a previously demonstrated aptitude in a related Ability. How much the new Ability is weighted should be worked out as a joint decision by you and the Host of your Game. The Host will want to look at your level of skill in similar Abilities; as a rule, a related skill that is Poor means the new Ability starts off equally Poor; if the related Ability was Exceptional, the new Ability might begin at a Good or Great (never Exceptional) instead of Average, by the Host's decision.

A Steam Age Price List

Note: The designation "c" represents a unit of *currency* for the nation where the Adventure is set. "p" represents one *penny*, the lowest unit of coin. As a rule in New Europa, 100p usually equals 1c, except in England, where 200p equals one *pound* (£).

MEN'S WEAR

Boots	2-3c
Business Suit	1-2c
Cane	1-2c
Cape	2c
Deerstalker Hat	1c
Felt Hat	1c
Formal Suit	20-25c
Frock Coat	3-6c
Macintosh Raincoat	3c
Overcoat	5-6c
Pocketwatch	1c
Quality Suit	10-20c
Shirt	25p-1c
Shirt Collars (12)	50p
Silk Tie	30p
Silk Top Hat	2c
Straw Boater	25p
Trousers	1c
Umbrella	1-2c
Underclothing	50p

LADIES' WEAR

Afternoon/Visiting Dress	3-4c
Bustle (1)	10p
Cape	2-3c
Chemise	10p
Corset	1-2c
Crinoline (steel)	1c
Evening Gown	30-100c
Fan	1c
Formal Dinner Dress	10-25c
Frock	2-3c
Hat	1-3c
Hatpin (1)	1p
High-button Shoes	5-10c
Morning/Country Dress	1-3c
Muff	1c
Pantalettes	75p-2c
Parasol	1c
Petticoats	1-2c

Reticule (purse)	1-2c
Shawl	50p-1c
Skirt	1-2c
Stockings	25p
Worth Gown	200-500c

RESTAURANTS

Breakfast	1-3p
Lunch	3-4p
Dinner	8-10p

GROCERIES

Ale, Beer or Porter	3p
Beef (pound)	40p
Bread	5p
Champagne (bottle)	5-10c
Dentifrice Powder	1c
Eggs	40p
Fish	30p
Milk (pint)	10p
Port (average)	1-2c
Poultry	30p
Shellfish	40p
Vegetables	5p
Whisky or Spirits (bottle)	2-4p
Wine (bottle)	1-2c
Soap	20p

ENTERTAINMENT

Theater/Opera (standing)	3c
Theater/Opera (seated)	10c
Theater/Opera (private box)	20c
Music Hall admission	30p
Opera Glass rental	40p
Fun Palaces & Parks	10p
Public Exhibitions admission	2p
Public Baths admission	5-50p
Museums, Gardens admission	5p
Good drink (whiskey)	10-15p
Glass of wine	8-10p

TRANSPORTATION

Automotive Rental	50p per mile
Automotive purchase	200-400c
Steam Launch Rental	1-2p per mile
Cab (fiacre, hansom)	
rental	0.12p per person+.06p per mile
London Underground	1p/station
Steamer Voyage	
(steering, 1 way)	10p per 100 miles
Steamer Voyage	
(1st class, 1 way)	1c per 100 miles
Train Fare	1-3p (per mile)

Rental Horse	40-50p day
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MISCELLANEOUS

Exclusive Club Dues, 1 year	100c
Good Club Dues, 1 year	50c
Average Club Dues, 1 year	20c
Hardback Book	50p
"Dime" Novel	10p
Library fee, 1 year	10c
Small Encyclopedia/	
Dictionary	4c
Newspaper	5p
Opera Glasses	2c
Spyglass	1c
Map	20p
Box Camera	6-10c
Film (24 exposures)	1c
Fountain Pen	50p
Steel-nibbed Pens (12)	4p
Pencils (12)	10p
Bottle of Ink	10p
Good Writing Vellum	25p
Writing Paper	10p
Playing Cards	5p
Pipe	24p
Cigars (12)	1-2p
Telegram (per 12 words)	5p
Tobacco (10 pipes)	1-2p
Postage	1p
Box of 50 wooden	
"Lucifers"(matches)	2p
Tool Kit (hammer,	
saws, wrenches)	15c
Small Musical	
Instrument	10-30c
"Gladstone" Bag	18c
Ladies' Bag	10c
Letter Box hire (1 year)	20c

WEAPONS

Carbine	50c
Dagger	1c
Derringer	15c
Drop Pistol	20c
Life Preserver	2p
Musket	15c
Pepperbox Revolver	20c
Rapier	5c
Reciprocator	30c
Rifle (Chassepot)	40c
Rifle (Needlegun)	45c
Saber	6c
Shotgun	15c

Hosting a Steam Age Adventure Entertainment

Running Adventures in the Age of Steam!

"S

o what do I actually do in a Game set in the Age of Steam? I mean, I couldn't even stay awake in History class!"

Relax. First of all, the basic idea of the Great Game assumes that Players and Hosts will have little or no knowledge of the people and places of the Victorian period; in fact, anything you do know will only enhance your enjoyment. One of the great things about the world of *Castle Falkenstein* is that since it's an almost-Earthlike world, it gives historians

and just plain adventurers an even playing field; your Entertainments can be as realistic as you want, and if someone with a history PhD shows up to complain about a niggling detail, you can feel free to say, "Well, this isn't Earth and it didn't happen that way here." After all, this isn't a historical simulation.

Second, if you've never played in an Adventure Entertainment before, here's a hint from a game designer friend of mine: "Roleplaying is basically 'Let's Pretend with rules.'" And it's even more so when playing in the Great Game; the idea is that you're participating in a shared play where each Player reacts to a Scene as he or she thinks the Character would, while the Host continually poses new Situations for the Players to react to. As the Players react, the Host then modifies the Situation to take the Players' reactions into account. Example:

Tom (as Host): "Okay, Morrolan, Dr. Paracelus finds himself dangling from a thin spire of rock on the very edge of the Tomb of Set. You are only a few feet away from Captain Fortune and Lady Alcour as they too struggle to keep from slipping into the abyss below."

Morrolan (as his Character, Dr. Xavier Paracelus, world famous Scientist/Archeologist): "I say, *that's* a sticky one. I look about myself for anything like a rope. Have I found anything?"

Tom: "There is a piece of gold filigree peeling away from the tomb. You think it might hold your weight—barely."

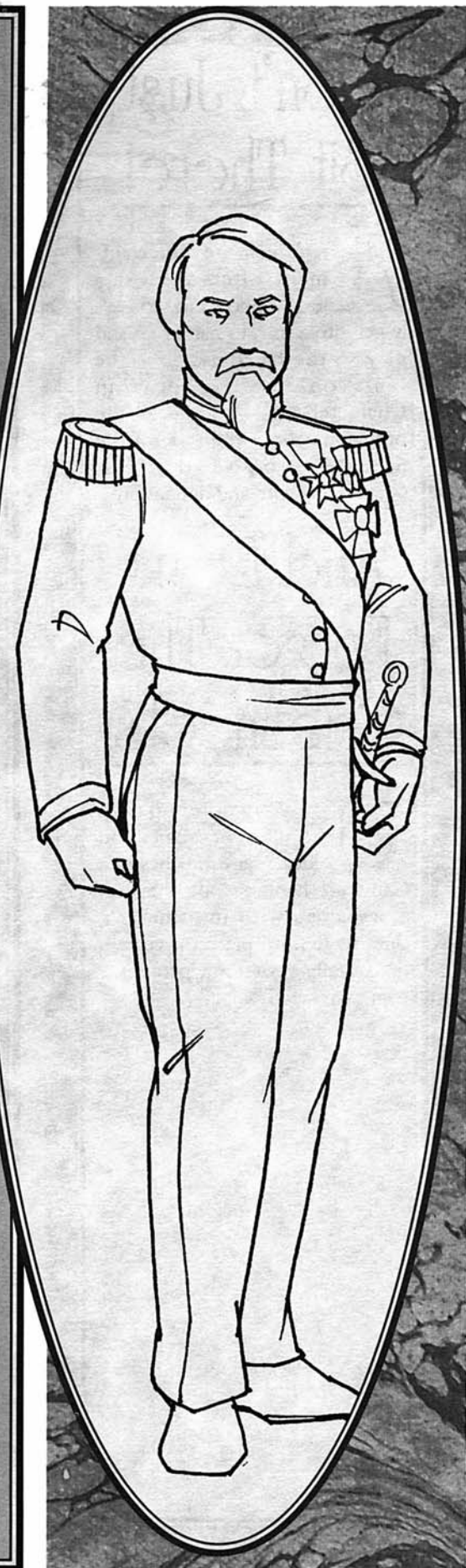
Marianne (as Lady Alcour, Druid Sorceress): "*Alors!* I shall tear a strip from my frock and toss it to the Doctor, *oui?*"

Tom: "Fine. You have two really bad ropes. And what about you, Capt. Fortune?"

Auberon (as Captain Damion Fortune, Faerie Hussar): "Aye, I'll chance it, then. Hand me the ropes and I'll pass through the rock ethereally to anchor them ..."

Tom: "Okay, you've got the ropes anchored ..."

And so on. The steps of playing an Adventure aren't all that hard, as you can see. The hard part is coming up with the original Situation the Host proposes; that and using some of the rules discussed later in this Game to resolve problems. Your biggest job as a Host is to be fair, consistent and describe Situations as clearly and as colorfully as possible.



Don't Just Sit There!

An Adventure Entertainment offers a Host a great opportunity to really get into a role, to ham it up and play to the balconies. Use the hints on how to speak in Character (pg. 70), and all the other bits about the style of the Steam Age to give your Host Characters depth and dimension!

And Don't Forget The Cribsheets!

Use your notebooks to record notes, clues and ideas. Nice touches in a Game are handing out scraps of newspapers with information, clues written on pieces of vellum, or actually providing props for your players to hold.

Starting Out

The first step to the process is to gather your Players together to have an Entertainment. If the Players haven't created their Dramatic Characters yet, the first session is always a good time to do this; they can even possibly "meet" each other in a cafe or party and interact with each other a bit. Take this time to circulate among the Players and take a few notes on their Characters and how they work together; this will give you ideas for future Adventures. Meanwhile, you can practice by acting out some of the Adventures and Adventure Settings already in this book (pages 216 through 220).

After a few sessions, you should have enough ideas to draft your own Adventure. Take a look at the "Elements of Victorian Melodrama" and the "Props" that go with it, then start thinking of a situation that might employ as many of these Elements as sound interesting. Next, take a look at the "Section of Writing Adventures" on pages 177 through 180 for more in-depth information.

Entertainments also use some elaborate staging devices that are more in keeping with their "Victorian" roots. A single adventure is called a **Chapter** or **Story**. Different locations within the Chapter are called **Scenes**. Hosts should, whenever possible, end a Chapter on a cliffhanger or critical turning point of the plot, just like a real tale of High Adventure.

Other staging devices are **Host Characters** used by the Host as Actors in each Situation or Scene (samples are on pages 169-170 of this book), and **Scene Mechanics**, which are more in-depth explanations of things going on in the Scene.

Setting the Scene

Adventure Entertainments also make use of three levels of scene setting, based on just how realistically you want to arrange your activities.

- **Live Action:** At this level, you'll want to recreate as much of the atmosphere and feeling as possible. Costumes, props and music are just the start of the possibilities. In Live Action, you should stage each Scene of the event in a separate room, or if possible, in actual locations similar to the places portrayed in your Story. Character Diaries should be carried in pockets, and referred to only if absolutely necessary; the Host should depend on his or her crib sheets to make decisions unless a Player requests otherwise. Props, physical clues and costumes are a real asset here; the best Entertainments are those held in a suitably Victorian place (something I have a decided advantage in) and with an adventure structured around the setting (such as a murder Entertainment on a grand summer estate, set in a real country inn).

- **Interactive:** Okay, so you haven't got a 18th century pepperbox pistol handy. But you can still get your players into the spirit. At this level, all important props should be written on 3x5 cards, and distributed among the Players. A gun isn't drawn until the card is removed from a pocket; a sword isn't out until the Players have Duelling cards in hand. Clues should be written on cards or scraps of paper and hidden around the room. Players should sit or stand with the groups they are with; if characters change locations, the Players should change seating or room location accordingly.

- **Tabletop:** The simplest method. Miniature figurines are used to represent the players, and all notes or clues are described by the Host. Locations are shown by maps, and questions of movement can be determined using the guidelines described in *Stage Directions* (page 140).

In the Steam Age, of course, most Tales are played out at the Live Action level (but since most of my players are actually wearing greatcoats, gowns and live in palaces, this might really be thought of as the Interactive level instead). The Interactive scale is probably best for Entertainments staged in the 20th century, but we warn you, you haven't lived until you've staged a flat-out masked ball with several duels!

Host Characters

Being, in the Main, Assorted
Personages Appearing in
or Mentioned Throughout
this Journal, including:

Lord Auberon of Faerie

Faerie Lord

Abilities: Fencing [EXT] • Marks. [EXC]
• Fisticuffs [EXC] • Perception [GR] •
Athletics [EXT] • Physique [EXC] •
Stealth [GR] • Glamour [EXC] •
Etherealness [EXC] • Kindred Powers
[EXT] • Sorcery [GR]

Charles Babbage

Calculation Engineer

Abilities: Tinkering [EXC] • Educ. [EXC]
• Perception [GD] • Athletics [AV] •
Physique [PR] • Fisticuffs [PR]

Alexander G. Bell

Inventor

Abilities: Fisticuffs [AV] • Tinkering
[EXT] • Perception [EXC] • Athletics
[AV] • Physique [AV] • Educ. [GD]

Sarah Bernhardt

Theatrical Performer

Abilities: Fisticuffs [PR] • Connect.
[EXC] • Charisma [EXT] • Perception
[GD] • Athletics [AV] • Physique
[AV] • Performing [EXT] • Comeliness
[EXT]

Otto von Bismarck

Mastermind

Abilities: Tinkering [AV] • Fisticuffs
[GR] • Perception [GR] • Athletics
[GD] • Physique [GR] • Stealth [AV] •
Educ. [GD] • Charisma [GD] •
Fencing [GR]

Elizabeth & Robert Browning

Writer(s) Her Abilities are 1st, his 2nd

Abilities: Fisticuffs [PR] • Perception [GR]
• Athletics [PR/AV] • Physique [PR/GD]
• Stealth [PR] • Connect. [GD] •
Educ. [GR/GD] • Charisma [GR]

Sir Francis Richard Burton

Explorer

Abilities: Fisticuffs [EXC] • Perception
[GD] • Athletics [GR] • Physique
[GD] • Stealth [GD] • Marksman
[EXC] • Courage [EXT] • Charisma
[GR]

Lewis Carroll

Writer and Mathematician

Abilities: Fisticuffs [PR] • Perception [PR]
• Athletics [PR] • Physique [AV] • Stealth
[PR] • Connect. [AV] • Educ. [EXC]

Capt. John Carter

Soldier of Fortune

Abilities: Fencing [EXT] • Marks. [EXC]
• Fisticuffs [EXT] • Perception [GR] •
Athletics [EXT] • Physique [EXC] •
Stealth [GR] • Charisma [GR]

Charles Darwin

Scientist

Abilities: Fisticuffs [PR] • Athletics
[AV] • Perception [GD] • Physique
[PR] • Educ. [EXC] • Tinkering
[PR]

Charles Dickens

Writer

Abilities: Physique [AV] • Athletics [AV]
• Fisticuffs [AV] • Perception [GR] •
Conn. [EXC] • Charisma [GR] •
Educ. [GD]

Benjamin Disraeli

Diplomat

Abilities: Connect. [EXT] • Perception
[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique
[GD] • Educ. [GD] • Connect. [EXT]

Count Vlad Dracula

Faerie Lord (Unseelie)

Abilities: Fisticuffs [GR] • Perception
[GD] • Athletics [GR] • Physique
[GD] • Stealth [EXT] • Comeliness [GR]
• Enchantment [GR] • Ether. [EXC] •
Powers [EXT]

Thomas Edison

Inventor

Abilities: Fisticuffs [PR] • Tinkering
[EXT] • Perception [GR] • Stealth [AV] •
Athletics [AV] • Educ. [GD] • Physique
[GD]

Prince Edward Albert (Bertie)

Nobleman (Crown Prince)

Abilities: Charisma [GR] • Perception
[AV] • Athletics [AV] • Physique
[AV] • Educ. [GD] • Connect. [EXT] •
Exchequer [EXT]

Rhyme Enginemaster

Dwarf Craftsman (& Mad Scientist)

Abilities: Fisticuffs [GD] • Perception

[GD] • Athletics [AV] • Physique
[GD] • Stealth [AV] • Love of
Metal [GR] • Tinkering [GR] • Educ.
[GD]

Sir Harry Flashman

Dashing Hussar

Abilities: Fisticuffs [GR] • Perception
[GD] • Athletics [GR] • Physique
[GD] • Stealth [EXC] • Marksman
[GD] • Courage [PR]

Phileas Fogg

Gentleman(?)

Abilities: Fisticuffs [GD] • Perception
[EXC] • Athletics [GD] • Physique
[GD] • Stealth [GD] • Exchequer [EXC]
• Connect. [GR] • Charisma [GD]

Dr. Victor Frankenstein

Mad Scientist

Abilities: Tinkering [EXC] • Perception
[PR] • Educ. [GR] • Fisticuffs
[PR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] •
Medical Skill [EXT]

Ulysses S. Grant

Hussar (Soldier)

Abilities: Fencing [GD] • Marks.
[GD] • Fisticuffs [GD] • Perception [GD] •
Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] •
Leadership [GR]

Sherlock Holmes

Consulting Detective

Abilities: Fencing [EXC] • Marks.
[GR] • Fisticuffs [GD] • Perception [EXT] •
Athletics [GR] • Physique [GR] •
Educ. [EXC] • Stealth [GR] • Hunch
[EXT]

Aldous Huxley

Scientist

Abilities: Fisticuffs [AV] • Perception
[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique
[AV] • Stealth [PR] • Educ. [EXC] •
Tinkering [GD]

The Invisible Man

Mad Scientist

Abilities: Perception [AV] • Educ. [AV] •
Fisticuffs [GD] • Athletics [AV] • Physique
[GD] • Medical Skill [EXT] • Stealth
[EXT]

Lord Kelvin (William Thomson)

Scientist

Abilities: Fisticuffs [AV] • Perception

tion[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [AV] • Stealth [PR] • Educ. [EXC] • Tinkering [GD] • Physics [EXT]

Abraham Lincoln

Diplomat

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[EXC] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GR] • Educ.[GD] • Oratory [EXT] • Connect. [EXT] • Leadership [EXT] • Marksman [GD]

Lady Ada Lovelace

Calculation Engineer

Abilities: Fisticuffs[PR] • Perception[GD] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [AV] • Educ. [EXC] • Tinkering [GR] • Exchequer[GD] • Stealth [AV]

Dr. Inigo Lovelorn

Mastermind

Abilities: Fisticuffs[PR] • Perception[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [PR] • Stealth [AV] • Tinkering. [EXT] • Charisma [GD]

Ludwig the First

Noble (ex-King of Bayern)

Abilities: Fisticuffs[PR] • Perception[PR] • Athletics [PR] • Physique [AV] • Exchequer[EXT]

Ludwig the Second

Noble (King of Bayern)

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GR] • Perception [EXC] • Athletics [GD] • Physique [GR] • Exchequer[EXT]

Marianne, Countess de Desirée

Adventures

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GR] • Comeliness [EXT] • Charisma [GR] • Perception[GD] • Athletics [AV] • Fencing [EXC] • Marksman [EXC] • Physique [GD] • Stealth [AV]

Karl Marx

Anarchist

Abilities: Marks. [GD] • Charisma [EXC] • Perception[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] • Stealth [GD] • Leadership [EXC]

Lola Montez

Adventures

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[GD] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] • Stealth [AV] • Comeliness [EXC] • Charisma [GR]

Professor Moriarty

Mastermind

Abilities: Fisticuffs[AV] • Perception[EXT] • Athletics [AV] • Physique

[PR] • Stealth [GR] • Tinkering [EXT] • Charisma [GD]

Grey Morrolan

Wizard

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] • Stealth [AV] • Sorcery [EXT] • Charisma [GR] • Marksman [GR]

Napoleon the Third

Rogue (and Emperor of France)

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[GD] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] • Stealth [AV]

Captain Nemo

Mastermind

Abilities: Fisticuffs[PR] • Perception[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [PR] • Stealth [AV] • Tinkering [EXT] • Charisma [GD] • Fencing [EXC] • Submarine Command [EXC]

Captain Thomas Olam

Secret Agent (& Game Designer)

Abilities: Fencing [GD] • Marks. [GD] • Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[AV] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [AV] • Stealth [AV] • Charisma [AV] • Comeliness [AV]

Dr. Richard Owen

Dinosaur Scientist

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[GD] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] • Paleontology [EXC]

Louis Pasteur

Scientist

Abilities: Fisticuffs[PR] • Perception[GD] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [AV] • Stealth [AV] • Biology [EXC]

Robur the Conqueror

Mastermind

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[EXC] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GR] • Stealth [PR] • Tinkering [EXT] • Charisma [GR]

Rudolf Rassendyl

Gentleman

Abilities: Fencing [EXC] • Marks. [GR] • Fisticuffs[EXT] • Perception[GD] • Athletics [GR] • Physique [AV] • Stealth [GR] • Charisma [GR] • Connect. [GD] • Exchequer [GD]

Gen. Rudolf von Tarlenheim

Dashing Hussar

Abilities: Fencing [EXC] • Marks. [GD] • Fisticuffs[GR] • Perception [GD] • Athletics [GR] • Physique [GR]

• Stealth [AV] • Charisma [GD] • Tactics [GR]

The Time Traveller

Inventor

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [AV] • Stealth [AV] • Tinkering [EXT] • Charisma [GD]

Mark Twain

Journalist

Abilities: Connect.[AV] • Educ. [EXC] • Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] • Stealth [AV] • Storytelling [EXT] • Charisma [GR]

Dr. Abraham van Helsing

Physician

Abilities: Fencing [GD] • Marks. [GD] • Fisticuffs[EXT] • Perception[GD] • Athletics [GR] • Physique [AV] • Stealth [AV] • Vampire Lore [EXT]

Dr. Jules Verne

Journalist and Diplomat

Abilities: Connect.[GR] • Educ. [GR] • Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[GR] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] • Stealth [AV] • Storytelling [EXT] • Charisma [GR]

Dragon Lord Verthrax

Dragon Lord

Abilities (in all forms): Fisticuffs [GD] • Perception[GR] • Athletics [GR] • Physique [EXT] • Stealth [GR] • Charisma [EXT] • Firecast [EXC] • Sorcery [EXC]

Queen Victoria

Noblewoman (Queen of England)

Abilities: Educ.[GD] • Perception[PR] • Athletics [PR] • Physique [PR] • Exchequer[EXT] • Connect. [EXT] • Charisma [PR] • Command [EXC]

Dr. John Watson

Physician

Abilities: Educ.[GD] • Perception[AV] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] • Medicine[GR] • Connect. [GD] • Marksman [GD]

Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin

Inventor

Abilities: Fisticuffs[GD] • Perception[AV] • Athletics [AV] • Physique [GD] • Stealth [AV] • Tinkering.[EXT] • Charisma [GD] • Fencing [GD] • Zeppelin Science & Design [EXT]

Dragon Characters

A Dragon is merely a Wizard who can change shape and 'breathe' fire. Merely.

—Grey Morrolan

One of the most powerful of the characters Players can choose, a Dragon can truly be a fearsome thing. So how do you fit Draconic Players in a Game? Here are a few hot tips I've found.

First of all, since Dragons are very rare, you don't have to let everyone be a Dragon unless it works for your Game. Force them to draw cards (example: "You must draw a 2 of any suit from the Sorcery Deck in order to become a Dragon."), or come up with a good reason why they should be allowed to play one of these enigmatic beings. As a last resort, you can always just say no; I have, on occasion, and if I can refuse a king, you shouldn't have any problem turning down a run-of-the-mill power player.

Second, since Dragons are very rare, they will automatically attract the attention of other beings who may be as powerful and as bad-tempered as they are. Your Dragons will automatically draw the fire of the most dangerous opponents in any Game, simply because a wise adversary always eliminates the biggest threat first.

Lastly, it's useful to remember that the average Dragon (in Dragon form) is not that much more powerful than a big human. Dragons are also not really designed for surface movement; they are slow, ungainly (Tie a blanket to your arms and legs and see how fast you run!), and can barely move in cramped quarters (like human habitations). They are really designed to attack from the air, swooping down to grasp the prey in foot talons or mouth and savaging it. So if you have trouble with Dragons running amuck in your Games, don't hesitate to fence them in with small rooms, tight passages and narrow doorways.

Ground Rules for Playing Dragons

- In Dragon form, a Dragon will always do physical damage based on his human Physique, but reading from the Animal Attack Table on page 186 and using the table below as a guide. Physical feats are based also on Physique, using the table below. This is because for all their huge wingspans and fearsome appearances, Dragons are actually rather light-boned and fragile; these are flyers, not tyrannosaurs, and

their bodies are very compact with muscles designed for whipcord toughness, not bull-like strength.

Physique	Animal Attack*	Can Carry†	Typical Strength Feat
PR, AV	Large	100lbs	Break wood beams
GD, GR	Very Large	150lbs	Bend bronze bars
EXC	Huge	200lbs	Bend iron bars
EXT	Gigantic	250lbs	Bend steel bars

*See page 186 † in normal flight

- It takes a Dragon one minute to change between forms, and as the transformation is so exhausting, it can only be done three times in any twenty-four hour period.

- When in human form, a Dragon will not have the strength, size, armor or attacks (including Firecast) of his Dragon form. He can, however, cast spells.

- Though Dragons can use any known spell, they can never Gather more than five cards in their Sorcery draw at any time. If the spell cannot be cast within five turns of Gathering Power, the spell is simply too involved for the Dragon to concentrate on, and he must disperse it uncast (the energy knot is unwoven without effect).

- Dragon Flight Speed is based upon the Physique of the Dragon, as listed on pg. 140.

- Dragons of Great Physique or above have enough natural armor in Dragon form to stop attacks, based on the Physique of the Dragon (see table below).

Physique	Wingspan	Body Length/wt	Armor stops per attack
PR, AV	10ft	6ft/100lbs	None
GD	20ft	10ft/150lbs	Stops 1 pt
GR	30ft	15ft/200lbs	Stops 2 pts
EXC	40ft	20ft/300lbs	Stops 3 pts
EXT	50ft	25ft/400lbs	Stops 4 pts

And Lastly, Firecast

As an inherent spell powered off the Dragon's internal magicks, Firecast cannot be Gathered together; instead each casting costs the Dragon 2 points of Health, recoverable at a rate of 2 points per day. The Firecast Spell has the following limits: a) the Dragon must be able to see his target and b) the target must be in a straight line from the Dragon's head. Firecasting ranges are based on the table on pg. 186.

Dwarf Characters

Compared to Dragons and the Faerie, Dwarfs are probably the *easiest* to deal with of all the non-human Characters your Players may choose to portray in an Entertainment.

Lords of the Ring

The Dwarfs are a fusion of Faerie Heritage and Mortal weakness. Long ago, the Dwarfs were another Kindred of Faerie, possibly related to Kobolds, who were so sickened by the constant fighting between the Courts that they voluntarily chose to renounce their Faerie powers and became mortal (long lived, true—the average Dwarfen lifespan is about two hundred years, but still mortal all the same). How the Dwarfs exactly accomplished this is unknown, but the tale itself, as related in the *Lay of Belgardiad the Iron Lord*, seems to involve a quest for a great Ring formed of “cold” Star Iron, the destruction of several tribes of Formorian ice giants, and the downfall of the Tuatha De Dannan from their palace in the clouds. Another legend of the Sundering (as it’s called) claims that the Dwarfs fell so in love with the strength and power of Cold Iron that in their desire to craft it, they renounced all their Powers.

Dwarf Characters in the Great Game

In a Game context, Dwarfs can usually be treated as very tough humans with a knack for using machines, save for the following special abilities:

- **Dwarfs are totally immune to fire.** You can burn their clothes, scorch their boots, and melt their tools, and all you’ll get is a naked, tool-less, infuriated Dwarf with bare feet. This extends to heat as well: Dwarfs can fall into pools of lava, be baked in ovens, and still come out of the experience alive and furious.

- Dwarfs are also especially resistant to Magick, so much so that most spells just bounce off their brawny backs. In fact, to build a spell that will work on a Dwarf is one of the most thaumically expensive propositions in all Sorcery. (With a Thaumic Definition cost of 16 points!)

- **There are no female Dwarf characters** (just as there are no female Leprechauns, no male Russalki and so on). Sex (and form) among the Faerie Kindred being a pretty optional affair unconcerned with reproduction, most take the most convenient sex at the time and revert to their old selves later. The Dwarfs take this one step further; they have no females, but being mortal, mate with whatever attractive Faerie types they favor (Niaads, Nymphs and Lake Ladies are Dwarfen favorites).

- Dwarfs normally have one name, and must earn a name related to their skills. **Players must always begin with Nameless characters;** this gives them a motivation to set out and adventure!

Love of Metal

When the Dwarfs renounced their Faerie heritage, they did it in exchange for the ability to work with the Cold Iron that other Faerie feared. This desire to shape Cold Iron gradually evolved into a general fondness for all types of metal, a *love* of metal so deep that even now it inspires Dwarfs to craft amazing things when they have it in their hands.

Love of Metal is a special affinity Dwarfs have for crafting and shaping metallic objects. A Dwarf’s Tinkering Ability is automatically enhanced by two levels when he is either crafting something made of metal, or working on a metal object. This is especially true of machines—Dwarfs love Steamtech and are so good at working with it that they are known as the consummate engineers of the Age. In addition, Dwarfs love metal so much that that they can smell metals of all types (the way you and I can smell food) up to a thousand feet away, even in very small amounts.



Faerie Characters

Next to Dragons, the second hardest pack of non-humans to fit into any Game are the Faerie, whether in their Seelie incarnations or their Unseelie hordes.

The rule in *my Games* is that Players may only play Seelie characters; and these are restricted to **Brownies**, **Pixies**, and the **Daoine Sidhe**. Feel free, however, to allow Players to command the fates of any of the other Seelie Kindred; it's your Game and your funeral. Just remember I'm safe over here on the other side of the Faerie Veil and I don't get mail.

As a side note, it's usually easier to think of Faerie as wizards who only have three spells: powerful, but not all-powerful. Judicious use of Iron and sorcery can keep most Faerie characters in line without having to resort to more draconian methods. Also, the fact that Faerie characters have to spread their Abilities between three very important Powers makes them a bit weaker overall in areas of Combat and Education skills (another way to control them).

The Rule of Iron

The first and most important thing about the Faerie is that they are **above all vulnerable to Iron**:

- **Steel** makes the Faerie uncomfortable and they will always try to avoid it. It requires at least an Average Courage for a Faerie Character to approach a large quantity of Steel (over 10lbs.), and at least a Good Courage for the character to remain around Steel for longer than a few minutes.

- **Iron** hurts the Faerie even more; it requires at least a Good Courage to approach a large quantity of iron and an Exceptional Courage to remain around it for more than a few minutes. Some Faerie can stay aboard warships or other large concentrations of Iron but it's like having a headache all the time, one reason that the High Faerie aren't as common in the Navies of New Europa as they once were.

- **Cold Iron** is *anathema* to the Faerie. To be around it causes them physical damage equal to losing 2 points of Health for every minute they are within a foot of a source of the stuff, no matter how small. Cold Iron is defined as *meteor iron*, a heavily magnetized form from space that is quite rare. Hosts are encouraged to make Cold Iron the equivalent of a magical weapon, and use it *very* cautiously.

- Faerie struck by steel or iron weapons will automatically take an additional two Wounds (and

six from Cold Iron). Because of this, the Faerie prefer to use bows firing **elfshot**, a poisonous kind of arrow that causes great damage, or swords made of specially enhanced **Faerie silver or gold** (as strong as steel).

Entering Faerie

Only the Faerie or a Mage using the proper spells can enter the Faerie Veil. The entryway may be through any standing circle of stones, flower ring, pond, lake, tree or even closet which has been previously designated an entryway into the Veil by the Host of the Game. Faerie characters may not create their own gate into the Mortal world; only their Kings (like Auberon and the Adversary) can do that.

Using Faerie Powers

While **no Faerie character can use sorcery** (only Auberon, a notable exception, and few Tuatha can), the Faerie do have access to three kinds of their own magick: **Etherealness**, **Glamour** and **Kindred Powers**.

- The speed of **Flight** is based on the **Etherealness** of the character, as listed in the table on page 140.

- The rate of passing through solid objects is based on your **Etherealness**, as below:

Etherealness	Wood	Stone	Metal	Steel	Iron
PR	No	No	No	No	No
AV	1ft/min	No	No	No	No
GD	2ft/min	1ft/min	No	No	No
GR	3ft/min	2ft/min	1ft/min	No	No
EXC	4ft/min	3ft/min	2ft/min	1ft/min	No
EXT	5ft/min	4ft/min	3ft/min	2ft/min	1ft/min

- You may change shape as often as you like, taking one minute to do so. You must, however, have *personally seen* whatever you are attempting to change into. You may not shapeshift to match a photograph or illusion.

- A **Glamour** stays erected until the Faerie character either dispels it or has it dispelled. The fact that a mortal *sees* through the Glamour has no effect on its continued existence. You can pick up Faerie Gold, kiss a Faerie woman (by the way, most Faerie beauty is enhanced by Glamour), or live in a Faerie castle. The best way, then, to think of Glamour is as an illusion with permanence and solid form.

- **Kindred Powers** are described in detail on the next pages, and are left up to the Host to decide their overall effects.

A Host's Guide to the Faerie

Following is an overview of all the common types of Faerie Kindred, arranged by general types. The listed powers are those known to the particular Kindred for that group.

I've also included all of the verifiable ways to repulse (drive off) various Faerie along with their Powers.

COMMON FAERIE REPULSIONS

- ☞ Repulsed by clothes turned inside out.
- † Repulsed by holy symbols and prayers.
- ☞ Repulsed by Iron.
- ♥ Marriage prohibition*
- ∴ Repelled by salt.
- ⚡ Frightened by bells.
- ☞ Cannot cross running water.
- ☞ Repelled by gifts.

*i.e. Striking a bride three times, seeing her in her furthest shift, etc.

• **Bogeyes** (aka Boggarts, Imps, Bugbears, Falchans, Redcaps, Bogles, Awd Goggies, Spriggans and Goblins): ☞ ☞ †

Typical Abilities: Fisticuffs [GR]
• Perception [AV] • Athletics [GD]
• Physique [GD] • Stealth [GR]

Evil Eye: To cast bad fortune upon anyone you can see with your naked eye. Good for one person at a time, it causes them to reduce all their abilities by one level until you cast the Eye on another person.

• **Brownies** (aka Grogans, Trows, Piskies, Hobs, Bwca, Fennoderee, Killimoulis and Gnomes): ☞ ☞

Typical Abilities: Fisticuffs [PR]
• Perception [GR] • Athletics [GD]
• Physique [PR] • Stealth [EXC]

Perform a Great Work: The ability to do the labor of many men in a single night; the number of men is based upon your level of Power (PR=2, AV=5, GD=10, GR=20, EXC=30, EXT=40), and the task must be accomplished from sun-down to sunup (that's the tradition).

• **Faerie Animals:** (Arkan Sonney, Black Dogs, Church Grims, Boobries, Cait Siths, Faerie Cattle, Cu Sith and Padfoots): ☞ ☞

☞ (Except Church Grims & Cait Sith)

Typical Abilities: Fisticuffs [PR]
• Perception [AV] • Athletics [AV]
• Physique [AV] • Stealth [GD]

Stealthy Tread: The ability to move absolutely silently, yet project an ominous, frightening footstep just somewhere behind your victim (scaring him half to death), no matter where you really are.

Rule the Animals: The ability to bend the wills of animals to your bidding, to charm and enchant them, and to make them follow your mental commands.

• **Fetches** (aka Co-walkers, Doppelgangers, and Fylgiars): ☞ ☞ †

Typical Abilities: Fisticuffs [GD]
• Perception [AV] • Athletics [AV]
• Physique [AV] • Stealth [EXC]

Be Unseen: The ability to remain unnoticed by anyone around you; like being invisible, but requiring no activity on your part. Detection spells just bounce off you; only Perception will do the trick.

Watchful Follower: To always know exactly where your favored person is (you must determine this at the start of creating a Fetch character). You must still travel to be with them, however.

• **Kobolds** (aka Knockers, Blue Caps, Wichtlein and Coblyneas): ☞ ☞

Typical Abilities: Fisticuffs [GD]
• Perception [GD] • Athletics [AV]
• Physique [GD] • Stealth [AV]

Portend Danger: The ability to sense oncoming danger (as described by the Host, obviously). Kobolds mostly use this to sense mine cave-ins; to sense other dangers raises the difficulty of the task by one level.

Smell Rare Earths: To be able to smell gems, gold, silver and platinum

the way others can smell a hot meal. You can scent rare earths of any amount up to a thousand feet away.

• **Leprechauns** (aka Clurichans) ☞

Typical Abilities: Fisticuffs [AV]
• Perception [GD] • Athletics [AV]
• Physique [AV] • Stealth [GD]

Cobble Shoes: The ability to make great shoes that when worn, cause mortals to dance uncontrollably. The shoes cannot be removed by the wearer, who will dance whenever sprightly Irish music is played.

Grant Luck: To bring good fortune upon anyone you can see with your naked eye. Good for one person at a time, it causes them to increase all their Abilities by one level until you cast the Eye on another person.

• **Nymphs** (Niaads, Dryads and Nereides): ☞ ☞ † ♥

Typical Abilities: Fisticuffs [PR]
• Perception [AV] • Athletics [PR]
• Physique [AV] • Stealth [AV]

Live in the Wood: The ability to meld and live within any wooden item. To the Nymph, the item is like a large, carved wooden house, with seats, beds and windows that look out onto the real world. The Nereides and Niaad version of this allows them to set up housekeeping in any body of water (Niaad) or seashore (Nereides).

Allure: The power to draw a mortal victim within eye contact to you, no matter what peril it places him in. When successful, the victim blindly walks towards you, drawn hopelessly into your web. The chosen mortal's ability to resist is based upon your level of Power versus his level of Courage. Used by Nymphs to seduce lovers whom they entrap within their trees, pools or waves forever.

• **Phookas** (aka Brags and Bugganes): ☞ †

Typical Abilities: Fisticuffs [EXC]

- *Perception*[GD] • *Athletics* [GR]
- *Physique* [GR] • *Stealth* [GD]

Take Animal Form: The ability to take one animal form of your choosing, be it rabbit, bear, wolf or whatever. The animal need not be of normal size; it can man-sized as well.

- *Pixies (aka Sprites, Elves and Fairies)*: ☼ ☽ ☿ ♄

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[PR]

- *Perception*[GD] • *Athletics* [GD]
- *Physique* [PR] • *Stealth* [EXC]

Love Charm: The ability to cause others, either mortal or Faerie, to fall into a consuming passion for another person. The charm lasts until it is either magically dispelled or you have removed it.

- *Forest Women (aka Dames Vertes, White Ladies and Giances)*: ♥

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[PR]

- *Perception*[GD] • *Comeliness*[EXT]
- *Charisma*[EXC] • *Stealth* [AV]

Healing Touch: The power to totally heal any harm or wound instantly. You may only use this power three times—ever—on a particular being.

Grant Creativity: The power to bring artistic brilliance upon anyone you can see with your naked eye. Good for one person at a time, it causes them to increase *Performance* or *Tinkering* Abilities by one level until you cast the eye on another person.

- *Haunts (aka Will-o-wisps, Jack in Irons, Trolls and Fachan)*: ☼ ☽ ☿ ♄

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[PR]

- *Perception*[AV] • *Athletics* [PR]
- *Physique* [AV] • *Stealth* [GR]

Terrifying Apparition: To create an aura of fear about yourself, that lasts up to one hour at a time (with a one hour rest in between). May only be used at night. The chosen mortal's ability to resist is based upon your level of Power versus their level of Courage.

- *Lake Ladies (aka Niades, River Women, Undines, Russalki, Gwra-gedd Annwns, Nixies and Sirens)*: ♥ ☽ ☿

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[PR]

- *Perception*[GD] • *Comeliness*[EXT]

- *Charisma* [GR] • *Stealth* [GD]

Raise Nature: The ability to create powerful thunderstorms, howling winds and minor earth tremors around yourself up to a mile. Not much damage, but guaranteed to scare any mortal half to death. **Allure:** As in the ability described above in Nymphs. Used by Lake Ladies to lure husbands underwater, or to drown those who have offended them.

- *Mermaids/men (aka Merrows, The Folk and The Blue Men)*: ♥

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[GD]

- *Perception*[AV] • *Athletics* [AV]
- *Physique* [GD] • *Stealth* [PR]

Take Human Form: The ability to change into a human form once per day for up to twelve hours. The Mermaid must then return to the water in her true form for one day before changing back again.

Allure: As in the ability described above in Nymphs. Used by Mermaids to lure husbands to their underwater homes, they must use their voices to sing their prey to them.

- *Nature Spirits (aka Pans, Satyrs, Fauns, Pucks, Brown Men, Green Men and Leshiye)*: ☼ ☽ ☿ ♄

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[GD]

- *Perception*[GD] • *Athletics* [GD]
- *Physique* [AV] • *Stealth* [AV]

Rule the Animals: As in the Faerie Animal Ability above.

Raise Nature: As in the Lake Lady Ability above.

- *Giants (aka Formorians, Furbologs, Trolls and Ogres)*:

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[GR]

- *Perception*[PR] • *Athletics* [AV]
- *Physique* [EXT] • *Stealth* [PR]

Terrifying Apparition: As in the Haunt ability above.

- *Selkie (aka Roane)*: ♥

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[GD]

- *Perception*[AV] • *Athletics* [AV]
- *Physique* [GD] • *Stealth* [GD]

Take Human Form: As in Mermaids above, but with no limit to the length of time in either form; you change whenever you shed your seal skin.

- *Spectres (aka Gabriel Rachets, Banshees, Bean-Nighe and Cwn Annwn)*: ☼ ☽ ☿ ♄

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[PR]

- *Perception*[AV] • *Athletics* [PR]
- *Physique* [PR] • *Stealth* [EXT]

Portend Danger: As in the Knocker power above, but not limited to any particular type of danger.

- *Water Demons (aka Nuckaleeves, Glastyn, Uisge, Jenny Greenteeth, Shellycoats and Kelpies)*: ☽ ☿ ♄

Allure: As in the Nymph Ability above. Usually used to lure in children or young women to be drowned.

- *Vampires (aka Baobhan Sith, Glastig and Leanan-Sidhe)*: ☼ ☽ ☿ ♄

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[GR]

- *Perception*[GR] • *Athletics* [EXC]
- *Physique* [GD] • *Stealth* [EXT]

Allure: As in the Nymph power above, but limited only to those of the opposite sex. (So far, I haven't met any gay vampires, but anything's possible.)

Take Animal Form: As in the Phooka power above, but limited to dogs, cats, rats, bats and snakes.

- *Faerie Lord (aka Daoine Sidhe)*: ☽ ☿ ♄ ♥

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[GD]

- *Perception*[GD] • *Athletics* [GR]
- *Physique* [GR] • *Stealth* [GD]

Enchantment: The ability to bend the will of a mortal to your bidding; to charm and enchant them, or to make him fall in love with you. The chosen mortal's ability to resist is based upon your level of Power versus his level of Courage.

- *The Unseelie Host (aka The Wild Hunt)*: ☼ ☽ ☿ ♄

Typical Abilities: *Fisticuffs*[GD]

- *Perception*[GD] • *Athletics* [GR]
- *Physique* [GR] • *Stealth* [EXC]

Enchantment: As in the Faerie Lord power above. After all, they are cousins, even if they hate to admit it.

Terrifying Apparition: As in the Haunt ability above.

Desperate Endeavour!

Behind us, we could still hear the bell-like *clang!* of steel and the sharp reports of pistol shots. Bullets *buzzzzzzed* by us as we fled, reaching out with mindless fingers of death; some of the remaining riders broke off from the melee and thundered after us. At least that evened the odds for Tarlenheim and his brave little band of defenders as they continued to block the main party.

Now the chase began in earnest. We were at least twenty minutes out of the Capital and running fast; our horses already tired from the long ride, while our assailants' were well rested from their wait in ambush. Now every advantage would count in the gruelling race that was ahead. Hooves beat the ground in rapid cadence as we hurtled up one rolling hill and down the next, our pursuers closing behind. Blood sang in my ears and the thick dust rose in choking billows in our wake; the sun beat down as our group ate up the miles between us and safety.

Crack! Whhhhhhhirrrr! I looked back over my shoulder as a bullet whizzed by all too close. They were gaining on us; another dust cloud of riders not far behind told me of the probable fate of Colonel Tarlenheim and his valiant Guardsmen. Our horses were just plain tireder than theirs. There was no way we were going to outrun them; we were just going to have to fight it out. *Aw hell,* I thought, drawing my nicked and battered sword. At least the odds should be even this time. Next to me, I could see Marianne grimly load a pistol and jam it into her belt.

As we reached the crest of the next hill, at the very edge of the city itself, the remaining highwaymen closed with us. We whirled to meet their charge with shot and steel, and the clashing fury of melee once again closed in around us. The other highwaymen would be arriving in moments.

Then a deep voice thundered through the chaos as we desperately hacked and hewed. "*For King and Country, boys!*" it shouted. "*For King and Country!*"

—Tom Olam,
An American Artist in Victoria's Court.

"There's no help in it. If we are to restore the King to his throne, we'll have to battle past all the Regent can hurl against us first."

Writing Falkenstein Adventures:

Using Your Literary License for Adventure Design



So you want to design Adventure Entertainments, hmmm? Like your Players, it's time for you, the Host, to go out and get yourself a big blank book (or a lot of sheets of notebook paper and a binder to keep it in). But unlike your Players, who use their Diaries and Journals to record events in the lives of the Dramatic Characters they have created, you're going to go one step further. You're going to write a Book.

A Book?

Yep. Your job description as Host is about to be expanded. If you're going to start designing Adventure Entertainments of your own (and, hopefully, create a rousing yarn of authentically "neo-Steam Age" fiction that will live down through the Ages), you'll need to learn a simple way to craft these adventures and make them work. Which means you're about to become a Writer whether you expected to or not.

The Splash Page: Plotlines for a Book?

The first step in the process is to design a Splash Page: a lurid synopsis of what your entire "Book" will be about, somewhat similar to the opening page of a paperback book (and written in the same place). Confused? Go over to the bookshelf right now and pull down the first trashy fantasy or science fiction novel that catches your eye. Open the cover and there it is—the splash page.

Your Splash Page should always begin with a lurid title of some sort, like DANGER AT HIGH NOON or DEATH STALKS! Under this should be a one page synopsis of the basic plot of your "Book." It should be fairly simple, written with a bit of lurid sensationalism, and give only the basic plot line. You can even start off with a one paragraph "scene" from the "book."

A Fiendish Plan

"You cannot mean that!" Melinda protested, backing away from the evil cloaked form approaching her.

The Count's eyes were wild as he brandished the heavy control Device. "Yes!" he exulted. "Indeed, I do, my dear. Even as we speak, my legions are preparing to descend upon the Capital and render the Guard helpless. In only a matter of hours, I will rule all this land, with you as my queen—willing or not!"



Count Rugen would soon have his vengeance. For soon, all New Europa would quail before the might of his deadly Electric Guns and the Clockwork armies that would wield them!

"H and me that
saber,
and I promise
you will be
treated fairly."

"B eg par-
don,
mon-
sieur, but as
long as I *have*
this saber, I do
not need your
assurances, and
need not pre-
sume upon
your word as a
gentleman,
non?"

—Captain Damien Fortune

VS

Count Alcour, the Master of
Magnetism

Then lead into a plot synopsis. Don't worry if the scene never happens in the course of your entertainments; most of the time these splash page scenes don't happen in real books either.

Spend a little time on thinking out the basic premise behind your Splash Page; it's going to be the foundation of your Adventure Entertainments to come. So if you want your premise to be interesting and have a lot of possibilities for adventure, remember: How many times have you put a book back on the shelf because the splash page didn't catch your eye? Take the time; you want to make sure your book gets read, don't you?

The Dramatis Personae in Order of Appearance: Cast of the Novel Revealed

The next page of your Book (unless you want to add a credits list, publisher's notes and a dedication just to enhance the "book feel" of your project) will be taken up by the Dramatis Personae list. This section will be used to describe the Dramatic Characters that you, the Host, will create for your Book.

Take a look at the information on creating Dramatic Personas for players (pgs. 144 through 163), then move back to this paragraph with the ideas of that section fresh in your mind. Now it's time to create a Cast of Players to populate the drama you are about to unfold before your audience. In short, you need a cast of Dramatic Characters to populate your saga. You don't need to write a lot; your Dramatis Personae List should contain only thumbnail sketches of the characters who will appear.

One difference between doing a "cast" list in a real Victorian novel and your version is that you will have to also fit in the game "mechanics" values for each character appearing, as well as the description. One way to make this not so glaring is to write these out as part of the description (an exceptional tinkerer, great fencer, and charismatic madman).

Dramatis Personae also need not appear in exactly the order listed, but doing so will help you organize your thoughts. Also, as more Characters are brought into the Book, you will be able to add them in the order they joined the cast, which will help you keep things straight.

Got your Characters? It's time to move on to actually writing your "book."

Chapter 1: What Has Gone Before

The first chapter of your Book, this could just as well be titled "What Has Gone Before", although you may have your own ideas for a title. Its purpose is to set up the backstory for your adventure(s), a sort of telling of all the events that will have begun before the actual Entertainment Adventure begins. The story can be as detailed as you want or a simple outline. It should, however, contain the following elements:

- An **Introduction of the Main Protagonists**, the characters who will involve and/or oppose the player's Dramatic Characters in the course of the book.
- The **Motivations** of the Main Protagonists who will appear in the Story(ies).
- **Important Events** in the Lives of these Characters.
- The **Events** that have brought about the story about to unfold.

By determining these questions, you will soon have a pretty good idea of where you'll want to take your storyline and who will be the most important Characters in it. The first Chapter will also help you zero in on what things will be important to your plotline and what characters you will need to concentrate in depth on as the story progresses.

From Two To Infinity: Further Chapters in Your Saga

Your "What Has Come Before" Chapter completed, it's time to start writing your "book", to put together the Adventure Entertainments that will keep your players busy and fruitfully occupied. There are two common ways to do this. The first method is by **Chapters**, with each Chapter representing a small portion of the story and each game session

Dramatis Personae in Order of Appearance

Count Rugen

Mastermind and Revenge-driven Lord of Castle Kaliban, an exceptional tinkerer, great fencer, and charismatic madman

Tinkering EXC • Fencing GR • Charisma GD

Lady Melinda Tidwell

Noblewoman and Investigator for the Crown

Comeliness EXT • Connections GR • Social Graces GR

Morgon the Dragon Lord

Diplomat and friend of Lady Tidwell

Perception EXC • Sorcery GD • Physique GR

Captain Alon Forest

Brave Hussar and Head of the Guard

Fencing EXC • Fisticuffs GD • Athletics GR

CHAPTER ONE

What Has Gone Before

Count Rugen of Castle Kaliban, the first son of the House of Kaliban, was sent abroad by his Father to study Engineering in Italy. In his absence, his Evil half brother Benedict murdered the old Count and, with the help of the corrupt King of Rolandia, had Rugen declared an outlaw and blackened his name to his fiancée, Lady Melinda. Rugen has returned from his studies to find his life ruined, and has sworn vengeance upon his brother and the King, by employing the secrets of a Lightning-throwing Device taught to him by his Mentor, the aged Inventor and Engineer Doctor Leonardo Bandoli.

CHAPTER TWO

Sword of the Phoenix

In which Count Rugen returns secretly to the Dungeons of Castle Kaliban to establish his Laboratory, and in which he gains an Ally in his old friend and retainer, Igor.

(Events of Game to follow)

making up a new Chapter in that saga. This option is best when you are planning a long campaign based around a single goal; I call this a Novel. A good example of a Novel would be Jules Verne's *Around the World in 80 Days*; the characters of Phileas Fogg, Mister Fixx and Passepartout appear in every chapter, and the entire novel is aimed toward one goal—getting around the world in the allotted time in order to win the 20,000£ wager.

The second way is to make each game session a separate **Short Story**. A Short Story is complete in and of itself; while it may refer to events that take place in other Short Stories, it is designed to pose a situation and resolve it all in one shot. This option is best when you are planning a series of unrelated adventures that may be using the same characters, what is often called a Series. A good example of a Series would be A. Conan Doyle's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (which appeared as a series of Short Stories published in *the Strand*). Each chapter represents a separate Short Story, but the characters of Holmes, Watson, LeStrade and Mrs. Hudson appear in every tale. Villains like Professor Moriarty or Col. Moran may make appearances from time to time, but unlike a novel, they are only passing through, not the main antagonists the heroes must always defeat.

Once you know if you're doing Chapters or Short Stories, the next step is to create the **Prologue**: a summary of what the particular Chapter or Story will be about. Think of this as an outline written in prose. The Prologue traditionally begins with the words, "In Which ..." followed by a description of the planned events to follow.

A smart idea is to describe the Prologue from the view of the players' adversaries, rather than trying to forecast the actual outcome of events (trust me; you won't be able to). The Prologue serves to sum up what you intend to do in the Entertainment, not what happens; that comes next.

Prologues are not commonly used in modern fiction; they're a very Victorian (and even pre-Victorian) affectation. If you're still stumped, it's probably a good time to visit the local Library and get reacquainted with the writings of the period.

A few things to remember as you write your Prologue: First, this will be an outline of what you plan to do in the Adventure Entertainment, so it should be fairly complete. Second, it should contain as many of the basic Elements of Victorian Melodrama as is possible without warping the storyline completely out of shape. This would be a good time to revisit the section on the Elements (pgs.136 through 137) and associated Props of Victorian Melodrama as well (pg. 138). Ask yourself what would fit into the Story at this point; if you've been doing Death Traps every Chapter, maybe it's time to try another tactic like a Heroic Sacrifice. Take some time on this; a good Prologue will make your Adventure Entertainments exciting and flow easily—an outcome well worth the investment in time and research.

Writing the Chapter/Short Story

This is the next step, but one which will be repeated over and over again throughout the life of your saga. The good news is, you won't actually have to be much of a writer to do this; with a bit of luck, the Chapter will almost write itself for you.

Let's go over the basic steps.

First, add any new Dramatis Personae who will appear in the Chapter or Short Story to your list in the front of the book. (Make sure to add their "game" information to this list as well.) Next, go back to your Prologue for the Chapter. Will there be any new places or locations that will make an appearance in this chapter? Will you need illustrations or pictures of important things the Players will encounter? Draw some simple maps or cut out whatever illustrations you think will be appropriate to the Chapter. Do not paste them in the book yet! Wait until you have moved on to the next part of the story; right now, just place them loosely among the Chapter pages.

Now go out and run the Adventure Entertainment. When it's all over, write down everything that happened in the adventure as soon as possible. Include any facts or things the players didn't know, as well as everything they

CHAPTER TWO

Sword of the Phoenix

In which Count Rugen Returns secretly to the Dungeons of Castle Kaliban to establish his Laboratory, and in which he gains an Ally in his old friend and retainer, Igor.

In this chapter, Count Rugen returned to the Castle just as the party, consisting of Jack Hawkinson, Explorer (played by Mark), Emily Sancriff, Writer of Travelogues (played by Sue), and Lieutenant Armand LeCroix of the 144th Grande Armée (played by Derek) have just taken the Castle as a summer villa. They were intrigued by the strange sounds coming from under the floor late at night and decided to investigate, when—

“Little do you realize the hellish power of the things you are dealing with, Count De Salvo!”

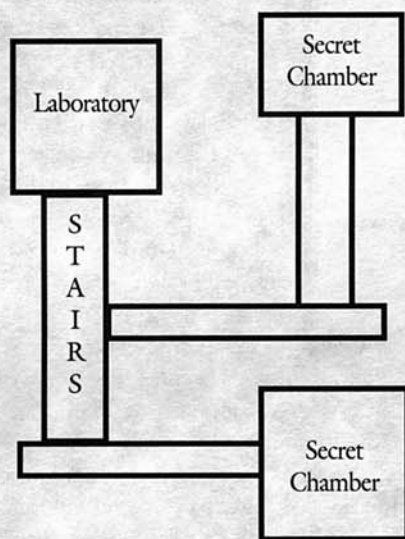
“Perhaps. But what power on earth can challenge that of the matchless force of the Atom? And with my Radium bomb, soon all Mankind will bow before me!”

—Adventurer Lars Harkonni vs.
Count De Salvo & the Society
of Evil

did do (if the Villain gave a long speech Offstage, this is where you'll write it.). You don't have to be a Dickens or Kipling; this section will almost write itself. All you have to do is tell what happened as clearly as possible.

Besides making a rousing yarn that you and your players may want to read aloud some night when things are slow, this method also gives you, the Host, a very exact record of what went on during each Entertainment session. When combined with the Player's individual Diaries and Journals, you'll have a bit of Game history to enjoy over and over again whenever you want.

A Map of the Tunnels Under The Castle



A Hot Tip: Binding Maps into your Book. Many old Victorian novels employ elaborate gatefolds to contain important maps or illustrations; you can do the same. Measure your book to determine its height and width. Multiply both values by two and get a piece of paper (do several of these at once to save time—thin fake parchment papers are cool and really in period) in the resulting size. Draw your map on one side, then fold the paper in quarters and paste the bottom-most side onto a blank page in your book at an appropriate spot. Unfold the paper whenever you need to refer to the map. Instant Victoriana!

You may also want to use the inside two pages of your book to draw maps of locations that will commonly be visited in the course of your Story(ies). These end pages (and the back ones as well) make a great place to place color maps or drawings of the most important Scenes in your book.

Becoming a Literary Lion

The first Book is always the hardest, and so it will be with yours. But by using this method, you'll (hopefully) soon be breezing through Prologues, Chapters and Dramatis Personae like a pro. After a while, you may even start to write new Stories to add on to the original epic, the first step to a successful career as a Steam Age Literary Lion. So get out your pen and your blank book, because Fame and Fortune (or at least some great Adventure Entertainments) await!

Blazing Guns, Flashing Blades, Heroic Feats & Derring Do:

The Game Mechanics of Castle Falkenstein



our blade screams from the scabbard as you face the Faerie Lord. Now is the time to call upon all your skills—Victory is at hand!

Fortune Decks

The “mechanics” of a *Castle Falkenstein* Game revolve around the idea of the Fortune Deck: a deck of standard playing cards used by the Host to help resolve rules questions in the Game. The Fortune Deck has much the same function as dice do in many other roleplaying games, but are actually a lot more useful, because they can do more than produce random numbers. Cards from the Fortune Deck can also:

- Be added to the Abilities of players and Host-controlled characters alike to enhance their chances of performing certain Feats (see below).
- Be used to cast fortunes for Characters in the Game, using traditional cartomancy systems.
- Be used to play authentically Victorian whist during lulls in the action.

To create a Fortune Deck for your Game, all you'll need is a deck of standard playing cards (Jokers included), available in most drug stores, supermarkets or game shops. Any standard deck will do; you may want to personalize your Game by purchasing a special back design or style that suits your tastes.

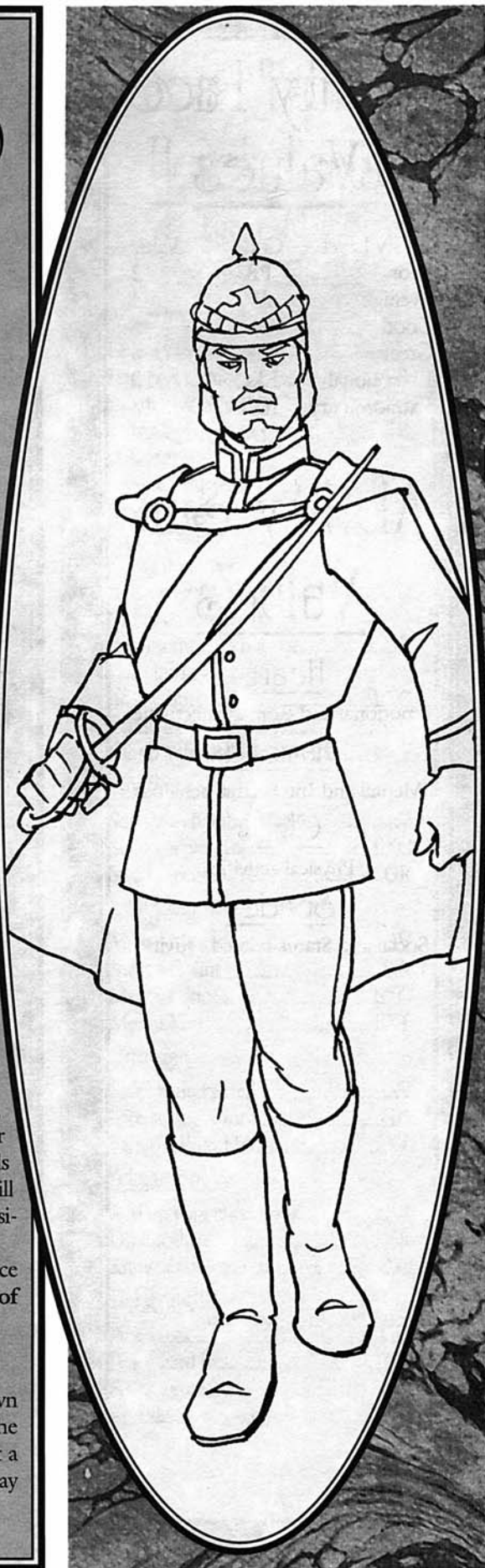
Stacking the Deck

As a prevention against cheating, you may also want to mark your Deck (no—to prevent cheating! Shame on you!). To do this, arrange all your cards in numerical order (from Ace to King) and in Suit order (Hearts, Diamonds, Spades and Clubs). Now, holding the Deck firmly in one hand, write your name in indelible ink on the top edge of the deck. If a question of ringer cards arises later on, just arrange the cards in their original order and any false card will show up immediately. However, when re-shuffled, it will still be almost impossible to determine what card is which from the back.

Once your Fortune Deck is prepared, shuffle it thoroughly and place it face down in front of you. Deal each player four cards; this will be the start of their Fortune Hand.

The Fortune Hand

Each character begins with a Fortune Hand of four “Fortune Cards”, drawn from the Fortune Deck. Fortune Cards are used to augment any type of feat the character attempts during the Game. Cards do not have to be used to attempt a Feat; often a character's Abilities will be enough to succeed. Fortune Cards may also be used to enhance an already successful Feat, making it even better.



Ability Face Values

Ability Level	Code	Value
Poor	PR	2
Average	AV	4
Good	GD	6
Great	GR	8
Exceptional	EXC	10
Extraordinary	EXT	12

Ability Suit Values

Hearts

Emotional and Romantic activities

Diamonds

Mental and Intellectual activities

Clubs

Physical activities

Spades

Social and Status-related activities

Fortune Cards may not be “discarded”; they must be used to perform a Feat of some type. New cards are gained every time a card is used to perform a Feat; used cards are shuffled into the Fortune Deck immediately and a new card drawn for the next turn.

Besides managing the Fortune Deck, the Host also has his own Fortune Hand, which is used to enhance the Abilities of the Villains, Supporting Characters and Feats at his command. He too draws new cards whenever his are used in play.

Face Values

Each Fortune Card has what is called a **Face Value**, based on the suit of the card and its numerical value. Face cards also have numerical values: Jacks are worth 11 points, Queens worth 12 points, and Kings worth 13 points. Aces are the high card in the Fortune Deck, with a value of 14 points. Jokers are “wild” and automatically have a Face Value of 15 in any Suit the user desires.

Abilities also have Face Values, relating to the Level of Ability and the type of activity the Ability falls into. Each type of activity has a related Suit (see sidebar). These Suits are listed in the descriptions of how to use the Ability on pages 159 through 163; they are marked like so [♥] next to their titles.

Every Ability is also rated from **Poor** to **Extraordinary**, with each Level having a numerical “value.” The Face Value is a combination of the Suit the Ability falls into and this numerical value (see sidebar table).

Example: An Athletics Ability of Good would have a Face Value equal to a 6 of Clubs: Clubs because Athletics is a Physical Ability, and 6 because of its numerical value, shown in the table above.

Heroic Feats

Your Hero stands, saber ready at the edge of the yawning chasm; across the vast gap, the Heroine struggles futilely in the arms of the Villain. From where you stand, you spy a hanging vine; you know that if you can just leap to it and swing over the chasm, you can snatch the Heroine in your arms and carry her to safety. But how will you do it?

Simple. Here’s how you’ll do **anything** you need to do in the Great Game.

1) **First, decide what it is you want to do:** the Heroic Feat (as it’s sometimes called) that you want to perform.

2) **Next, decide what Ability you’ll need** to perform the Feat (if there’s some doubt, talk to the Host of your Game and work out the best possible Ability). Example: Skiing could be considered an Athletics Ability, so Athletics could reasonably be used as the proper Ability to do a ski jump. As a rule, most things you will want to do will reasonably fall within one of the Abilities described on pages 159 through 163.

If the Feat requires an Ability you don’t have, you will automatically default to **Average** in the required Ability, unless the Host rules otherwise. **Example:** The Host rules that flying a Helical Cloud Clipper will require the Ability of Piloting; no other Ability will do. He rules that an Average person probably would be able to start the Clipper, but not control it.

3) **Finally, the character attempting the Feat adds the Face Value of the Ability he’s using to whatever Fortune Card(s) he has decided to play, then compares his Total against the Total of the Feat’s Required Level of Ability** (as determined by looking at the examples on pages 159 through 163 or through the Host’s best judgment) and whatever Fortune Card(s) the Host chooses to play.

The Effect of Suits on Playing Fortune Cards

While Fortune Cards can be used to enhance the Face Value of Abilities by adding their Face Value to that of the Ability, there is a catch. When a Fortune card is of the same Suit as the Ability it is added to, it has a Face Value equal to

its numerical value. But if the Fortune card is not in the same Suit as the Ability it has been added to, it only has a Face Value of 1 point. Example: The character plays a Queen of Spades with a Social Graces Ability of Great (Face Value=8 of Spades). Because both are in the same Suit, their Total value is 20. However, on the next turn, the character plays a Queen of Hearts on the same Social Graces Ability. This time, the cards are not in the same Suit, so the Fortune Card only adds one to the Total, which is then 9.

The good news is, **you can combine cards from any suit to make up a Total.** This means even if you need Hearts and your Hand is all Spades and Clubs, you can combine those Spades and Clubs and add them to your Ability just like you would if you had used a Heart. You could even combine a low-ranked Heart card with other Suits; the danger, of course, is that you will probably be using cards that you might really want in another situation!

Resolving A Feat

Once you've gone through the three steps shown above, the only thing left to do is determine the results of your attempt. There are five kinds of resolutions possible: a **Fumble**, a **Failure**, a **Partial Success**, a **Full Success**, and a **High Success**. Each is determined by comparing the Total of your Ability and any card(s) played on it against the Total of the Feat's Required Level of Ability and any cards the Host has played with it.

- **If the character's Total is less than half that of the Feat's Required Level of Ability Total, the attempt is a Fumble.** Fumbles are always resolved by the Host, using his best judgement for the particular Ability. Example: The character attempts to open a lock. His Tinkering Ability is Poor, with a Face Value of 2. He plays a 7 on top of this, for a Total of 9 points. The Feat's Required Level of Ability is Great, with a Face Value of 8. The Host plays a Queen on top of this for a Total of 20 points. The result is a Fumble; looking at the examples, the Host decides that the lockpick jams in the lock and breaks.

- **If the character's Total is less than that of the Feat's Required Level of Ability Total, the attempt is a Failure.** Failures are always resolved by the Host, using his best judgment to determine how serious the result is. Example: The character attempts to open a lock. His Tinkering Ability is Average with a Face Value of 4. He plays a 5 on top of this, for a Total of 9 points. The Feat's Required Level of Ability is Great, with a Face Value of 8. The Host plays a 2 on top of this for a Total of 10 points. The result is a Failure; looking at the examples, the Host decides that the lock just won't open no matter how hard the character tries.

- **If the character's Total is equal or greater than that of the Feat's Required Level of Ability Total, the attempt is a Partial Success.** Partial Successes are always resolved by the Host, using his best judgment to determine how limited the result is. Example: The character attempts to open a lock. His Tinkering Ability is Average with a Face Value of 4. He plays a 7 on top of this, for a Total of 11 points. The Feat's Required Level of Ability is Good, with a Face Value of 6. The Host plays a 4 on top of this for a Total of 10 points. The result is a Partial Success; looking at the examples, the Host decides that the lock opens, but with a lot of creaking and noise.

- **If the character's Total is equal to or greater than half again that of the Feat's Required Level of Ability Total, the attempt is a Full Success.** Full Successes are always resolved by the Host, using his best judgment to determine what the result is. Example: The character attempts to open a lock. His Tinkering Ability is Great with a Face Value of 8. He plays a Queen on top of this, for a Total of 20 points. The Feat's Required Level of Ability is Average, with a Face Value of 4. The Host plays a 5 on top of this for a Total of 9 points. The result is a Full Success; looking at the examples, the Host decides that the lock opens easily with no noise.

Some Typical Heroic Feats

& Their Ability Requirements

Athletics

Leap a yawning chasm	GD
Leap to a chandelier.....	GR
Balance on tightrope or other precarious place	EXC
Balance on a moving vehicle.....	EXC
Grab a hanging rope or ladder.....	AV
Swing on a rope into someone	GD
Swing on a rope and catch someone en route.....	GR
Leap into the saddle on the run	EXC
Climb a cliff.....	GR
Climb a sheer cliff.....	EXT

Charisma

Seduce a chambermaid.....	AV
Seduce a princess	EXC
Sway a mob	GR

Connections

Meet a Mayor.....	AV
Meet a Count	GR
Meet a Prince	EXC
Meet a King.....	EXT

Courage

Face an angry clerk.....	AV
Face an angry mob.....	GD
Face the Wild Hunt	EXT

Education

Add up your checkbook.....	AV
Do calculus	GR
Know an obscure language	EXC

Tinkering

Pick a lock	GD
Pick a hard lock	GR
Fix an automotive	GD
Rebuild an automotive.....	GR

“If we can
but reach
the edge
of the catwalk,
we can climb
back to the
deck and reach
the Airship’s
Bridge in
time!”

“And the
alterna-
tive,
Captain?”

“Quite
simple,
old
man. We
plummet
headlong ten
thousand feet
to our deaths
... Ready?”

—Somewhere high over the
Atlantean Ocean

• If the character’s Total is equal to or greater than twice that of the Feat’s Required Level of Ability Total, the attempt is a High Success. High Successes are always resolved by the Host, using his best judgment to determine how great the result is. Example: The character attempts to open a lock. His Tinkering Ability is Extraordinary with a Face Value of 12. He plays a King on top of this, for a Total of 25 points. The Feat’s Required Level of Ability is Good, with a Face Value of 6. The Host plays a 10 on top of this for a Total of 16 points. Even so, the result is a High Success; looking at the examples, the Host decides that the lock not only opens in half the expected time, but that no Attempt will be required to open any other similar lock in the building.

Doing Several Feats at Once.

You may want to do several Feats at the same time, or combine Feats. The simplest way to do this is to determine the most important Feat that will be attempted, have the Host decide on that Feat’s Required Level of Ability, then raise it by one level for each additional Feat added to that first one. Example: The character wants to leap out over a chasm and snag a hanging vine there, then swing over to the other side. The Host looks at this and decides that the jump to the vine is the most important of these feats; if the character misses, the swinging part will be moot. The Host decides that normally leaping to the vine would require a Great Level of Ability; adding the swing at the end will boost that to an Exceptional Required Level.

Contested Feats

You may also want to perform a feat in opposition to another character, whether a character controlled by the Host or another player. In these cases, called Contested Feats, the opposing party selects an Ability that most likely would be used to oppose the Ability you have chosen to use. Both parties add their Ability’s Face Value to whatever card(s) they choose, with the result being determined the same way as with any uncontested Feat. Example: Mister X attempts to Mesmerise (using his Charisma) Miss Phoebe, who uses her Courage to resist the attempt. Mister X’s Charisma is Extraordinary with a Face Value of 12; he plays a King of Hearts on top of this, for a Total of 25 points. Miss Phoebe’s Courage is Exceptional, with a Face Value of 10; she plays a 10 of Hearts on top of this for a Total of 22 points. The result is a Partial Success; the Host decides that while Miss Phoebe may become dizzy and slightly suggestible, she will not do anything she would normally object to (such as removing her clothes for Mister X).

Combined Feats

Characters can also combine their efforts to accomplish a feat. This is done by adding the Total Abilities of all the characters involved in the Feat, plus the lowest card in the proper suit between them. Example: Prince Ruprect and Col. von Trapp are attempting to defuse a dynamite bomb hidden under the Austrian Imperial Museum. Ruprect’s Tinkering is Good (6 of Diamonds), while von Trapp’s is Great (8 of Diamonds). Although Col. von Trapp has an seven of Diamonds in his Fortune hand, the two must instead play the 2 of Diamonds in the Prince’s hand. The Total is 16. Meanwhile, the Host rules that defusing the Mad Dynamiter’s infernal package has a Required Level of Ability of Exceptional (Face Value 10), and plays a 9 on top of this for a Total of 19 points. The result is a Failure; the bomb keeps on ticking, but since it wasn’t a Fumble, it doesn’t blow up in our heroes’ faces.

Combining feats requires a bit of judicious thinking on the part of the Host; some things just can’t be done by more than one person at a time, and there is usually a definite limit where extra people actually make it harder to perform a task. Hosts should always use their discretion in these cases, and not let themselves be pushed around by a “committee” of over-involved players.

Combat: A Special Kind of Feat



ou swing easily over the chasm and sweep the Heroine up in your arms, depositing her neatly back on the other side. You swing back once again and land lightfooted on the rocky precipice in front of the Villain, saber drawn. He brings his blade up in a sardonic salute, and with a clash of blades, the battle begins!

Combat: The Ultimate Feat

Combat is a very specific kind of Heroic Feat; it takes place over a lengthy amount of time and must be attempted over and over again until it's resolved. The actual Feat of Combat is performed by making an Attack, using one of the Combat Abilities that matches the weapon you intend to use.

There are two kinds of Attacks that may be used in Combat: **Ranged Attacks** and **Hand to Hand Attacks**.

Ranged Attacks

- Ranged Attacks may be made at up to twice the Effective Range, but at a **two point Disadvantage** subtracted from the Attack. A Ranged Attack used at less than one quarter Effective Range gains a **two point Advantage** added to that Attack.

Ranged Weapons of the Steam Age

Wound types indicate damage at different Success levels

Attack Type	Effective Range	Magazine or Total load	Wounds (Partial)	Wounds (Full)	Wounds (High)
Bows	30yds	12	1	2	3
Carbines	90yds	1	3	4	5
Chassepot Rifle	140yds	1	4	5	6
Derringers	10yds	2	2	3	4
Drop Pistols	20yds	4	3	4	5
Elfishot	30yds	6	4	5	6
French Mitrailreuse	300yds	36	8	9	10
Gatling Gun	300yds	42	8	9	10
Muskets (rifled)	80yds	1	4	5	6
Prussian Needle Rifles	120yds	1	4	5	6
Pepperbox Revolvers	20yds	6	3	4	5
Reciprocators	10yds	6	4	5	6
Shotguns	30yds	2	5	6	7
Shrapnel*	6yds	NA	8	9	10
Thrown Daggers	5yds	1	None	2	3
Thrown Spears	10yds	1	1	2	3

*Includes Grenades, Artillery or other explosives. Range is distance from where explosive or shrapnel lands. Hot

Tip: If using miniature figures, 1 standard figure equals two yards.

- **A Special Ranged Weapon—The Dragon Firecast:** Sorcerously created, a Dragon's Firecast is always a tight, straight, column of flame no wider than 6 feet (if using miniatures, this is equal to one figure length). Range and damage are determined by the size of the Dragon; the bigger, the more dangerous:

Optional Rules

The Great Game is a role-playing game, not a simulation. Therefore, I play fast and loose with the usual wargamer types of stuff like *turns*, *autofire* and the like. The overriding rule should be simple: Use common sense to decide the details, not tons of rules!

Turns & Time in

Combat

Should be taken in order of highest to lowest Perception Ability. If equal, all actions are taken by mutual consent, but are considered simultaneous.

Reloading

Reloading takes 1 minute, no matter what type of gun. This is 1870; what cartridge arms there are will be primitive at best.

Area Effect Weapons

Shrapnel and explosive shells are treated as a particularly deadly attack that occurs over an area. The Athletics Feat is against the chance that the explosion hits *near* you, not directly on you. Therefore, when one is used, everyone within the Area of Effect must make an Athletics Feat check against the Marksmanship of the Attacker, who designates where he wants the attack to be placed.

Type	Area Effect
Shotguns.....	6 feet
Shrapnel.....	12 feet

Autofire Weapons

Reciprocators, Gatling Guns and Mitrailleuses can all fire at up to three targets each turn, as long as the targets are all within 6 feet of each other. The attacker must make a separate attempt to hit each target.

Dragon Firecasts

Dragons Firecast as a Marksmanship attack vs the target's Athletics. A New European Dragon's Firecast is always in a straight line.

Hand to Hand

A Physical Hand to Hand attack is almost always a contest of Fisticuffs Ability vs Fisticuffs Ability. When using *weapons*, Hand to Hand defaults to either to Fencing Ability or to Fisticuffs for knives and clubbing weapons.

Animal Attacks

Nasty, eaty, bitey, chewy things with sharp white teeth, Animals (and Faerie Creatures) use their Athletics Ability to attack and defend.

Dragon Firecast Ranges & Wounds

Dragon's Physique	Effective Range	Wounds (Partial)	Wounds (Full)	Wounds (High)
Poor	10yds	4	5	6
Average	20yds	5	6	7
Good	30yds	6	7	8
Great	40yds	7	8	9
Exceptional	50yds	8	9	10
Extraordinary	60yds	9	10	11

Hand to Hand (and Claw and Bite) Attacks

• **Hand to Hand Attacks** may be used up to six feet away from the Attacker (if using miniatures, this is equal to one figure length).

Hand to Hand Weapons & Attacks

Attack Type	Wounds (Partial)	Wounds (Full)	Wounds (High)
Animal Attack (tiny)	None	None	1
Animal Attack (small)	None	1	2
Animal Attack (large)	1	2	3
Animal Attack (very large)	4	5	6
Animal Attack (huge)	7	8	9
Animal Attack (gigantic)	8	9	10
Blow (PR to AV Physique)	None	1	2
Blow (GD to GR Physique)	1	2	3
Blow (EXC to EXT Physique)	2	3	4
Cudgels & Clubs	1	2	3
Daggers, bayonets, knives	1	2	3
Hatpins	1	2	3
Life Preservers	1	2	3
Rapiers & Court Swords	4	5	6
Sabers	4	5	6
Spears	2	3	4

Resolving Combat

Combat is resolved as any other kind of Feat: The Attacker adds the Face Value of the Combat Ability he's using to whatever Fortune Card(s) he decides to play, then compares his Total against the Total of the Defender's Athletics Ability and whatever Fortune Card(s) the Defender chooses to play.

• **If the Attacker's Total is less than half that of the Defender's Total, the Attack is a Fumble and causes no Wounds.** In fact, it may possibly cause the Attacker harm. To resolve this, draw a card from the Fortune deck **immediately**.

• A draw of a **Heart** means the weapon **harms the nearest friendly target** possible. If there is no one present, the weapon harms the Attacker, doing the equivalent of a Partial Success of Wounding.

• A draw of a **Diamond** means the weapon **malfunctions** in some way; non-mechanical weapons break or mechanical weapons jam.

• A draw of a **Club** means the weapon is **dropped** accidentally.

• A draw of a **Spade** means the weapon **harms the Attacker**, and will cause damage using the Partial Success Wound Column for the Attack type.

Example: The Attacker is using a saber, and his Fencing Ability is Poor, with a Face Value of 2. He plays a 3 on top of this, for a Total of 5 points. The Defender's Athletics Ability is Great, with a Face Value of 8. He plays a 4 on top of this for a Total of 12 points. The Attack is a Fumble; a card is immediately drawn from the Fortune Deck. It is a Spade; the saber accidentally buries itself in the Attacker's foot, causing 4 Wounds.

• **If the Attacker's Total is less than the Defender's Total, the Attack Fails and causes no Wounds.** **Example:** The Attacker is using a saber, and his Fencing Ability is Poor, with a Face Value of 2. He plays a 6 on top of this, for a Total of 8 points. The Defender's Athletics Ability is Great, with a Face Value of 8. He plays a 2 on top of this for a Total of 10 points. The Attack will Fail.

• **If the Attacker's Total is equal to or greater than the Defender's Total, the Attack is a Partial Success and will use that Wound Column for the Attack type.** **Example:** The Attacker is using a saber, and his Fencing Ability is Great, with a Face Value of 8. He plays a 10 on top of this, for a Total of 18 points. The Defender's Athletics Ability is Exceptional, with a Face Value of 10. He plays a 7 on top of this for a Total of 17 points. The Attack will cause 4 Wounds.

• **If the Attacker's Total is equal to or greater than half again the Defender's Total, the Attack is a Full Success and will use that Wound Column for the Attack type.** **Example:** The Attacker is using a saber, and his Fencing Ability is Great, with a Face Value of 8. He plays a Queen on top of this, for a Total of 20 points. The Defender's Athletics Ability is Average, with a Face Value of 4. He plays a 6 on top of this for a Total of 10 points. The Attack will cause 5 Wounds.

• **If the Attacker's total is equal to or greater than twice the Defender's, the Attack is a High Success and will use that Wound Column for the Attack type.** **Example:** The Attacker is using a saber, and his Fencing Ability is Great, with a Face Value of 8. He plays a King on top of this, for a Total of 21 points. The Defender's Athletics Ability is Poor, with a Face Value of 2. The best he can He play is an 8 for a Total of 10 points. The Attack will cause 6 Wounds.

Armor

Unfortunately, personal armor is not really an option in Steam Age combat; by 1840, most bullets could easily penetrate any existing body armor, and modern fencing techniques and blades had rendered plate and chain obsolete. Even the cuirassier's breastplate and helmet of the time were more for show than for function; bullets could punch through it like a knife through butter and sabers could easily stab through the openings at neck and arms. In short, if you really want armor in the Steam Age, be prepared to wait until after the Great War and the invention of bulletproof fabrics.

If, however, you must have body armor in your Falkenstein Game, as a general rule it will only stop 1 to 2 points of damage at any one time, and will severely hamper both movement and combat abilities. If armor is worn, a character must automatically reduce all of his Physical Abilities (with the exception of Physique) by one Level.

Health and Injury

Health is the measure of a Hero or Heroine's ability to withstand shocks, blows, wounds or other bodily injuries. Health is determined by a combination of your Courage and your Physique, and is measured in points (see table next page).



The Black Spot Rule

So you just *have* to kill your players, eh? The Black Spot rule works like this; whenever a Character has gone below 0 Health, draw one card randomly from the Fortune Deck. If the card is a spade [♠] of any value, the character has perished. If the value is anything other than a spade, the character lingers on until healed.

Dragon Health

The bad news is, in New Eurpoa, Dragons aren't anywhere as tough as they are in the average fantasy novel. Dragons are flyers, and with that heritage comes the need for hollow bones and whipcord muscles, all of which make Dragons a lot more vulnerable than you'd think. As a result, a Dragon's Health (in all forms) is equivalent to a human of the same Physique, plus two additional Health.

Health Chart

PHYSIQUE						
COURAGE	PR	AV	GD	GR	EXC	EXT
PR	3pts	4pts	5pts	6pts	7pts	8pts
AV	4pts	5pts	6pts	7pts	8pts	8pts
GD	5pts	6pts	7pts	8pts	8pts	8pts
GR	6pts	7pts	8pts	8pts	8pts	9pts
EXC	7pts	8pts	8pts	8pts	9pts	9pts
EXT	8pts	8pts	8pts	9pts	9pts	10pts

Wounds and other injuries taken are subtracted from your Health; when your Health reaches a *negative* number, you are unconscious (not dead).

Shocks, Blows, Wounds & Death

There are no substantial differences between types of damage in a *Falkenstein* adventure, no killing versus non-killing damage as in other games. The only real difference is that blows and punches can be recovered from very rapidly, whereas real wounds take much longer.

To kill someone, you must first beat or Wound them into unconsciousness, then make a point of saying that you continue to harm them until they die. You cannot wound them "below" their capacity; you must choose to kill them. In short, you just say, "I kill them." A free shot, but with troublesome moral implications.

Unusual Kinds of Injury

- Heroines have a special option besides taking blows or wounds: **swooning**. A swoon happens when a Victorian Lady's senses are overwhelmed in some way or another; she takes a "Constitutional Shock." Ladies who do not have a Courage equal to or greater than Good are prone to swooning. Common ways to cause a swoon are great stress, mesmerism or a threatening gaze, great excitement or rough treatment. Each "shock" causes harm just like a weapon strike or blow, but swoons are recovered from faster than from any other attack.

Swooning

Type of Constitutional Shock	Wounds
Extremely foul language	3
Great heat, cold or too-tight corset	2
Threatening gaze	1
Rough treatment (grabbing, pushing, slapping)	4

- **Falling, trampling, electrocution, fire, poison or other environmental injuries** are treated as Wounds.

Environmental Hazards

Falls	1 Wound for every 20 feet fallen
Trampling, collisions	1 Wound for every 100lbs of animal
Electrocution/Lightning strike	1 Wound/second for every 200 volts
Fire/Firestorm/Acid	4 Wounds/minute
Poison	2 Wounds/min until antidote administered
Earthquake	4 Wounds/minute
Drowning/Suffocation	8 Wounds/minute

Very Important: You can be killed by these kinds of injuries. When you have reached a negative Health value through any of the above, you must draw a single card from the Fortune Deck. If a Spade of any value is drawn, you will have perished from your injuries. Otherwise, you are wounded but alive.

• **Regular Torture** (using painful but not damaging methods) and **Privation** are treated as Blows. **Severe Torture** (using physically damaging methods) is treated as Wounding.

• **Faeries Struck by Iron or Steel:** When Faeries are struck by steel or iron weapons, the wounds done are automatically considered to cause an additional 2 Wounds of damage at that time, no matter what the level of success of the Attack.

• **Faeries Struck by Cold Iron:** When Faeries are struck by cold iron weapons, the wounds done are automatically considered to cause an additional 6 Wounds of damage at that time, no matter what the level of success of the Attack. When a Faerie character has reached a negative Health value through damage by Cold Iron, you must draw a single card from the Fortune Deck. If a Spade of any value is drawn, you will have perished from your injuries. Otherwise, you are wounded but alive.

Recording Shocks, Blows and Wounds

Constitutional Shocks, Blows and Wounds taken should be noted down either in your Diary at the time of the incident, or on a separate scrap of paper. This is primarily so that you will know when to recover Health from each type of injury.

- Whenever you take a **Constitutional Shock**, remember to record it by writing down an "S."
- Whenever you take a **Blow**, remember to record it by writing down a "B."
- Whenever you take a **Wound**, remember to record it by writing down a "W."

Example: Lord James, with a total Health of 4 points, takes two blows (B) and three wounds (W). Although he has lost five Health points total, he records these injuries as B, B and W, W, W. Because his current Health is a negative value (-1), he also has passed out.

Recovering from Shocks, Blows and Wounds

Recovery is at the rate of one point of Health recovered for each time period passed, based on the type of harm (see sidebar). **Example:** A Lady who had taken 4 points in Constitutional Shock would recover in 4 minutes. Meanwhile, her Gentleman companion, who was soundly thrashed for 5 points of Blows, would recover in five hours. Her Manservant, Wounded for 3 points, will recover in three days.

Note that Ladies recover from swoons at the *same* rate whether they have been plied with smelling salts or not. **Blows** also require no medical aid for recovery. However, as shown in the sidebar, **Untreated Wounds** will take weeks to recover, not days. As you recover from a specific type of injury, remember to restore your Health accordingly. The Host has the option of reviving an unconscious Hero in the next Scene, or whenever the Hero has a positive Health value.

Example 1: Lord James, with a total Health of 4 points, has taken two blows (B) and three wounds (W), which he has recorded as B, B and W, W, W. Because his Health is now a negative value (-1), he also has passed out. He will recover from one of the Blows (B) every hour and one of the Wounds each day. Thus, he will be conscious in one hour, but bruised and in pain for another hour and wounded for three more days.

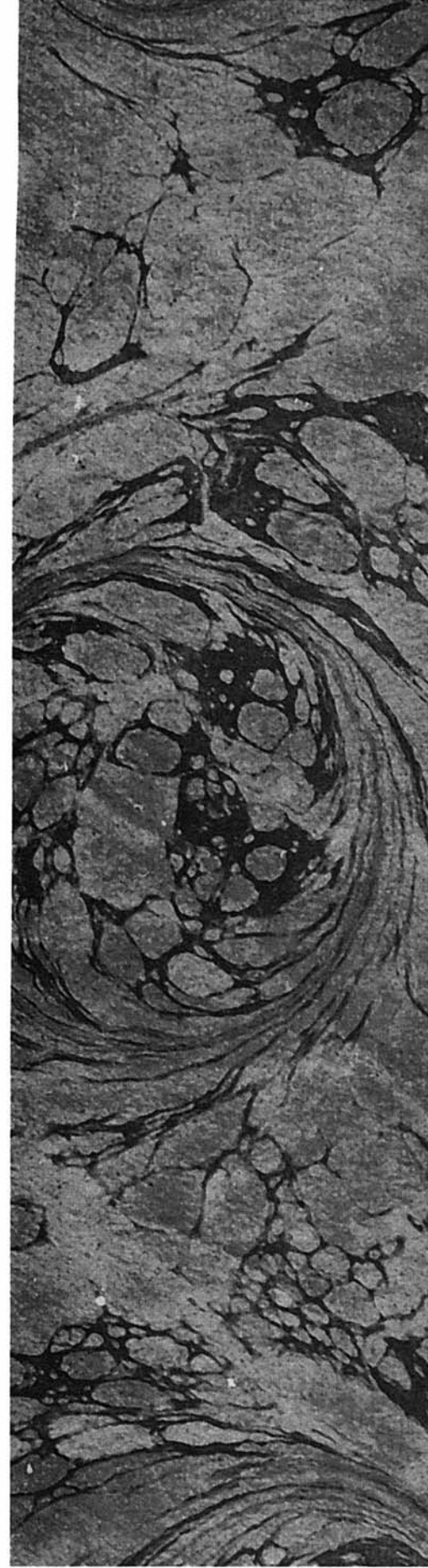
Example 2: Lady Ashton is accosted by several ruffians as she leaves her carriage. One grabs her arm and shakes her (causing four points of Constitutional Shock or S, S, S and S) and another cuffs her with his fist—the brute (causing 2 points of Blows or B, B)! With her poor Health (only 3 pts), the fragile lady collapses. Four minutes later, the Shocks to her system wear off, but the blows have rendered her insensible for another hour, when she awakes inside a steamer trunk bound for the Dragon Empires.

Recovery Rates

Type of Harm	Time
Constitutional Shocks	Minutes
Blows	Hours
Treated Wounds	Days
Untreated Wounds	Weeks
Wounds Treated by Sorcery	Hours

Animal Health

Size of Animal	Health
Tiny (mouse)	1
Small (cat, dog)	5
Medium (man-sized, wolf)	10
Large (lion)	20
Very Large (bear, tiger)	30
Huge (whale)	40



Engines of War

Vehicles and Infernal War Machines in Conflict

In the Steam Age, battle is often joined not only between brave Heroes and the Fiendish Villains they oppose, but also involves the massed forces of mighty armies with Dreadnoughts, Landfortresses and titanic Verne Cannon. And when the Empires of New Europa aren't at war, the Masterminds and Mad Scientists of the *Falkenstein* world keep up the side by employing their own terrible Engines of War in the pursuit of Vengeance, Extortion or Power.

Man Against Machine

Gigantic war machines (the only important type in the Steam Age) are rarely if ever destroyed by charging soldiers waving sabers. (Even automobiles aren't all that easy to destroy and usually require a liberal use of grenades and very heavy gunfire to have an effect—you'd be amazed at how many hits a 20th century car can take before it's finally incapacitated.)

When Men attack Machines, they either disable them from the inside or incapacitate them using other machines. The question therefore becomes *How do you get into the machine to incapacitate it?* The first way is through trickery or cleverness: smoking out the crew, going in through the walls in an Ethereal state (a good Faerie trick), or using Sorcery to gain entrance (all fair methods with lots of roleplaying potential).

The other method is brute force. The rule here is in order to get through the side of a Machine, you must attack it with weapons on a *machine* scale. **Any weapon that does not cause at least 10 wounds of damage in a single attack is considered to be useless against a Machine with more than 60 Wounds** (pretty much ruling out every man-carried weapon but Grenades).

Machines Against Men

One rule should always dictate the outcome of Men attacked by machines: *The Rule of Common Sense*. If a gigantic LandFortress rolls over a Dramatic Character, he's crushed. If an Infernal Weapon blasts him, he's obliterated. If the mighty spur of the Nautilus pierces him, he's torn apart.

What is important in Machine vs Man encounters is how near the attack strikes. An artillery shell is never fired at a single person; it's fired at a general area. The casualties are the poor saps who get caught in the blast when the shell hits. As a general rule, treat any attack (with the exception of obvious things like being speared on a thirty-foot ramming spur driven by a radium-powered submarine) as a Shrapnel hit. To avoid incoming Shrapnel attacks is a Feat requiring at least a Good Athletics ability. Example: Lieutenant Edgar Jones-Forthwythe hears the shriek of incoming mortar fire and hits the dirt. His Athletics is Average; avoiding Shrapnel has a Required Level of Good. Edgar is caught partially in the impact of the shell.

Machine vs Machine

Finally, we come to the contest of Machine versus Machine, the moment when giant submarines duel dreadnoughts and mighty automatons stride the earth assaulting LandFortresses. The general rule is the Attacker always uses his Marksmanship Ability when aiming or firing a weapon (even if it's that thirty-foot ramming spur driven by a radium-powered submarine again). The

Defender, however, uses a new Ability created just for this situation: Helmsmanship.

Helmsmanship [♦]

This is the ability to pilot a large Vessel, whether it is a giant LandFortress, submarine or a Bayernese aeroship. A Poor Helmsman has probably never steered anything before; an Average Helmsman can usually determine a few basics like how to hold a straight course and how to make careful turns; a Good Helmsman is skilled enough to make any standard "takeoffs," "landings," "dives" and general maneuvers. A Great Helmsman can easily do any standard maneuver, and can do emergency maneuvers as well. An Exceptional Helmsman is known by reputation and a vessel in his hands is very hard to pursue, avoid or overtake. An Extraordinary Helmsman is one of the greatest alive, and regularly does the impossible with any vessel under his command.

To determine the outcome, use the same basic resolution as in other Combat, then resolve damage by using the table below:

Vehicle & Infernal Weapon Effects

	Wounds (Partial)	Wound (Full)	Wounds (High)
Artillery.....	50	60	70
Bombs.....	80	90	100
Explosives.....	20	30	40
Gatling Guns.....	8	9	10
Grenades.....	10	20	30
Light Artillery.....	30	40	50
Ramming Spur.....	100	110	120
Rockets.....	20	30	40
Torpedos.....	70	80	90
Fearsome Infernal Weapon.....	50	60	70
Terrible Infernal Weapon.....	80	90	100
Horrible Infernal Weapon.....	110	120	130
Ghastly Infernal Weapon.....	140	150	160

In general, since this is not a vehicle combat game, maneuvering is determined by comparing Helmsmanship Abilities of rival pilots.

Applying the Damage

"Wounds" to vehicles are based on the size of the vehicle and what it's made of (Composition). Wounds by Vehicle sizes and Composition are listed below:

Vehicle Wounds

COMPOSITION

SIZE	FABRIC	WOOD	BRASS*	IRON	STEEL	ARMORPLATE†
Small	20	40	60	80	100	120
Medium	40	60	80	100	120	140
Large	60	80	100	120	140	160
Huge	80	100	120	140	160	180
Immense	100	120	140	160	180	200
Titanic	120	140	160	180	200	220

* or other light metals † or Dwarfish aluminum

A vehicle which has lost more than half its Wounds is considered *immobile* (if it moves at all); at 0 Wounds, it is considered *destroyed*.

Some Sample Vehicle Sizes

Small: Steam motorcycle

Medium: Steam automotive, carriage, small ornithopter.

Large: Zeppelin, Torpedo Ram, Ironclad Monitor, Aero-corvette

Huge: Ironclad Cruiser, Landfortress, small Aero-cruiser

Immense: Battleship, Dreadnought, Aero-battleship

Titanic: Verne Cannon.

Some Typical Vehicle Wounds

Just a few of the major vehicles encountered in the Steam Age:

<i>Albatross</i>	100
Armored Car.....	100
Automotive.....	80
Bayernese Aerocruiser.....	180
Cab (fiacre, hansom).....	60
Carriage.....	60
Dreadnought.....	200
Giant Automaton.....	140
Ironclad Battleship.....	160
Ironclad Cruiser.....	140
Ironclad <i>Monitor</i>	120
Landfortress.....	160
<i>Nautilus</i>	160
Steam Train Engine.....	100
Submarine.....	140
Torpedo Ram.....	120
Train Car.....	80
Verne Cannon.....	220
Wooden Ship of Line.....	80
Zeppelin.....	80

“Fear my
steel, you
foul crea-
ture of
Unseelie
Darkness!”

“I may fear
your steel,
Mortal
worm. But do
I fear your abili-
ty to use it? I
think not ...”

—Cpl. Gio Giovanni, Soldier of
Fortune, vs the Troll of
Underdeep

The “Art” of the Duel

A Game of Heroic Combat & Flashing Swordplay

W

hile it's true that most civilized people will usually attempt a peaceable resolution to an affair of Honor, there are times when an insult can only be expunged with blood. At these times, men and women of Honor take up arms in a formal, arranged combat called a Duel. Most of these incidents are fought to the first blood, but when a feud has been long standing or is particularly rancorous then the only solution is to end the combat in the death of one or both of the parties.

In the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, a Duel is the ultimate form of man-to-man challenge, a battle royale that involves only two opponents (no gentleman would think of “ganging up” on another); it is an encounter where both combatants fight for an advantageous position, each momentarily forcing the other back into a perilous retreat to the edge of a yawning chasm, culminating in the lightning strike and mighty thrust that ends the duel. In short, a struggle of cinematic proportions.

What the Duelling game does is to simulate this one-on-one challenge aspect of combat. Rather than simply deciding whether you have hit a target or not, you must make your duelling a test of wills, of thought. In a duel, you must be able to out-think your opponent, rather than merely have higher “scores” and make “to hit rolls.” For battles en masse, an everyday Combat system might suffice. But for a real **duel**—a battle between mortal enemies in the true style of this land—you must work to combine strategy and action, the ability to read your opponent's eyes for clues, and the nerve and cunning to defeat a foe even when you know you're outmatched.

The Conventions of Duelling

A Duel is defined as any formal one-on-one combat between two opponents. To start a duel, you'll need to call the other party out. This may be verbally, by insult or formal challenge (see pg. 76), through a formal note delivered by a second (someone who comes with you to the Duel to carry your weapons), or by a slap or blow of a glove across the face. The seconds should immediately clear an open space as a Duelling Circle, and keep anyone else from entering the circle. The Circle should never be more than about 18 feet across. One second is often designated the Judge of the contest.

Duels are never fought between more than two parties; any more participants and the conflict becomes a Combat instead (and uses other rules to resolve the outcome). Although pistol duels are not uncommon in New Europa (and are resolved as a Feat of Combat as on pg. 185), a traditional Duel is fought with hand-to-hand weapons of equal length: swords against swords or canes, daggers against knives, etc. Again, any violation of this convention automatically changes the Duel to a Combat.

Exchanges & Rounds

A Duel is always divided up into two parts: **Exchanges** and **Rounds**. An Exchange is a single clash of blades. In order to have an Exchange, both duelists must be within two yards (6 ft) of each other.

A **Round**, in turn, is made up of three **Exchanges**; when three **Exchanges** have been performed, the **Round** ends and a new **Round** of **Exchanges** begins. In between each **Exchange** and each **Round**, duelists may do any one of the following:

- Move around to a better position (up to six feet in any direction).
- Change weapons or pick up a fallen weapon.
- Throw something (if you picked it up after a previous **Exchange**)
- Shoot a pistol, crossbow or other triggered weapon.
- Leap out of sword range (6 feet) to get away.
- Leap into sword range (6 feet) to follow that cowardly dog who's running.

These actions are all resolved as **Feats** (see pg. 183)

Gentlemen, Your "Swords"

To prepare for a duel, each duelist starts by taking **six cards** from the **Host's Fortune Deck**. Two of these should be **red cards** (Hearts or Diamonds). Two should be **black cards** (Spades or Clubs). The suits or face values do not have to match, just as long as each duelist has two black cards and two red cards. The remaining two cards should be either **Jokers** (or, if the deck you are using hasn't got enough of these, any two **Face cards of the same type** [Kings, Queens or Jacks]).

What Do the Cards Mean?

- **Red cards** will always represent **Attacks**, where you cut or thrust with your sword or weapon.
- **Black cards** always represent **Defenses**, where you parry with your weapon or dodge back out of harm's way while still maintaining position.
- **Face cards** represent **Rests**, pauses in combat to catch your breath. Rests are very important, because you will be forced to play a certain number of them each **Round**, based on your **Fencing Abilities**:

Fencing Skill	PR	AV	GD	GR	EXC	EXT
Rests per Round	5	4	3	2	1	0

There is no *limit* to the number of **Rests** you can play in a **Round**, so playing extra **Rests** when you don't need to is a great tactic to fool an opponent into underestimating you.

Starting the Exchange

At the start of each **Exchange**, both duelists secretly pick two cards from the ones in their hand to represent their actions. Cards may be two **Attacks**, two **Defenses**, two **Rests**, or any combination of the three types. The duelists (or their **Seconds**) count to three and all cards are revealed.

- A **Defense card** automatically cancels out one of your opponent's **Attack cards**. If there is no **Defense card** to cancel out the **Attack**, it automatically hits the target. If a **Defense** is played against another **Defense**, there is no effect on the combat (other than both duelists wildly swinging their blades to parry an **Attack** that didn't come).

- An **unopposed Attack** automatically scores as a hit and is resolved on the **Resolution Table** below. If a single **Attack** gets through, it is called a **single touch**; if two get through, it is called a **double touch**.

- If both duelists play all **Defense cards**, they are assumed to have clashed parries into what is called a *coeur de coeur*—the classic scene where opponents lock hilts and snarl scathing witticisms over their swords at each other. A *coeur de coeur* is resolved based on the **Physiques** of the two duelists; the one with the more powerful **Physique** automatically pushes the weaker back six feet. If the duelists are of equal strength, they both are forced back three feet, with the centerpoint between them.





• Rests don't stop anything; if you play a Rest against an Attack, the Attack will hit. Rests also don't stop Defenses or other Rests; they're just considered to have no effect. Remember, since you'll probably have to play at least one or two Rests each Round, you'll want to use them strategically throughout the Round, when you hope your opponent will be playing a Defense or his own Rest.

• When you successfully fake your opponent into Defending instead of Attacking against your Rest, it is called a **Feint**.

Once cards are compared and the outcomes determined, the Exchange ends; duelists put their cards back into their hands and prepare for the next Exchange. When three exchanges have been completed, the next Round of the Duel starts. Remember, between Exchanges (and Rounds), duelists can still move around, change weapons, or pick things up, resolving the outcome in these cases as if performing a Feat (see pg. 182 through 184). Example: Captain Lewis of the Royal Hussars has challenged OberLieutenant von Helsing of the Prussian Guard over a matter of a lady's honor. The matter is to be settled with sabers in the central courtyard (the designated Duelling Circle) of the Old Vienna Opera House. Both combatants have Exceptional [EXC] Fencing Abilities, requiring that each play at least one rest each Round. The two cavalymen face off, touch blades in salute and begin.

On the first Exchange, von Helsing plays an Attack and a Rest; Lewis plays a double Attack. The result is:

<u>Lewis</u>	<u>vs</u>	<u>von Helsing</u>	<u>Result</u>
Attack	vs	Attack	Both Attacks hit
Rest	vs	Attack	von Helsing hits

Since von Helsing has hit with both Attacks, he has scored a double touch. Not without cost: He took a single touch from Lewis and he still has to play a Rest somewhere in this Round.

On the next Exchange, Lewis is more cautious. He plays a Defense and an Attack; von Helsing plays a Rest and a Defense.

<u>Lewis</u>	<u>vs</u>	<u>von Helsing</u>	<u>Result</u>
Attack	vs	Defense	Lewis' Attack is Parried
Defense	vs	Rest	von Helsing Feints

On the third and final Exchange of the Round, both combatants have gotten rid of their required rests. They go at it with a flurry, but both are also cautious:

<u>Lewis</u>	<u>vs</u>	<u>von Helsing</u>	<u>Result</u>
Attack	vs	Defense	Lewis' Attack is Parried
Defense	vs	Attack	von Helsing's Attack is Parried

Determining the Result of an Exchange

To determine the physical outcome of a successful Attack, compare the Fencing Ability of the Attacker (top) against the Fencing Ability of his opponent (side) on the table below. The letter to the left of the slash is the result of a single hit; the letter to the right is the result of a double hit.

ATTACKER						
	PR	AV	GD	GR	EXC	EXT
PR	P/WP	WP/WF	WF/WH	WH/I	I/I	I/I
AV	P/WP	P/WP	WP/WF	WF/WH	WH/I	I/I
GD	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP	WP/WF	WF/WH	WH/I
GR	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP	WP/WF	WF/WH
EXC	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP	WP/WF
EXT	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP	P/WP

KEY: P=Pushed Back WP=[Partial] Wound WF=[Full] Wound WH=[High] Wound I=Incapacitated

A Really Nasty Option: While most sword work in New Europa is done with sabers, there are still places where court swords or rapiers are still used. Since sabers rely on the strength of the blow to cause damage, in this variation, you

could use the Attacker's Physique ranking instead of his Fencing Ability to determine damage against the defender's Fencing ability. But court swords and rapiers depend on pinpoint stabbing actions to damage, so you would continue to use the Attacker's Fencing Ability against the defender's Fencing Ability when they were employed. This is a pretty useful option, as it allows players to pick weapons that favor both their strengths and skills; big hackers like the average Guardsman use sabers, while very skillful Fencers use rapiers.

What the Letters Mean

There are three possible results when a successful attack hits, based on the number of unopposed Attacks the duelist has gotten through and the comparative skills of both combatants. The loser can be:

- **[P] PUSHED BACK:** The loser of the exchange is forced to give ground, moving backwards six feet. He may not move to the front; he must move backwards, although he can move to either side as well. If there is no place to move backwards to, the PUSHED BACK is automatically upgraded to Partially Wounded.

- **[W] WOUNDED:** As with Wounds in normal combat, there are three kinds of wounds: Partial, Full and High. WOUNDED characters take damage based on the Damage code for the Exchange (Partial [WP], Full [WF], or High [WH]).

	Partial [WP]	Full [WF]	High [WH]
Saber, Rapiers & Court swords	4	5	6

Although values for rapiers, sabers and court swords (the most common weapons for a fencing duel) are given here, the number of Wounds taken is based on the type of weapon used and can be extrapolated from the Hand to Hand Weapons & Attacks table on pg. 186, allowing almost any kind of melee weapon to be used. (Hatpin duels to the death, anyone?) **Example:** Let's go back to our previous duel. In Exchange 1, remember that both Attacks hit. But Lewis' Attack was a single, whereas von Helsing's was a double touch. According to our table, although both men are EXC ranked, Lewis's single attack will result in Pushing back von Helsing, while von Helsing's double will result in a Partial Wound. Since both are using sabers, Lewis will take 4 Wounds from von Helsing's strike. Exchanges 2 and 3 were inconclusive, as no Attacks were successful.

Duelist's Health at Negative: A duelist wounded below his normal amount of Health does not automatically die; instead he is rendered unconscious or incapacitated, just as he would be in a normal Combat situation (pg. 188). His attacker then has the option of finishing him off (or of using the "Black Spot" option described below).

A Partial Wound can be converted to a **Disarm** by the choice of the Attacker. He then has the option of demanding his opponent's surrender, returning him his sword, or attacking him while he is unarmed. A gentleman always takes the first two options; to attack an unarmed opponent is a foul, cowardly action and immediately turns a duel into a mere Combat (which is resolved as on page 186).

- **[I] INCAPACITATED:** The victim is wounded so badly he cannot fight and instead falls unconscious. As mentioned earlier, the goal of combat in *Castle Falkenstein* is not to kill, but to incapacitate your opponent. Killing becomes a voluntary action; you render your opponent incapacitated and then decide if he dies or not. This isn't entirely realistic (and god knows it doesn't happen here), but it is very cinematic, which is more to the point. Those with faint hearts can always elect to use the "Black Spot" option: Draw one card from the Fortune Deck; if it is a Spade (the "black spot") of any value, the incapacitated opponent dies.

Dueling Tactics and Strategy

Cinematic Swordplay

On this side of the Faerie Veil, combat often does resemble an Errol Flynn movie more than it does real warfare. A duel here isn't a random hack and slash; it involves cut, parry, slash, fients, *coeur de coeur*—all in a flashing, cinematic style that screams out for big black capes and high-topped boots.

If one were to sum up a duel in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, it would go something like this:

Hero duels Villain. Battle goes back and forth along the parapet, with each side momentarily forcing the other back into a perilous retreat (to the edge of a yawning chasm). Occasionally someone is slashed or cut, but not in any meaningful way. Then, suddenly, the Hero (or the Villain) gets the upper hand, and drives a mighty thrust into his opponent, who slumps lifeless (but not always dead) on the ground. The same goes with smaller weapons like daggers or other melee types like canes and sticks. Substitute a dodge for a parry, and it's once again a struggle of cinematic proportions.

Sorcery:

Another Kind of Duel

The Duelling Game can also be used to resolve Sorcery confrontations between rival Wizards, making a semantic substitution of Attack "spells" for sword "blows" and "counterspells" for Defensive "parries" and "dodges." Rests represent the Wizard's summoning of power for the continuing battle. Damage is determined by comparing the relative Sorcery abilities of the opponents, using the Duelling Table to resolve damage.

You can also use the Duelling Game to resolve other types of confrontations as well; in fact, any contest where it's one-to-one, skill against skill can be converted into a duel. I've had Players use the Art of the Duel to resolve chess matches (Perception vs Perception), wrestling bouts (Athletics vs Athletics), hand to hand combat (Fisticuffs), and battles of wit (although I'd strongly advise against using a mechanics system in lieu of making Players have to come up with their own quips and barbs). Feel free to experiment; I'll be interested to see what variations you come up with that I haven't thought of yet!

At first, this method of combat may seem strange to those accustomed to the "I hit, you hit" school common to most roleplaying games. But in a real saber duel, opponents don't just stand toe to toe and slug it out until the better man wins. Dueling involves a knowledge of how your opponent works; if he's better than you, he'll probably press a reckless attack in the hope of defeating you right away. If he's worse than you, he'll play Defenses in a continual attempt to keep your blade at bay; your job will be to press him until he has to play a Rest and you can get a shot in. If you're good enough, that single strike may be enough to render him *hors de combat*. Likewise, if you're unsure of where you stand, you'll play the safe Attack/Defend combination until you can get a sense of what your opponent can do and how many Rests he'll have to play in the Round. Or keep backing away from him, forcing him to chase you around the Duelling Circle.

Duelling also involves using the *environment* around you, one reason why so many great sword battles happen on tops of trains and high parapets. If two combatants are equally matched, the result is probably going to be a series of Push Backs until someone makes an error in judgment. But if you're duelling in an enclosed space, you can use those push backs to drive your opponent into a corner where you can convert those Pushes into Wounds. Or you can drive him back along the wall of the castle until he's forced to jump the gap to the next wall (maybe failing the Feat and falling to his death). This is why you try to arrange duels atop high places or moving vehicles; it's not only dramatic, but if you have superior balance and Athletic skills, you can make the most of what may be dangerous terrain for your opponent.

Live Action Duelling

One of the best things about the Duelling Game is that it can be acted out in person; in fact, it's something of a fad right now among young hussars in New European militaries to clear the barracks floor and go at it when they've got a few hours to kill (literally). Many combatants consider the Duelling Game to be a useful combat training tool, because it sharpens the eye for spotting an opponent's strategy, teaches you how to use tactics, and generally makes you a better duelist without getting you killed.

In the live-action version of the Duelling Game, the two duelists take positions within the Circle, moving warily, taking up positions, or simply standing their ground. At a prearranged signal from their seconds (such as "One, two three—STRIKE!"), both Duelists reveal the two cards they intend to use. The outcome is resolved, and damage taken. Then comes more circling and jockeying for position.

Entire "card-dueling" societies have sprung up throughout New Europa; it's a lot less fatal than the real thing, and you don't have to worry about saber cuts on your face (although the Prussians, of course, would rather have the scars). You may want to consider starting your own card-duelling Club or even leagues of competing clubs as has been done in various cities here.

Miniatures

If live-action dueling is a little too active for your tastes, you can also use miniature figurines to represent your combat. Since the average soldier miniature represents six feet, it's pretty easy to set up a situation; one miniature length is duelling range, as well as the distance for most actions. Three figure lengths is the width of a Duelling Circle. Half a figure length is a yard.

When duelling with miniatures, remember that the environment is just as important as your skill with a blade. While it's doubtful that you'll want to create the sort of detailed miniature dioramas King Ludwig has had built for his own Games, the right combination of figures and setting will add a lot to the enjoyment of any clash of imaginary blades!

High Sorcery!

Roleplaying the Arcane Arts of the Steam Age



As a Novice, you began with only a mere smattering of Sorcerous Ability: enough to sense and manipulate the knots and webs of Magickal energy that underly Reality, but certainly not enough to claim the next rank of Power—the Adept. But all beginning Sorcerers start that way in the Falkenstein world, and you're no different. You knew you'd have to work your way up through the Sorcerous Order that selected you, out of the few candidates with the Gift, to join its illustrious Brotherhood.

One day you will be an Adept. And the Power of Sorcery will be yours to command.

Becoming a Wizard

In the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, wizardly characters always begin by using one of their Good attributes to learn the Ability of Sorcery. As a starting character, they must then work their way up from this inauspicious beginning, learning the Lore of their selected Order and the traditions that go with it. Beginning Sorcerer characters always start with a Good Sorcery ability; there are no exceptions.

A beginning Sorcerer must also decide at the time of his "creation" which of the many Sorcerous Orders of New Europa he belongs to. He may only belong to one Order at a time; each group jealously hoards its power and deals with traitors who straddle the fence between groups very severely.

With your chosen Order, you gain the Lore and traditions of a sorcerous Brotherhood spanning perhaps thousands of years. You also become part of the ongoing feuds, alliances and bloody magickal vendettas that have been the dark undercurrent of New European sorcery since its discovery in the mists of ancient Time.

But all of this is worth it, because in the end, it allows you to master the Art itself, to shape the very fabric of Reality with the tools of spellcasting.

Research, Lore and Spells

But *how* do you cast a spell?

The first step is **research**—you must learn how to construct the Spell you want to cast. Remember, Victorian Sorcery is not the quick and dirty affair that Fantasy sorcery is; it requires time, patience and a lot of hard work. A Spell is constructed by reading the Secret Lore that contains what you want to do and using one of the Spells contained within that Lore.

Each Order has one or more Books as part of their Lore; you have access to the books of your Order and only those. To learn the Lore of another Order requires that you either join that Order as an Initiate, or somehow get access to that Lore and study it secretly (an adventure in itself!). **Example:** Master Windkey is a member of the Druidic Brotherhood. He may only use the *Manuscript of Elemental Shaping* and *The Raised Forces of Nature* to construct his Spells, as these are the only bodies of Lore possessed by the Brotherhood. If he wanted to use the *Manuscript of Paranormal Dreaming*, he would have to either join the Theosophic Masters of the White Lodge or secretly gain access to their temple in order to read and use their Lore (a full list of bodies of Lore and their associated Sorcerous Orders is on pages 199 through 202).

Inside the Lore of each book are the basic Spells of that Lore, which are the building blocks of your final spell. Each of these Spells has a **Thaumic Energy Requirement**, an amount of Magickal energy which must first be gathered together



Spell Aspects

- **Hearts:** Emotional and Mental magicks; things of the heart and will. Emotionally-based spells affect intellect, reason and courage, allowing the subject to be made more malleable to the will of the Adept. Emotional spells encompass Will Magick, Illusion, Mental Control, Confusion and Telepathy.

- **Diamonds:** Material magicks; the physical world. This is the most "scientifically" structured of the Aspects, as it involves physical changes of state such as Alchemy, Transformation and Alteration.

- **Spades:** Spiritual magicks and dimensional sorceries that reach beyond this plane of reality. Spiritual Magick allows the Summoning of ghosts, demons, invisible servants and para-dimensional forces, as well as travel to Astral Planes, other Dimensions and the Faerie Realms.

- **Clubs:** Elemental magicks—the materials of Earth, Air, Fire and Water, undivisible to their molecular components. Elemental Energies also allow the Adept to create sentient creatures of the four elements to do his bidding. Elemental Spells encompass Weather Control, Elemental Forces (Earth, Air, Fire and Water), earthquakes, storms, lightning and thunder. *Example:* The *Manuscript of Elemental Shaping* concerns spells using Elemental energies: *Altering Elemental Temperatures*, *Investing the Element with Intellect & Form*, *Elemental Barriers* and *Shaping the Element*. Its Aspect will be in the Suit of Clubs.

before the Spell can be cast. It is similar in many ways to the Required Level of Ability of a Feat. *Example:* The *Manuscript of Elemental Shaping* contains the Spell *Investing the Element with Intellect & Form*. This Spell has a Thaumic Energy Requirement of 10 points.

Determining Spell Aspect

Each Spell also has an associated **Aspect**, a type of energy that the Spell is constructed from. There are four kinds of Magickal Aspects from which a Spell can be woven; these (as do most things in the Great Game) correspond to one of the four Suits of a deck of cards.

Constructing a spell involves reaching out with the Adept's Sorcery Ability and "weaving" these four Aspects of energy into new "knots" of power that redefine reality. The important part to Game Sorcery is determining where that power is drawn from and how much is available to the Adept at any one time.

That's where the **Sorcery Deck** comes into play.

The Sorcery Deck

The Sorcery Deck is similar to the Fortune Deck (described on pages 181 through 182); however, in this case, it represents the total available magick within the "gathering range" of a sorcerer in the Game (about ten miles). To create a Sorcery Deck for your Game, you'll need a second deck of standard playing cards (Jokers included); you may want to differentiate between both Decks by purchasing a different back design or color for each one. You may also want to mark your Sorcery Deck like you did your Fortune Deck (see pg. 181) to prevent ringer cards from being played. Once your Fortune Deck is prepared, shuffle it thoroughly and place it face down in front of you.

The Sorcery Deck allows us to demonstrate the fact that Magickal Energy is finite; there is only a limited amount in the universe at any one time, and what one mage is using can't be used by another mage at the same time. It also allows us to use the Suits of this Deck to represent the various **types** of Magical Energy swirling around just at the edge of everyday perception.

Definitions

Research completed, the next step in casting a spell is to determine the **Definitions** of the Spell. Definitions are the particular characteristics of the Spell you want to cast, the personalizing touches. They define the **Duration** of the Spell, its **Complexity**, its **Range of Effect**, the number of **Subjects** affected, the **Subject's Natural Resistance to Sorcery**, and your **Familiarity** with the subject of the Spell.

You must have a **Duration**, **Complexity**, **Range**, **Number of Subjects**, **Level of Resistance** and a **Familiarity** for each Spell, or it will be up to the GM to assign any missing values. (And usually not in your favor!)

Gathering Power

The next step is to gather the Power required together to weave the Spell. This will always be equal to the Spell's Thaumic Energy Requirement, plus the Thaumic Energy Requirements for each of its various Definitions, minus the value of the Adept's Sorcery Ability. When an amount equal to or greater than the Total Thaumic Energy Requirement of a Spell has been gathered, the spell can be released. Power is Gathered by drawing cards one at a time from the Sorcery Deck: one card for every two minutes of Game time.

Example: Marillion the Magnificent has a Great Sorcery Ability (with a value of 8). He intends to cast the spell *Illusions of the Mind & Body*, to create a brick wall across an alley to confuse a group of pursuing ruffians. The Spell has a Thaumic Energy Requirement of 6. He must also add the Spell's Definition Requirements: Duration (1 to 30 minutes [2]), Complexity (only one Element [1]),

Cont. Page 203

Lorebooks

Following is a list of all the well-known Lorebooks of New European Sorcery. This is by no means an exhaustive list, and Hosts should feel free to "discover" new Lore whenever they feel it will enhance their Entertainments.

Emotional Lore

Manuscriptum Mentallis

[Illuminated Brotherhood]

History & Secret

Knowledge: Written by Trigmestus Adeptus of Austria in 1215, this text is often associated with the Order of the Illuminated Brotherhood of Bayern. Most of the Book's text is concerned with mental control of others through Redefined thought structures: The discipline of *Mental Command* allows for the sorcerer to give simple or complex mental commands to others, while *Dominant Will* allows him to possess the body of another mentally. *Forget* allows for selective memory loss of things or periods of time, while *Implanting Suggestions* allows ideas to be mentally placed in the subject's subconscious. *Entrancing & Beguiling* makes the subject dizzy and confused, *Stunning* renders the subject unconscious and *Create Blinding Pain* causes incapacitating agony that renders the victim unable to do anything but writhe in pain. *Death Wish* causes the victim to suffer great mental damage until he is killed (the level of damage caused must be determined by the Definition of the spell). *Mental Barrier* allows the caster to deflect any and all of the above actions instantly.

Ritual Writing of Psychic Binding

[Order of St. Boniface]

History & Secret Knowledge: The Ritual of Psychic Binding (written in 1065 by the Order of St.

Stephen of Malta) is a body of knowledge concerned with the mystic bindings that control or restrain others from attacking an Adept or from leaving his presence. A *Simple Geas* is a binding command or word that places the subject under the Adept's power. *Restraint through Magic Circles, Wards or Talismans* defines that the bound creature may not step over the circle, pass through the warded opening, or attack the

Mage carrying the Talisman. The discipline of *Strengthen the Life Bond* is designed so that

if the target is mortally wounded, he will regain enough Health to reach a positive value (+1) from the Health of the Mage casting the spell. The ritual of the *Psychic Bond* allows the Adept to be aware of whatever the bound creature is physically doing (as long as caster pays full attention), although its thoughts will be hidden from him. *Break the Binding* allows the caster to sever any and all of the above bindings instantly.

Agrivicca Rexus' Realm of Illusion [Freemasons]

History & Secret Know-

ledge: This tome (created by Agrivicca Rexus in 1298 B.C.) concerns itself with *Illusions of the Mind and Body*, and of the Imparting of them with Sight, Sound, Touch, Smell, and Taste. The Definitions of this Lore encompass the complexity and duration of the Illusion,

whether it encompasses multiple parts or is of one thing, whether the description of what you want to create is vague or unknown to you, whether the illusion will be mobile and the number and type of subjects the illusion is to be viewed by. *True Vision* allows the caster to dispel any and all of the above illusions instantly.

Megron's Realm of Dreaming [The White Lodge]

History & Secret Knowledge: Written by Megron the Sumerian, this text is the second of the Three Realms of The Heart (the first having been lost), and is considered to be the foundation of the Knowledge of the Old Kingdoms. There are five



Dreams which may be sent using the knowledge within. The first two are *Dreams of Prophecy*, dreams in which the caster imparts knowledge to the dreamer, and *Dreams of Warning*, in which the caster attempts to show the dreamer a threat. Both require that the caster have true knowledge of the threat or the event that is to come. The prophecy is not, however, assured. The third and fourth Dreams are *Nightmares* and *Erotic Dreams*, in which the caster imagines a scenario which is then populated by the person or thing the dreamer desires or fears most. Finally, *Killing Dreams* are Dreams in which the Adept causes the dreamer to dream his own death; if the dreamer is not awakened before the end of the dream, he dies, leaving no sign of how he was killed. *Dream Barrier* makes the caster proof against any or all of the above types of sendings, although it will not stop normal dreams.

Realm of The Unknown Mind

[Order of St. Boniface]

History & Secret Knowledge: The third book of the three Realms of the Heart, this body of knowledge controls things of sanity and madness. *Cast Out The Other* cures schizophrenic behaviors and mental possession. The discipline *Conquer the Madness* makes the victim grovel and bark like a dog, hear strange voices, and lose touch with reality, or conversely become lucid again if insane. *Hear the Hidden Thoughts* allows the Adept to perceive thoughts of the subject, including those the subject may not be aware of. *Bring to Peace* imparts calmness and tranquillity to the subject, such that he loses all desire for aggressive action. *Bring to Rest* imparts an even greater calm, such that the subject falls into a deep, restful sleep.

Material Lore

Libram of Mystic Transformation [Templars]

History & Secret Knowledge: The Libram of Osman the Prophet, who was Master of an early mystic Brotherhood famed throughout northern Afrika, and the holder of this book of Power. Teacher of the Sultanate and Master of the Four Mysteries, Osman is rumored to have learned these knots at the foot of the Djinn Sulim. The substance of this body of work is the manipulation of living matter. The discipline of

Changing Size allows the caster to alter the size of any living subject from that of an ant to elephant-sized. *Shape of a Known Form* allows the caster to give the subject the shape of any living form personally known to the Adept, while the related discipline *Invest With Powers of a Known Form* allows the mage to invest the subject with the powers or inherent abilities of that known form. *Shape of the Unknown Form* allows the caster to give the subject the shape of things not personally known to the Adept, as long as a detailed description (an accurate drawing or picture) is in his possession. *Transformation Barrier* allows the caster to stop any or all of the above changes, as long as the spell is cast before the transformation has begun.

The Manuscriptum Universal Alchemic [Freemasons]

History & Secret Knowledge: The only surviving work of Hermes Trismegistus, this manuscript is a classic of alchemi-

cal theory. The disciplines of the *Universal Alchemic* allow the caster to change the inherent material structure of non-living forms, such as lead to gold. The related discipline of *Flesh to Mineral* allows the caster to change mineral to flesh and vice versa, with the defined mineral type established at the time of transformation. *Alchemic Destruction* causes the victim to

Thaumic Energy Requirements

Manuscriptum Mentallis

<i>Mental Command</i>	4
<i>Dominant Will</i>	10
<i>Forget</i>	4
<i>Implanting Suggestions</i>	6
<i>Entrancing & Beguiling</i>	4
<i>Stunning</i>	10
<i>Create Blinding Pain</i>	12
<i>Death Wish</i>	16
<i>Mental Barrier</i>	8

Ritual Writing of Psychic Binding

<i>Simple Geas</i>	4
<i>Restraint through Magic Circles</i>	2
<i>Restraint through Magic Wards</i>	4
<i>Restraint through Magic Talismans</i>	4
<i>Strengthen the Life Bond</i>	12
<i>Psychic Bond</i>	8
<i>Break the Binding</i>	8

Agrivicca Rexus' Realm of Illusion

<i>Illusions of the Mind & Body</i>	6
<i>True Vision</i>	6

Realm of the Unknown Mind

<i>Cast Out the Other</i>	8
<i>Conquer the Madness</i>	8
<i>Hear the Hidden Thoughts</i>	6
<i>Bring to Peace</i>	4
<i>Bring to Rest</i>	6

subsume into its raw chemical materials (a greasy, bubbling puddle of slime). *Alchemic Barrier* allows the caster to stop any or all of the above changes, as long as the spell is cast before the transformation has begun.

Osman's Tome of Physical Movement [Templars]

History & Secret Knowledge: The Second of the Four Mysteries, this Tome (or a copy of it) fell into the hands of the sorcerors of the Ottoman Caliphate in 1370. Osman may have also imparted this knowledge to several other Orders as well as part of his teachings, since flying carpet and flight spells abound throughout the now-decaying Ottoman Empire. The Tome contains the *Knowledge of Flight*, which allows Great flying speed to be imparted upon a person or object, and *Mastery of Levitation* (allowing the slow moving of objects up to Poor speeds). The discipline *Hand of Hovering* teaches the caster to suspend (but not move) objects above the ground up to 100 feet, while the discipline *Floors of Glass* allows for sliding objects along a surface as through it were perfectly smooth at Average speeds.

Spiritual Lore

Libram of Temporal Control

[Temple of Ra]

History & Secret Knowledge: This Libram is a body of knowledge probably written by Xerxes of Thrace in 1088, but considering it was a book of time travel knots, the exact time of its writing is dubious. It comprises three chief types of knowledge: *The Manuscriptum of Time Cessation*, in which time around the caster stops; the discipline of *Time Acceleration/Slowing*, in which time is speeded up/slowed by a factor of four for all but the caster, and the discipline of the *Temporal Fugue*, in which the caster repeatedly returns to a single period of time (up to four times, for only 1 minute) to

perform a task, in such a way that it appears that many copies of him are performing many things at once.

Libram of Summonation [Golden Dawn]

History & Secret Knowledge: The calling of things through time and space, as written of in the *Grand Libram of Meta-physick and Transferences of Corum The Adept* in 109 B.C. This Libram is considered to be held by the Order of the Golden Dawn, although the Orders of the Silver Dawn and the Illuminatus may also have had access to it at one time

or another. When *Summoned*, the called object or persona manifests itself before the Adept (although it is not bound to do his bidding). Objects, weapons, living things, armies of creatures, spirits and demons may all be summoned, with Definitions of where the Summoned is brought from, the complexity of the Summoning, and the duration thereof. The summonation may be reversed by using the discipline of *Banishment* at any time before or after the Summoning has been cast.

LeRocun's Scrolls of Dimensional Movement

[Illuminated Brotherhood]

History & Secret Knowledge: The first of the *Writings of Unspeakable Knowledge*, as written by the Order of LeRocun the Black (a powerful Templar) in 1620, these scrolls teach the disciplines of instantly projecting the physical form to other planes of existence. Each succeeding scroll describes the Gatherings

required to open portals to a new realm: to *Other Lands in New Europa*, whether nearby or far, to the *Faerie Realm*, and to other *Dimensions Beyond the Faerie Veil*. In addition, the scroll of *Astral Movement* allows projection of consciousness (but not the physical body) to any place within New Europa.

Thaumic Energy Requirements

Libram of Mystic Transformation

<i>Shape of a Known Form</i>	6
<i>Invest w/Powers of Known Form</i>	12
<i>Shape of the Unknown Form</i>	16
<i>Transformation Barrier</i>	8

Manuscriptum Universal Alchemic

<i>Universal Alchemic</i>	8
<i>Alchemic Destruction</i>	16
<i>Alchemic Barrier</i>	8

Osman's Tome of Physical Movement

<i>Knowledge of Flight</i>	8
<i>Mastery of Levitation</i>	6
<i>Hand of Hovering</i>	4
<i>Floors of Glass</i>	4

Libram of Temporal Control

<i>Time Cessation</i>	10
<i>Time Acceleration/Slowing</i>	12
<i>Temporal Fugue</i>	12

Libram of Summonation

<i>Summonation</i>	8
<i>Banishment</i>	6

Scrolls of Dimensional Movement

<i>Portals to Lands in New Europa</i>	6
<i>Portals to the Faerie Realm</i>	8
<i>Portals to Beyond the Veil</i>	10
<i>Astral Movement</i>	4

Dark Libram of Necromancy [Golden Dawn]

History & Secret Knowledge: The darkest of the three *Books of Kal*, rumored Lord of the Dark Lodge of the Faceless Man. Copies of this work have nearly all been destroyed by the unceasing vigilance of the Order of St. Boniface, a clerical order devoted to purging the world of the works of Evil. The manuscript allows the disciplines of *Animation of the Dead* (allowing for full function as when the subject was alive), *Speaker to the Dead*, allowing the dead to communicate as they did in life (but without physical movement ability) and *Draining of the Life Force*, which reduces the vitality of a living victim based on the Defined qualities of the spell. These fell curses may be reversed by using the discipline of *Banish to Eternal Rest* at any time before or after they have been cast.

Manuscript of Paranormal

Divination

[The White Lodge]

History & Secret Knowledge: This body of work, known to the scholastic orders through the writings of Jarix the Red Mage, contains powers of divination and extraordinary perception. The discipline of *Clairaudience* allows the caster to mentally listen to conversations far away from his position, while *Clairvoyance* allows him to see and hear distant sights and visions as though he were there. *Scrying* allows clairvoyance through the means of any clear crystal or mirror. *Divination Barrier* may be employed to confound these powers at any time.

Elemental Lore

Manuscript of Elemental Shaping [Druidic Temple]

History & Secret Knowledge: Compiled in 1225 from several older sources, this work defines the major tenets of shaping Elemental forces: those of Earth, Air, Fire and Water (rather than discrete raw materials like hydrogen and oxygen). The first chapter, *Investing the Element*, allows the mage to create elemental creatures entirely made of either Earth, Air, Fire or Water; these are of limited intelligence and will normally carry out

only one task (or a single series of very simple tasks) at a time. The disciplines of *Elemental Temperature* allow the mage to heat or cool any chosen element from its boiling or gaseous point to a frozen or immobile state. *Shaping the Element* allows the sorcerer to manipulate large amounts of the chosen element in a raw form; air can be shaped to whirlwinds; water to shapes, floods or torrents; earth can be made to take forms, quake or engulf objects; and fire can be made to take shapes, consume or heat chosen objects. *Elemental Barrier* allows

the caster to stop any or all of the above actions instantly.

Burton's On the Raised Forces of Nature [Druidic Temple]

History & Secret Knowledge: This body of work has existed within the shamanistic cultures of several races, including the Druids of Britain, the Celts of the Northern Germanies, and the Indian Nations of the Americas. Most knowledge is in the oral form of dances or chants, with the most recently accessible form being Burton's *Monograph on the Raised Forces of Nature*, compiled in 1869. This details the major abilities of these shamanistic traditions: *Raise the Storm*, which allows the shaman to cause mighty storms or to hurl rain and lightning at a foe; *Raise the Maelstrom* creates tidal

waves, floods and gouts of water to be hurled from the hands. *Shake the Earth* creates earthquakes and *Raise the Firestorm* causes forest and prairie fires, or can be focussed to a single blast of flame. The level of devastation caused by each of these must be determined by the Definition of the spell. *Quell Nature* allows the caster to stop any or all of the above Forces instantly.

Thaumic Energy Requirements

Dark Libram of Necromancy

<i>Animation of the Dead</i>	8
<i>Speaker to the Dead</i>	10
<i>Drawing of Another's Life Force</i>	16
<i>Banish to Eternal Rest</i>	8

Manuscript of Paranormal Divination

<i>Clairaudience</i>	6
<i>Clairvoyance</i>	8
<i>Scrying</i>	6
<i>Divination Barrier</i>	8

Manuscript of Elemental Shaping

<i>Investing the Element</i>	10
<i>Elemental Temperature</i>	4
<i>Shaping the Element</i>	8
<i>Elemental Barrier</i>	8

Burton's On The Raised Forces of Nature

<i>Raise the Storm</i>	6
<i>Raise the Maelstrom</i>	8
<i>Shake the Earth</i>	8
<i>Raise the Firestorm</i>	8
<i>Quell Nature</i>	8

Mix It Up!

Not all Lore has to be related to a single Order. Hosts should occasionally make the Lore of a another group accessible (through adventure and intrigue) to their Players' Wizard characters.

Range (within unaided sight [2]), Number of Subjects (up to 10 [2]), Level of Resistance (Mortals [1]) and Familiarity (don't know the Subjects [3]). These total up to 17, which, when the value of his Great Sorcery Ability is subtracted [8], means he will need to Gather 9 points of Thaumic Energy to cast the spell.

Aligned & Unaligned Power

But, just as with Fortune Cards, there's a catch. When a Sorcery Card is of the same Suit as the Aspect of the Spell, it has a Face Value equal to its numerical value (called Aligned Power). But if the Card is not in the same Aspect, it only has a Face Value of 1 point and is considered to be Unaligned Power.

Unaligned Power can be released instead of used; the card is returned to the bottom of the deck and a new card drawn. The problem is that it takes far longer to "cherry-pick" Aligned Power than to use whatever Unaligned Power you can grab. So the temptation to grab whatever you can is almost irresistible to an Adept in a hurry. **Example:** To cast his *Illusion* spell, Marrillion the Magnificent needs to gather 9 points of Thaumic Energy in the Aspect of Hearts. He draws the following series of cards over the next few minutes: 5 of Hearts, 4 of Clubs, 7 of Spades, 6 of Diamonds, 2 of Diamonds and 8 of Clubs. Marrillion could elect to use all of the various Clubs, Spades and Diamonds to cast the spell instead of waiting for another Heart to show up; they're all only worth one point, but together they add up to 5 points of Unaligned Power, which, when added to his 5 points of Aligned Power gives him enough to cast the spell.

Power for a single spell can be Gathered by more than one Mage; this is one reason why Sorcerous Orders exist—to cast huge spells. Each Adept involved draws one card each turn and contributes it to the gathering of energies. However, only the Sorcery Ability of the most powerful Mage is subtracted from the Spell's Thaumic Energy Requirement. This process is what makes really powerful spells that might have Thaumic Energy Requirements of fifty or more points possible.

Casting the Spell

Once sufficient Power is Gathered, the Spell must be cast immediately—the force of the Gathered Power is so great that it cannot be held back. The actual Casting involves no real preparation; the Adept simply pronounces an Invocation he has chosen for the occasion. No special words are required; a single phrase or string of syllables will release the spell and *Abracadabra* works just as well as the most obscure Latin. Say your Invocation, and your Spell goes off—*Abracadabra!*

So much for the good news. The bad news is Harmonics.

Harmonics

Harmonics are what you get when you combine Unaligned Power with Aligned Power. Each time you rush a spell by combining the two, you're playing with fire, because the nature of the Unaligned forces will influence the outcome of the spell in bizarre and unexpected ways.

Whenever you combine Unaligned Power with Aligned Power (or construct a spell using entirely Unaligned Power), you will get a Harmonic. The type of Harmonic you get will be based on the face value of the largest Unaligned Power card in the spell. If card values are tied, the Host picks the card to use as the source of the Harmonic. **Example:** Should Marrillion use all the Power he has gathered in the example above, the largest valued Unaligned card would be the 8 of Clubs. The Harmonic would therefore be in the Elemental Aspect.

What Happens When You Get Harmonics

In a nutshell, the spell goes crazy. Strange effects crop up and alter the outcome of your Spell, possibly with dangerous or downright deadly results:

- **Hearts:** Spell has an **Emotional** Harmonic. Material Aspect spells may have emotions attached to them, such as irrational auras of fear or joy. Transformed

Definitions

Definition	Requirement
Spell Duration (momentary).....	1
Spell Duration (1-30 minutes).....	2
Spell Duration (1 hour).....	3
Spell Duration (1 day).....	4
Spell Duration (1 week).....	6
Spell Duration (1 month).....	7
Spell Duration (1 year).....	8
Spell involves only one element.....	1
Spell involves only a few elements.....	2
Spell involves many elements.....	3
Spell involves many complex elements.....	4
Subject must perform only one Task.....	5
Subject must perform multiple Tasks.....	6
Spell Range (touch).....	1
Spell Range (within unaided sight).....	2
Spell Range (within a few miles).....	3
Spell Range (in another city).....	4
Spell Range (in another country).....	5
Spell Range (in another dimension).....	6
Spell Range (in another time).....	7
Subjects Affected (1).....	1
Subjects Affected (up to 10).....	2
Subjects Affected (up to 100).....	3
Subjects Affected (up to 1000).....	4
Subjects Affected (An Entire Country).....	5
Subject is Mortal (Human or Animal).....	1
Subject is Faerie (or Faerie Creature).....	2
Subject is another Wizard.....	3
Subject is Dragon.....	6
Subject is Demon or other supernatural entity.....	8
Subject is Dwarf.....	16
Know Subject well.....	1
Barely know Subject.....	2
Don't know the Subject.....	3
Subject Totally Unknown to You.....	4

“Sorcery, I tell you. Dark Sorcery from the Dawn of Time! An evil thing, with the reek of the Unholy upon it. The Brotherhood’s hands are bloody with its power, and their unspeakable servants now stalk the land in its name ...”

—Master Sorcerer Largo of the Templar Brotherhood

subjects may be seized with delusions, believing they really are what they have transformed into, or objects may take on aspects of intelligence. Spiritual Aspect spells also take on emotional contexts. Summoned or resurrected creatures may project terrifying auras of fear, love, lust or confusion that affect the caster (use the highest value of the harmonic cards to determine the difficulty of overcoming the effects of this; for example, a Queen of Spades would require that the caster have a Courage equal to 12 in order to avoid the harmonic’s effect). Dimensional travel may give the traveller hallucinations or irrational fears. Elemental Aspect spells will also gather emotional/mental effects similar to those of summoned or resurrected creatures; elementals may become intelligent and self-aware, or project emotional auras.

- **Diamonds:** Spell has a **Material** Harmonic. If the spell has a Spiritual Aspect, there will be physical manifestations; summoned spirits, demons or forces may have telekinetic powers or take physical forms (use the highest value harmonic card to determine the strength of these Abilities). Dimensional movement may establish actual physical doors or gates that open into other realms and allow creatures to enter your world unstopped. Elemental Aspect spells will usually be enhanced beyond controllable limits, causing earthquakes, lightning storms or other disasters to rain down on the mage. Mental Aspect spells may take on physical manifestations; illusions may become solid and real, bindings may manifest as real chains or physical barriers, dream creatures and images may take material forms, and madnesses may take physical forms as well (use the highest value harmonic card to determine the strength of these effects).

- **Spades:** Spell has a **Spiritual** Harmonic. Materially-based Transformation and Movement spells may acquire associated ghosts, demonic presences, spirits or doors to other dimensions may be opened. Emotionally-based spells may be troubled by severe spiritual crises; casters or targets may be driven mad, or radically change behavior. Elemental spells may take on extra-dimensional effects; weather changes may manifest themselves as powerful and bad-tempered thunder gods, for example, or elements may take on personifications (rocks start talking to you, trees protest being cut down, etc.)

- **Clubs:** Spell has an **Elemental** Harmonic. In all types of spells, the Harmonic will have an Elemental effect, usually manifested as severe weather changes or earthquakes. Your Summoned ghost shows up in a lightning storm; your transformed object sets off an earthquake; your mind control spell causes the skies to become dark and ominous. Use the highest value harmonic card to determine the strength of these effects (2 to 6 = Mild, 7 to 10 = Strong, Jack to Ace = Very Strong). Example: Marrillion’s spell has an Elemental Harmonic superimposed on an Emotional Aspect. Based on our examples, Marillion’s spell will have a strong Elemental effect, with possibly a major storm or small earthquake accompanying it.

Wild Spells

Harmonics are not the only danger of spellcasting; the other is the uncontrollable or “wild” Spell, caused when the Adept’s manipulations cause an unexpected tangling of the knots of sorcery. A spell will automatically go “wild” anytime that a Joker is drawn from the Sorcery Deck; on the draw of the card, the spell instantly goes off whether its Thaumic Energy Requirements are fulfilled or not.

A wild spell will automatically cause a greater effect than its intended Definitions allow (such as the mind control spell that suddenly controls a whole city instead of one person, or that lasts until the Mage figures out some way to dispell it). A wild spell’s effects are always up to the Host of the Game.

Beating The High Cost of Spellcasting

As you may have by now realized, New European sorcery takes time, because it takes time to Gather together enough power and shape it into the knots of a

spell. This is why mages rely on duels of will for combat rather than spells; since true sorcery takes so long, it's not designed to allow you to launch a flurry of fireballs (on the other hand, with enough time and skill, you can decimate a major city, as the Indians did to St. Louis a few years ago). To cast the instantaneous spells common to fantasy literature and games, you would need a way to either instantly Gather power or to have power already Gathered in one place.

Artefacts

One way to beat the high time cost of Sorcery is **Artefacts**.

Artefacts are "storage batteries" of Gathered Power: Power held (thanks to the Aspect of the Material World) in a latent form. Most Artefacts are Aligned towards being used by one Aspect; however, there are powerful objects that may Align towards multiple Aspects or no Aspect in particular. Like a Sorcery Card, an Artefact has an Aspect and a Face Value, which can be added to the Power Gathered to cast a spell. An Artefact can also be used in an Unaligned Aspect, but its value will never be greater than one, and it will have all the problems inherent in using Unaligned Power.

Artefacts are always described in terms of their **Appearance**, the **Secret Knowledge** and **History** associated with them, and their **Aspect** and **Thaumic Power**.

The Catch with Artefacts.

An Artefact can only be created through Use and Intent; the more you use it for its intended purpose, the more powerful it becomes. You can't just *make* a magical item in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*; you must instead actually use it over and over until power begins to build up around it. This means the most powerful Artefacts are always very, very old and well-worn. And the more they are used, the more fragile and hard to maintain they become.

This also means that Artefacts without Aspects are extremely rare; the very fact that items are created by Use and Intent means that they almost always get used for an Aligned purpose.

A Note For Hosts: As a rule, Artefacts should be the "McGuffins" of your Game, prizes that powerful mages battle to achieve. This allows for plenty adventuring action as adventurers comb lost temples and seek out old ruins (or the strongholds of other Orders) to get powerful Artefacts. But should you need to make an Artefact, the rules are quite simple:

- The Artefact must be originally designed for its purpose. You can't use an old butter knife as the *Pussiant Poniard of Power*; you must forge a special knife just for that purpose.

- The Artefact must be used repeatedly to gain power. **For every year an Artefact is regularly used** (at least three times a year), **it will gather a one hundredth point of Thaumic Energy**. One way to determine the required age of an Artefact is to decide how many points of Power will be invested in the Artefact and multiply this value by 100. Example: In order for the *Pussiant Poniard of Power* to have gathered the equivalent Power of a Queen of Diamonds, it would have to be used for at least twelve hundred years! As Artefacts are often handed down as great treasures over the millenia, many transcend the lifespans of at least two or three civilizations! The maximum amount of Power a single Artefact can gather is 14.

- An Artefact will automatically take an Aspect to itself based on what it's used for. Therefore, you must be very careful when creating a potential Artefact that you intend to use in many Aspects to always use it in a *different* Aspect for each use. Repeating certain usages over time will align the Artefact irrevocably. A smart Host should take note of how an Artefact gets used over its lifetime and make a point of aligning it even if the Player doesn't want to. Example: if the *Pussiant Poniard* is used mostly for Material Spells, it will take on a Material Aspect whether its owners want it to or not!

A Sample Artefact

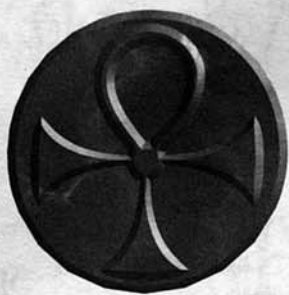
Here's an example of a typical Artefact:

The Mystic Chalice of Set

- **Appearance:** A smooth silver bowl with intricate Egyptian hieroglyphs around the upper edge.

- **Secret Knowledge & History:** Used as a focussing device for mental spells in the great Temple of Egypt, rare herbs were burned in the chalice and inhaled by the priests to enhance their visions. Having been in use for five thousand years, the Chalice is very potent at enhancing mentally based Spells.

- **Aspect & Thaumic Power:** Queen of Hearts (Emotional).



Creating Artefacts

Artefact creation is a very dangerous thing. Luckily, you may have noticed that it isn't all that easy to create an Artefact; much as in real sorcery, intent and use are much more powerful than just enchantment.

However, if you plan to have Artefacts be a major part of your Entertainments, make sure you limit them to creations found by Players, not created by them. And don't succumb to the urge to scatter them all over the place; a good Artefact should require an Adventure and a hunt at least equalling that for the missing Ark of the Covenant.

Lastly, remember that if your Players are seeking a powerful Artefact, there will probably be at least three other equally well-armed and sorcerously-equipped parties also seeking it at the same time!

Some Sample Artefacts

A good Game in the world of *Castle Falkenstein* just isn't complete without a host of rare and unusual magickal creations for your players to scour the most mysterious and obscure places on Earth in search of. Here are just a few ideas:

The Blade of Finn McCool

Appearance: A rough-edged broadsword, with runes carved deep in the upper blade.

Secret Knowledge & History: A powerful centering device for building up the will and leading others. The blade was first held by an ancient Irish war leader, and has been traditionally carried by Irish chieftains ever since.

Aspect & Thaumic Power: 5 of Hearts (Emotional).

The Amulet of Chthonic Might

Appearance: A heavy oblong silver medallion on a thick chain. A great ruby eye fills the center, while cabalistic symbols ring the outer edge.

Secret Knowledge & History: The ceremonial amulet worn by the Dark Lords of Fallen Atlantis, preparatory to their attempts to raise islands from the sea floor.

Aspect & Thaumic Power: King of Diamonds (Material).

The Hand of Dark Mystery

Appearance: A carved wooden staff with a gnarled hand at the top, gripping a crystal orb.

Secret Knowledge & History: A potent charm of the Order of the Golden Dawn, used in Summonation rituals at its Grand Conclaves.

Aspect & Thaumic Power: Jack of Spades (Spiritual).

The Tool of The First Master

Appearance: A smoothly-finished metal tool of strange shape, encrusted with gems, with the runes of Eternal Shaping engraved on the haft.

Secret Knowledge & History: A potent focus for material works that involve transformation and creation, the Tool of the Master is used by the Mystic Lodge of the Temple of Ra in their technological-magickal rituals.

Aspect & Thaumic Power: Seven of Diamonds (Material).

The Ring of Light & Shadow

Appearance: A smooth golden torc with heavy knobs on each end, and a filigree of Celtic knots throughout its length.

Secret Knowledge & History: A powerful Artefact used by the Ancient Brotherhood of the Druidic Temple in rituals of weather control and elemental magic.

Aspect & Thaumic Power: Ace of Clubs (Elemental).

The Blue Crystal of Mu

Appearance: A multi-faceted, roughly triangular blue crystal, suspended from a slim golden chain.

Secret Knowledge & History: Worn only by the Priestesses of the Lost Continent of Mu in their rituals of time travel. Currently sought by the Masters of the Temple of Ra.

Aspect & Thaumic Power: Queen of Spades (Spiritual).

The Numeric Eye of Avogadro

Appearance: A large triangular pendant with a sun shape superimposed. In the center is a carved sapphire eye with a flickering light within.

Secret Knowledge & History: A powerful Artefact of uncertain origin, rumored to have been used by the Master Sorcerors of the Tibetan Plateau and later recovered by Sir Richard Burton from agents of the Dragon Empire. Its powers over the Realms of the Mind are legendary.

Aspect & Thaumic Power: Ace of Hearts (Emotional).

Unravelling

The other, more infamous method for beating the high time cost of spellcasting is called **Unravelling**.

Unravelling is the technique of using the Magick inherent in the life forces of living things. Every living thing is made up of interwoven threads of all the forms of Power. Woven inside an Adept's being are elements of Emotion & Will (Consciousness), the Material (Body), Elemental (Earth, Air, Fire and Water) and the Spiritual (Soul). By using the Gathered Power in the knot that makes up your existence, you can instantly power a spell with "free," already-Aligned energy, like a ragdoll knitting a sweater by unravelling itself.

It is very, very dangerous. It often kills mages. But it can be done. And many Adepts, when faced with the choice between death by sword or possible death by Unravelling, take the risk and Unravel themselves.

For every 2 points of Thaumic Power Unravelled from a living organism, the victim loses one point of Health. When its Health drops below zero, it is dead. Recovering from Unravelling occurs at the same rate as recovering from (Treated) Wounds. Example: Illuminatus Grandmaster Lucius Vanderhoff needs to cast an immediate **Stunning** spell to stop an onrushing Troll. He knows the spell will have a Thaumic Energy Requirement of 10 points. He visualizes the Act of Unravelling upon himself (with Definitions and subtracting his Sorcery), liberating the Thaumic ten points and costing himself the equivalent of five Wounds. With only two Wounds remaining, he staggers away as the Troll is wracked by pain and falls unconscious.

Last But Not Least: Turning the Spell Off

One of the problems with spellcasting by manipulating the sorcerous superstrings that control reality is that all the time there are other forces also pulling and tugging on those same strings. As a result, all spells eventually are ripped apart by the general movement of the greater Universe. To a large extent, the Duration of a spell is not as much a time limit, as a measure of how well the spell has been crafted to resist these disrupting forces.

But you may occasionally need to turn off an ongoing spell before its natural Duration ends. This process, called **Dispelling**, can be done two ways. The first is to have the original creator of the spell pronounce the Invocation a second time to mentally release the spell, pulling the slip knot, so to speak.

The second method comes up when a mage wants to dismantle another Adept's spell. In these cases, both wizards will treat the attempt to Dispel the ongoing Sorcery as a Contested Feat (pg. 184), with both using their Sorcery Abilities and whatever card(s) they wish to add to the contest of wills. The defending mage need not be near the spell; he is still psychically linked to the spell no matter where he currently is and will know of its dispelling.

- If the Dispelling Mage's Total is less than half that of the other Mage's Total, the attempt is a **Fumble**. The spell automatically backlashes, causing Wounds to the Dispelling Mage equal to one half of its Total Thaumic Energy.

- If the Dispelling Mage's Total is less than that of the other Mage's Total, the attempt is a **Failure**. The spell continues on unabated.

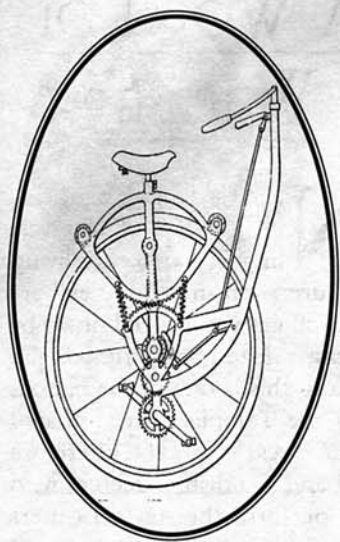
- If the Dispelling Mage's Total is equal to or greater than that of the other Mage's Total, the attempt is a **Partial Success**. The spell will continue operating, but at greatly reduced parameters. Move all parameters down to the next level of power.

- If the Dispelling Mage's Total is equal to or greater than half again that of the other Mage's Total, the attempt is a **Full Success**. The Spell shuts down instantly.

- If the Dispelling Mage's Total is equal to or greater than twice that of the other Mage's Total, the attempt is a **High Success**. The spell instantly shuts off, with psychic backlash causing Wounds to the other Mage equal to one half of the Spell's Total Thaumic Energy.

A Word of Warning

Needless to say, performing the Act of Unravelling on any other living creature is an incredibly evil act that will get you hunted down by at least a dozen Brotherhoods and Orders; this is one of the reasons why the Templars exterminated the Aztecs. However, there are Evil and fiendish Sorcerers who still perform the Act on others (usually as part of some type of foul sacrificial murder). Hosts should feel no hesitation in punishing this kind of unspeakable activity with the vengeful legions of Pure Sorcery descending upon the offending Adepts!



Creating Anachrotech

Since Anachrotech is always something that's commonly manufactured throughout Steam Age society, it's not easy to create new forms of it (sort of like creating your own car company back home). The best way to create new Anachrotech is to either encounter it as a creation of the Host of your game, or to create the original as an Infernal Device (more on this later), and convince someone to set up a manufacturing plant.

TYPICAL COSTS OF ANACHROTECH

Automatic Recorder.....	20c
Automatic Abacus.....	5c
Automotive.....	200-400c
Calculation Engine.....	1000c
Clockwork Prosthesis.....	25c
Dreadnought.....	Nations Only
Entertainment Clockwork.....	25c
New Games.....	5c
Land Fortress.....	Nations Only
Telegraphic Rec.....	1000c

Infernal Devices, Engines of Destruction & Astounding Inventions

Steamtech Invention & Vernian Science in the Age of Steam

Steamtech. You can't live in the world of *Castle Falkenstein* without it. (Well, you could, but it sure wouldn't be as much fun). Steamtech makes up such an important part of everyday reality here that I immediately knew I'd have to create rules for inventing it in the Great Game. But since I'm not an engineer by trade (and you probably aren't either), the tough part was to create a way to give my Players all the fun of Steamtech without the complexities of real gadget design. The following are some basic ground rules for creating the three kinds of Steamtech commonly encountered in New Europa. Feel free to play with these rules any way you see fit; the idea of Steamtech is that it makes a great way to add fun and weirdness to an Entertainment and should never be an end in itself.

The overwhelming amount of Steamtech falls into two categories: **Anachrotech** (strange Victorian pseudo-technology that mimics devices and things not yet invented in the 1800's) and **Gadgets** (useful tools built into everyday objects—a current Steam Age fad similar to the popular electronics boom of the late 20th Century). Rules for creating both are in the sidebars and articles in this section.

However, the *main* thing you can do with Steamtech is build the incredible inventions and machines of the Steam Age: clanking, iron-clad, big-riveted, ornately ornamented, steam-belching creations found in all the best fictions of the 19th century. These aren't just big machines; these are major Plot Devices of epic proportions, with a style and clockwork panache that makes them truly Victorian.

Constructing Steamtech Inventions

There are five kinds of Steamtech in a *Castle Falkenstein* Entertainment: **Gadgets**, **Amazing Vehicles**, **Infernal Weapons**, **Astounding Engines** and **Formulations**; all use the same basic construction system described below.

Each Steamtech Invention has two parts: the basic **function** of the Vehicle, Weapon, Engine or Formulation, and its **parameters** (power source, method of control, armament [if any], movement abilities [if any], size, range, deadliness, appearance and duration). Each function and parameter also has an associated cost. You add up all the applicable parameter costs to the cost of the functions, *subtract* the Face Value of the Inventor's *Tinkering* Ability, and finally multiply the total by the Invention's **size** (for Vehicles), **area of effect** (Weapons), **reliability** (Engines) or **duration** (Formulations). The result is the overall amount of **weeks** required to build the device; **multiply this by 100** to get the cost in currency. *Example:* Dr. Phelps's [Tinkering GR=8] *Fabulous Flying Belt* involves the following: Ornithopter [10] made of brass [0], driven by a steam boiler [5] for an hour [2], using levers [1], mechanical wings [5] and small sized [x1]. Total cost [23-8=] is 15 weeks and 1500c.

Creating Your Own Gadgetech

One of the most common forms of Steamtech in the world of *Castle Falkenstein* are **Gadgets**, those uniquely neo-Victorian fusions of common everyday items and advanced (for 1870) technology so beloved by New Europeans. Gadgets are *everywhere* in the Steam Age; they can be purchased from special Gadgeteer's shops or in the newfangled "Department Stores" that are springing up like weeds in major cities. So it's natural that Players will also want to create their own Gadgetech to use in Entertainments.

General Rules For Constructing Gadgetech

Constructing Gadgetech in the Great Game is a relatively simple process. If you have at least a Good Tinkering Ability, you may purchase any of the gadgets listed below from a gadget shop and install them in a Container of your own devising. Or you may have a Gadget constructed by a Gadgeteer at any gadget shop (most large cities have at least one). The gadget will require one day of construction time for every gadget you wish to install in the Container, plus an additional 20% fee added onto the cost of parts for installing the bits the way you want them. For a 50% rush charge, you can cut this down to half the normal time. New Containers and Gadgets to go into them are possible, if mutually agreed upon by the Host of your game.

Gadgets & Gadget Containers

Common Gadget Containers

CONTAINER	DESCRIPTION	COST	SPACES
Ring	Large cameo ring with compartment	4c	1
Snuffbox	Metal box with engraving	3c	2
Cigarette Case	Flat metal box, engraved, or w/cameo	4c	2
Walking Stick	Hardwood stick with metal head	3c	3
Cloak Pin	Cameo or metal with compartment	3c	1
Brooch	Cameo or metal with compartment	3c	1
Pistol Belt	Hoster and belt with harness straps	4c	2
Shoe/Boot	Hollow heels, space in upper boot	4c	2
Coat	Space in sleeves, collar, back	8c	6
Gloves	Leather riding or long ladies'	2c	2
Hat	Woman's "picture" hat or men's topper	2c	3
Book	Hollowed, with covering pages	2c	3
Watch	Large pocketwatch, hidden compartment	3c	2
Umbrella	Two person, w/space in handle	4c	2
Pen	Fountain pen, onyx or gold engraved	3c	1
Sword Hilt	Ornate rapier/saber hilt w/compartment	8c	1
Prosthetic Limb	Clockwork arm or leg	50c	4

Common Off-The-Rack Gadgets

GADGET	DESCRIPTION	COST	SPACES
Air Bottle	5 min air supply in tiny metal cylinder	1c	3
Acid Vial	Tiny glass tube. Acid damage/3 turns	2c	1
Blowgun	Extending tube w/3 soporific darts	1c	1
Bolo	Metal throwing balls joined with wire	2c	2
Brass knucks	8 linked metal finger rings	2c	2
Caltrops	6 marble-sized spiked metal balls	1c	3
Camera	Tiny box camera, 4 photographic plates	6c	4
Chemical Lab	Tiny chemical vials, mixers, test tubes	10c	4
Claws	4 finger rings w/claws (as dagger)	4c	2
Compass	Dime-sized direction finder	1c	1
Crampons	Folding metal cleats that clip on shoes	12c	4
Drug Needle	4 soporific or poison needles	2c	1
Drill	Hand drill, w/4 bits from .02" to .5"	4c	2
Explosive	Shrapnel damage over 4 yd. area	15c	2
First Aid Kit	Bandages, smelling salts, iodine	6c	3
Flash Bomb	Blinding magnesium flare (marble sized)	5c	1
Flasher	Torch, w/spring-loaded signal cap	2c	1
Fuse	5 minutes of fuse-cord for explosives	1c	1
Garrotte	Strangling wire w/finger ring grips	1c	1
Gas Atomiser	Sprays 2 doses chloroform. 1yd range	3c	2
Grapple	Folding grapple hook w/ 20' wire cable	4c	3
Hidden blade	Spring-loaded dagger	3c	2
Icepick	6" long steel needle (as hatpin)	2c	2
Invisible inkpen	Pen, ink, celluloid glasses to see ink	1c	2
Life Preserver	Inflatable rubber flotation tube	3c	4
Lockpick	4 picks, skeleton keys	2c	1
Magnifier	Tiny rectangular magnifying lens	1c	1
Microscope	Tiny microscope w/2 slides	4c	2
Nitroglycerin	Small glass vial. Shrapnel damage over 4 yds	20c	1
Parachute	1 man (150lbs) silk chute	25c	5
Periscope	Tiny scope extends to 12"	8c	2
Pistol	2 shot "skeleton-frame" derringer	30c	2
Ratchet	Hand cranked pulley for going up cables	10c	3
Rocket	Tiny rocket. Range 10yds. Shrapnel damage.	25c	2
Sextant	Tiny folding navigation aid, tables	7c	3
Signal Flare	Tiny rocket w/parachute. Lasts 3 min	7c	2
Skates (Ice)	Folding metal blades that clip on shoes	10c	4
Snorkle	Extending 2" breathing tube	2c	3
Telegraph	Tiny morse key set, 20' wire, battery*	15c	3
Telescope	Tiny extendable 20x scope	6c	2
Timer	Clockwork 60 min timer with chime	3c	1
Toolkit	2 screwdrivers, wrench, tiny hammer	6c	2
Torch	Magnesium flashlight w/lens, 1 refill	6c	2
Umbrella	1 person parasol	2c	4
Watchwork	Quarter-sized pocketwatch with chime	1c	1
Whistle	Policeman's whistle. Very loud	1c	1
Wire saw	2' wire saw with finger ring grips	2c	1

*can be connected to regular telegraph wires w/attached hooks.

Building Amazing Steam Age Vehicles

Amazing vehicles: one of the most important parts of any Steam Age Adventure. What would *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea* be without the *Nautilus*, or the *First Men in the Moon* without their mighty *Colombiad*? And can you imagine the Martians invading Earth without their Giant Tripod Warmachines?

Since Amazing Vehicles are such an important part of the March of Victorian Progress, both Players and Hosts alike will want to build their own. The following system lets you do just that, but in keeping with the spirit of the Age, preserves the boiler-plated, jury-rigged feel of true Steamtech.

What is your Amazing Vehicle's function? If your Vehicle can perform several functions, pick the individual Functions it contains [10 each]:

- **Underground Drill Machine:** A powerful metal drill capable of boring holes deep into the earth, this Vehicle could be used for exploration of Lost Subterranean Worlds or to tunnel into the vaults of the Bank of England!
- **Dirigible or Airship:** A hydrogen or helium-filled balloon with the ability of controlled flight, this Vehicle could be used to explore distant regions safely and swiftly, or to drop bombs and rain terror down upon an unsuspecting populace!
- **Cloud Clipper or Gyrocraft:** A ship-like flying Vehicle suspended by hundreds of spinning rotors, this too could be used for exploration and commerce, or to attack cities and military forces all over the globe!
- **Ornithopter:** A flying Vehicle which mimics the flight of a bird,

this could be used to provide speedy aerial transportation to law-abiding citizens, or as the mechanized mount of aerial terrorists!

- **Interplanetary Ether Ship:** Designed to penetrate the very furthest reaches of the rarified Ether, this Vehicle could be used for the peaceful exploration of Space and the Seeking out of New Civilizations or the conquest of Strange New Worlds!

- **Land Vehicle:** This Vehicle could provide rapid, dependable transportation to the four corners of the earth, or be used as a mechanized agent of invasion and armored imperialism!

- **Submarine Vessel:** A deep diving nautical craft, this Vehicle could be used to explore the depths of the Deep Oceans, or to plunder innocent shipping and pursue a life of underseas piracy and destruction!

- **Marine Vessel:** This Vehicle could be used as a useful carrier of commerce and industry, or as a deadly dreadnought whose mighty weapons could be used to dominate the Eight Seas!

- **Giant Automaton:** A helpful servant of Mankind, freeing us from everyday toil, or the vanguard of a mechanized army that knows no fear: this Vehicle could be either!

What's it look like? Pick any or all descriptions that apply to the look of your Creation [No cost].

- Metalized fabric stretched over thin metal or wooden ribs.
- Laminated wooden sheets nailed down with shiny round-headed brass tacks.
- Shiny brass plates riveted together in complex patterns.
- Rusty-red iron plates w/huge knobby rivets.

- Blackened steel plates w/huge flat rivets.

- Large glass "fish-eye" observation bubbles.

- Lots of external gears and complex levers.

- Lots of hissing steam vents and chuffing pistons.

- Ornate gilded scrollwork and glossy hand-rubbed paint.

- Tall, complex arrangements of smokestacks with no apparent functional use.

- Lots of shiny brass knobs and fittings all over the surface.

- Large brass dials and gauges bolted all over the inner surface.

How is it powered? Pick the description that is the closest to your idea [5 each].

- Complex and intricate metal **Clockworks**, driven by assorted mainsprings, gears and a big key.

- Welded brass **Compressed Air Cylinder** with complex multi-stage valves, hissing pistons, and a hand-cranked pump for pressurization.

- Spherical brass **Boiler** covered with hundreds of tiny rivets and jets of pressurized steam hissing from spigot-shaped safety valves.

- Complex whirling brass **Electric Dynamo** with ornate gilded fretwork on the outside, that throws off occasional sparks.

- White hot glowing **Radium Engine** encased in a massive lead chamber covered with leaded glass portholes.

- **Solar boilers** heated by complex arrays of highly polished brass mirrors and thick glass lenses.

- Banks of fuming **sulphuric acid/lead batteries** driving whirling, sparking Electrical Engines.

- Rickety **windmill-vanes** cranking complex gears, clutches and metal chains through wooden pulleys.

How long can your Vehicle operate before needing refuelling? Pick the description [and cost] closest to your idea.

- A few minutes.....1
- Up to an hour.....2
- Up to six hours.....4
- Up to 24 hours.....6
- Up to a week.....8
- Up to a month.....10
- Unlimited Range.....12

How is your Vehicle controlled? Pick the description closest to your idea [Cost 1 each].

- Long metal **Levers** that crank incredibly complex arrangements of Gears.
- Thick metal cables and greasy iron rods pulled by ranks of numbered handles.
- Celluloid **Punch Cards** fed into clattering brass Babbage Calculation Engines.
- Large **Electrical knife switches** and thick Indian rubber-insulated wires snaking and sparking all over.
- Nautical-style **Captain's wheel** with large brass compass and control rods leading to the Engine room.

Does it travel in the Air or through the Ether? If so, pick the description that is the closest to your idea [Cost 5 each].

- Wood and fabric **Paddlewheels** with shiny pistons and gears.
- Large wooden **Propellers** spinning on ornately-mounted drive shafts.
- Thrashing metal and fabric **Mechanical Wings** complete with artificial drag vanes.
- Stacks of multi-vented **Helical Rotors** spinning madly in alternating directions.
- Large brass **Rocket Tubes** in densely packed clusters, throwing off sparks and flame.

Does your Vehicle travel on Land? If so, pick the best description [Cost 2 each].

- Long ornate iron skids.
- High, spindly metal wheels with Indian rubber tires.

- Clanking metal **treads** with lots of gears and driving wheels.
- Articulated metal legs with large ratchets and complex gears.

Does your Vehicle travel on or under the Water? If so, pick the description that is the closest to your idea [Cost 2 each].

- Oversized **paddlewheels** cranked by shiny pistons and complex gears.
- Thrashing metal **mechanical fins** complete with artificial scales.
- Shiny brass **propellers** spinning on ornately mounted drive shafts.
- Multi-vented **Helical Screws** whirling in alternating directions on ornate metal drive shafts.
- Long metal **hydrofoil fins** projecting into the water.
- Banks of **mechanical oars** driven by gears and connected rods.

Is it armed? If so, pick the description that is the closest to your idea [Cost 5 each; damages listed on page 191].

- One **Gatling gun** that delivers lethal raking bursts of fire.
- One rapid firing **artillery gun** with deadly explosive shells striking at long ranges.
- Four fin-tipped **bombs** that can be dropped on targets from high in the atmosphere.
- Two self-guided **rockets** that descend upon their targets with explosive force.
- Two self-guided **clockwork torpedoes** that speed towards their targets carrying explosive charges.
- A long, lance-like **torpedo ram** with explosive charges at its tip.
- A great metal **ramming "spur"** that can pierce the hull of any vessel.

How Big is it? Multiply the final total of all your Costs by the number in brackets.

- Tiny (toy or model)[x .5]
- Small (crew of 1 or 2)[x 1]
- Medium (crew of 4)[x 1]
- Large (crew of 10)[x 2]
- Huge (crew of 100)[x 4]
- Immense (crew of 500) ...[x 5]

- **Titanic** (crew of 1000)[x 6]

Vehicle Examples

Submersible Avenger

Used by the Royal British Navy to hunt down Pirate submarines [10].

Cost: 132 weeks at 13,200c

Size: Huge [x4]

Description: Body is made of rusty-red iron plates with huge knobby rivets, with large glass "fish-eye" observation bubbles and large brass dials and gauges bolted all over the inner surface. [0]

Powered by: Banks of fuming sulphuric acid/lead batteries driving whirling Electrical Engines. [5]

Operation time: 1 month [10]

Controlled by: A nautical-style Captain's wheel with large brass compass and thick control rods leading to the Engine room. [1]

Moves with: Multi-vented Helical Screws whirling in alternating directions on ornate metal drive shafts [2].

Armed with: Self-guided Clockwork Torpedoes with explosive charges. [5]

Personal Ornithopter

Used by Fredonian Air Pirates to swoop down on helpless villages from their Pirate Airship. [10]

Cost: 30 weeks at 3,000c

Size: Small [x1]

Description: Shiny brass plates riveted and welded together. [0]

Powered by: Welded brass Compressed Air Cylinder with complex multi-stage valves, hissing pistons, and a hand cranked pump for pressurization. [5]

Operation time: An hour. [2]

Controlled by: Long metal Levers that crank incredibly complex arrangements of Gears. [1]

Moves with: Thrashing metal and fabric Mechanical Wings and Long iron Skids for landings. [7]

Armed with: Two self-guided Rockets that descend upon their targets with explosive force. [5]

Creating Infernal Weapons...

Infernal Weapons are another great staple of classic Steam Age melodrama. They exist to threaten helpless cities for tribute or to exact a Terrible Vengeance upon the World.

As a Mad Scientist or Mastermind Character, your Goal may be to create an Infernal Weapon for your own fiendish purposes. As in creating Vehicles, you will combine functions and parameters and pay a final cost in time and money based on your choices

Important: As a side note, Infernal Weapons are always powered by Electricity, which is always supplied by a huge sparking Dynamo in the cellar. Why? Because it's Tradition!

What is your Infernal Weapon's function? Pick the description that is closest to your Creation [cost is 10 each].

- **Projects a Hypnotic Ray:** To bend the wills and minds of others! No force, Faerie or mortal can resist its mental domination [Resistance is an EXC Courage Feat]!
- **Projects a Weather Control Ray:** To harness the very forces of Nature to your command. With this device, you can create mighty storms or quell the strongest hurricane!
- **Projects a Temperature Control Ray:** The power of cold or heat is yours to master over any area or object you desire! Wrap things in shrouds of ice or cause them to burst into flames!
- **Projects a Magnetic Force Ray:** The powers of Magnetic Force and Attraction are at your very fingertips! You may attract or repulse anything, as long as it is formed of ferrous materials!
- **Projects a Levitation Ray:** To raise the very continents! Lift great

objects with the forces of Gravity to do your bidding!

- **Projects an Incineration Ray:** Focus your mighty Engine of Incineration upon your Enemies and reduce them to ash!
- **Projects an Electric Lightning Ray:** Hurl thunderbolts across continents with the very power of Jove himself!
- **Hurls Explosive Shells:** Rain gigantic missiles the size of houses upon your enemies like a veritable Cyclops!

What's it look like? Pick any or all descriptions that apply to the look of your Infernal Weapon [no cost].

- Sheets of glass mirrors held up by metal struts.
- Complex arrays of electrical arcs, rotating lenses and shiny mirrors.
- Shiny brass plates welded together in complex patterns.
- Rusty-red iron plates with huge knobby rivets.
- Blackened steel plates with huge flat rivets.
- Lots of external gears and complex levers.
- Lots of hissing steam vents and chuffing pistons.
- Ornate gilded scrollwork and glossy hand-rubbed paint.
- Lots of shiny brass knobs and fittings all over the surface.
- Large brass dials and gauges bolted all over the inner surface.

How is it controlled? Pick the description that is the closest to your idea. [1 each]

- Long metal Levers that crank complex arrangements of Gears.
- Thick metal cables pulled by ranks of numbered handles.

What is your Infernal Weapon's range [and cost]?

- Hundreds of feet4
- Thousands of feet6
- Dozens of miles8
- Hundreds of miles10
- Thousands of miles12

How deadly is your Infernal Weapon's Power [and its cost; damages on pg. 191]?

- Fearsome4
- Terrible8
- Horrible12
- Ghastly16

How large an object or area can your Infernal Weapon affect? Multiply the final result by the number in brackets. Note: The device must be at least as large as the object or area to be affected; a Lightning Gun that can strike a huge object is equally huge itself.

- Small objects or up to 12 square feet[x1]
- Medium objects or up to 30 square feet[x2]
- Large objects or up to 60 square feet[x3]
- Huge objects or a single large house[x4]
- Immense objects or whole city blocks[x5]
- Titanic objects or whole cities[x6]

Sample Infernal Weapon

Von Drakon's Lightning Gun

Used by evil Count Igor von Drakon to terrorize the people of his tiny nation of Bucholia. [10]

Cost: 145 weeks and 14,500c

Description: Body is made of shiny brass plates welded together in complex patterns. Large brass dials and gauges are bolted all over the inner surface, and complex arrays of electrical arcs, rotat-

Astounding Engines ...

ing lenses and shiny mirrors jut out of the barrel. [0]

Controlled by: Long metal Levers that crank complex arrangements of Gears. [1]

Range: Hundreds of Miles [10]

Deadliness: Terrible [8]

How Large an Effect?: Entire City blocks [x5].

Astounding Technological Engines

Another important part of Steamtech Invention. Technological Engines are anything that performs a useful non-vehicle function or that manufactures goods and services. Here are a few of the most important; new ones can also be developed through working with the Host of your Game.

What does your Astounding Technological Engine do? Pick the function(s) closest to your Creation [Cost 15 each].

- **Sound Transmission:** Listen or send your voice (or other sounds) to far distances through the agencies of telegraphic wires or through the very Ether itself!
- **Visual Transmission:** Send images to distant locations through the telegraphic wires or through Etheric Waves!
- **Long Range Viewer:** Observe sights and scenes from far away with a telegraphic telescopic device!
- **Calculation & Computation:** Compute the most complex algorithms and generate complex mathematics through the agency of Artificial Intellecs!
- **Manufacturing Engine:** Mass production of material, clothing,

vehicles, consumer goods and food-stuffs for the markets of the world!

• **Mechanical Automaton:** Clockwork or electrical servants that never tire, and who exist to fulfill your every whim.

What's it look like? Pick any or all descriptions that apply to the look of your Engine [no cost].

- Ornate wooden cabinetry with brass fittings and leather padding.
- Shiny brass plates and gears.
- Rusty-red iron plates with huge knobby rivets.
- Lots of external metal gears and complex levers.
- Ornate gilded scrollwork and glossy hand-rubbed paint.
- Lots of shiny brass knobs and fittings all over the surface.
- Large brass dials and gauges bolted all over the surface.

How is it powered? Pick the description that is the closest to your idea [2 each].

- Complex and intricate metal Clockworks, driven by assorted mainsprings, gears and a huge iron key.
- Welded brass Compressed Air Cylinder with complex multi-stage valves, hissing pistons, and a hand-cranked pump for pressurization.
- Spherical brass Boiler covered with hundreds of tiny rivets and jets of pressurized steam hissing from spigot-shaped safety valves.
- Complex whirling brass Electric Dynamo with ornate gilded fretwork on the outside, that throws off occasional sparks.
- Solar boilers heated by complex arrays of highly polished brass mirrors and thick glass lenses.
- Banks of fuming sulphuric acid/lead batteries driving whirling, sparking Electrical Engines.

• Rickety windmill-vanes cranking complex gears, clutches and metal chains through wooden pulleys.

• Waterwheels cranking large gear-boxes and huge reduction pulleys.

How is it controlled? Pick the description that is the closest to your idea [Cost of 1].

- Long metal Levers that crank complex arrangements of Gears.
- Thick metal cables pulled by ranks of numbered handles.

Chemical Formulations & Amazing New Materials

Although plastic has not yet been invented, the Steam Age has already seen the creation of many new modern conveniences, from rayon, chemical dyes, and celluloids to tempered steel and helium gas. The field of Formulations and Materials is a good place for an ambitious Inventor or Scientist (Mad or otherwise) to explore:

What does your Chemical Formulation do? Pick the description that is closest to your Creation [10 each].

- **Emotion or Will Altering:** Cause fear and confusion in all but those with Exceptional Courage! Or cause them to love or hate as you alone command!
- **Mind or Intellect Altering:** Bend the very will of your enemies and make them your slaves!
- **Mental Augmentation:** Become a veritable genius, increasing your Education by two ranks of Ability!

... And Formulations

• **Physical Transformation:** Take the aspect of another humanoid creature. Or even take the very form of Invisibility itself!

• **Sleeping or Hypnotic:** Cast the spell of morpheus upon your victims until you alone rouse them!

• **Rapid Healing:** Heal all Wounds within hours, not days or weeks!

• **Physical Augmentation:** Become a veritable Hercules, increasing your Physique and Athletics skills each by a full two ranks of Ability (up to EXT)!

What appearance does your formulation take? Pick the description that is closest to your Creation [no cost].

- Gas
- Liquid
- Dust
- Metallic Solid

How long do the effects of your Chemical Formulation last? Multiply your total by the Duration below:

- A few minutes.x1
- Up to an hour.x2
- Up to six hours.x3
- Up to 24 hours.x4
- Up to a week.x5
- Up to a month.x6
- Forever.x8

What are the properties of your Amazing New Material? Pick the property or properties that are closest to your Creation [Cost 20 each].

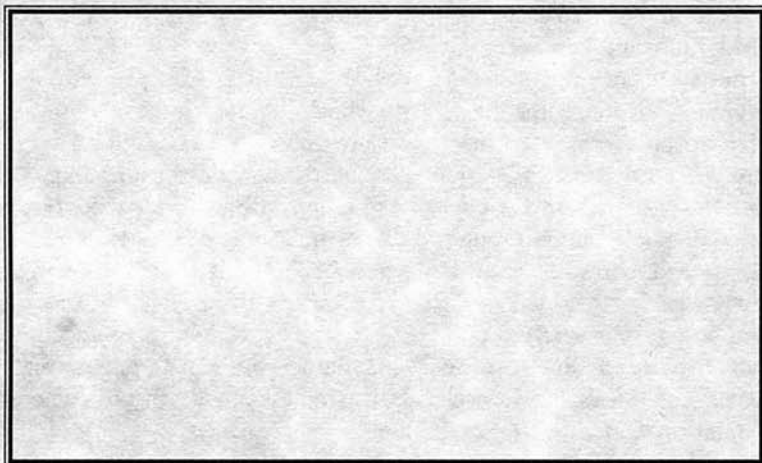
- Super transparent
- Invisible
- Super strong
- Super flexible
- Super conductive
- Super explosive
- Super protective
- Super long-lasting

Royal Patent Office Official Application

What is Your Invention To Be Called?

Please Describe Your Invention in as Clear and Precise Terms as Possible:

Please Enclose a Plan Drawing of Your Invention Below:



Your Patent Number is

Engine Magick

Engine Magick. The mystic combination of sorcery and technology that allows the Steam Age to become an Age of Magick Technology as well.

Now the good news and the bad news. The bad news is, I *can't* tell you how Engine Magick works. There's a lot of reasons for this, not the least being that I don't really understand it myself. But the main reason is that this Journal will be travelling through the Faerie Realms to reach my old home, and I can't take the chance that the Second Compact's greatest secret might be waylaid by Unseelie Agents and turned against us.

The good news is, I can tell you how to create and use Engine Magick in the context of a Adventure Entertainment. That's going to have to do for now until I can figure out a safe way to get the real facts.

The Basics

Engine Magick is the Ultimate Plot Device. Right now, only three or four people in the entire *Falkenstein* world know how to use it. So the chances of your players building Engines is nil. However, they may encounter Engines any time they encounter Agents of the Second Compact or their devices. That's where you, the Host, get to step in and create the Engines to be in your Entertainment.

A warning: This system deliberately uses no points or construction formulas; it's primarily a guide to constructing Engines that look and act in interesting ways.

Since Engine Magic combines a Device and a Spell, it truly is a fusion of Spellcasting and Inventing. Therefore, you have to combine both processes to create a magical Engine. **The first step is to determine what the Engine's Function is—the spell it creates.** Using the Lore descriptions on pages 199 through 202, determine the Spell the Engine casts. You do not have to pay to Gather Power; the Engine does that for itself. Write down what it does, but do not write in any definitions; the Engine's size will determine those for you.

The next step is to determine what the Engine's Primary Spell Generator looks like. Sorcerous Automata all require a Primary Spell Generator, a central "thingamajig" that weaves the spell. This part is always shaped to manipulate a particular Aspect:

- **Emotional:** Spinning concentric circles of metal rings etched with tiny hooks and with small cups lining the outer rims.

- **Material:** Complex gears and jointed metal parts that move in repeating patterns, driven by thin connecting pulleys and wires.

- **Spiritual:** Shiny metal globes, odd shaped pendulums and balance beams, swinging back and forth.

- **Elemental:** Jointed metal parts with knobs on each end that clack together, ratcheting up a long screw or cogwheel.

Next, determine how the Engine is powered. Sorcerous Automata are *never* self-powered; the *Law of Conservation of Energy* forces them to be driven by some external power source. Pick one that seems fun:

- **Intricate metal Clockworks**, driven by assorted mainsprings, gears and a big key.

- **Compressed Air system** with complex multi-stage valves, hissing pistons, and a hand-cranked pump for pressurization.

- **Brass Boiler** covered with hundreds of tiny rivets and jets of pressurized steam hissing from spigot-shaped safety valves.

- **Electric Dynamo** with ornate gilded fretwork on the outside, or a **Battery** power system.

Duration: How long can it operate? Engines keep producing the spell until they stop running or are turned off. Thus, there is no Duration Definition. Decide, based on the power source, how long you think the Engine will be able to operate before being rewound, stoked or refuelled.

Lastly, How Big & Powerful?

Finally, the size of the Engine determines the **range** of effect and/or **number** of people affected. The larger the Engine, the more it affects.

Engine Size	Range	Effect
Tiny (toy sized)	Up to 50 feet	small objects/12 sq.ft
Small (chest sized)	100's of feet	med. objects/30 sq.ft
Medium (desk sized)	1,000's of feet	lg. objects/60 sq.ft
Large (wagon sized)	Dozens of miles	huge objects
Huge (locomotive sized)	100's of miles	whole city blocks
Immense (ship sized)	1,000's of miles	whole cities

Engines are **omnirelational**; they affect all targets the same way, so there are no *Level of Resistance* Definitions. They also may not be directed at a specific target or type of target. Beyond that, what you want to do with Engines is up to your imagination and the needs of your Game. Have fun.

Like Clockwork

A Beginning Adventure Entertainment

Prologue: City of Secrets!

Old Vienna, 1871. The vast Austrian Empire drowns in the late summer sunlight, adrift on a sea of whipped cream, coffeehouses, and endless glittering parties. Since the defeat of Chancellor von Bismarck's armies five years ago by the Bayernese Aeronavy at *Königssieg*, grandfatherly old Emperor Franz Josef has been content to let his people bask in a contented fog, ignoring the intrigues and skirmishes that lie just beneath the placid surface of the Imperial capital.

But what shadowy secrets are stalking the evening streets of Old Vienna this night? Could tonight's masked ball hide more than just beautiful faces and undercover rendezvous? What pressing business will bring a famous Dwarf artificer, an ancient Dragon, and a powerful Wizard to a sorcerous battle in the Emperor's own amusement park?

Your Host has set the Stage for tonight. Can you, the Players, deduce and duel your way to the heart of the mystery? Will this adventure come off ... just like clockwork?

Dramatis Personae In Order of Appearance

Master Eleric Clocktinker, Dwarf Craftsman and Inventor

Fisticuffs [GD], Tinkering [EXT], Physique [GD] and Health [6].

The Lady Cecily, His Companion

Comeliness [EXT], Charisma [GD], Physique [GD] and Health [7].

Four to Six Rogues of Bad Character with Sabers

Fisticuffs [GD], Fencing [GD], Physique [GD] and Health [6].

Count Navarre, Roguish Wizard and Suitor

Sorcery [GR], Fisticuffs [GR], Fencing [GD], Physique [GD] and Health [8].

Lord Archon Highwing, A Dragon

Sorcery [GR], Fisticuffs [GR], Fencing [GD], Physique [GD] and Health [10].

CHAPTER ONE

What Has Gone Before

Austria, 1870 NE (New Europa). The Austrian Empire is a huge polyglot of peoples, spanning from the edge of Turkey to the boundaries of Bayern. The Empire has been at peace for many years, and the Emperor and his ministers are content to maintain their position by a clever balancing of secret treaties, vast spy networks, and marriages of alliance. The last outbreak of hostilities was in 1866, when Prussian Chancellor von Bismarck declared war on the Empire, and demanded certain of its holdings. (The war ended rather abruptly at a battlefield known as *Königssieg*, when the forces of Bayernese King Ludwig II routed the Prussian's Landwehr Fortresses with their new Aeronaval Dreadnoughts.)



On this particular afternoon in the cosmopolitan Capital of Old Vienna, the coffeehouses and hotels are thronged with visiting tourists and local citizens in town to attend tonight's gala Gaslighter's Grand Ball, just one of the many civic events Vienna is famed for.

Master Eleric Clocktinker, famed Dwarfish craftsman and Inventor, has decided to take the air in the company of his astoundingly lovely companion, the Lady Cecily, a fascinating figure of local gossip since her mysterious arrival two weeks ago. Gorgeous but regally remote, Cecily has been eagerly sought after by suitors all over town, but accepts no callers and is always seen with her elderly mentor. The odd couple has just stepped inside the shady comfort of the Cafe Schnitzle for coffee and cakes, a cafe currently occupied by the Players who are also having lunch.

Chapter Two

The Incident in the Cafe Schnitzle

In which a famous Dwarfish Inventor and his Lady friend are accosted by Ruffians. And also in which the Lady falls under a spell and is carried off by a Rogue in Black.

Scene Mechanics:

- The Dwarf will be called into a side room of the Cafe by a bribed waiter, where he will be thrashed soundly. Shouts and screams will be heard a few moments later. The Lady, however, will not react to any of this.
- There are two more Ruffians than there are Players; they will flee if more than half their number fall or if the Players summon the Police (who are at least five minutes away).
- The black-cloaked Rogue is really a Wizard. He will enter the Cafe shortly after the fight begins, speak briefly to Lady Cecily, and depart hand in hand (and smiling) with her. They will leave in a hired fiacre. If pursued, he will use the flash bomb in his cane to stun all pursuit; the players will not be able to avoid being dazzled.
- The battered Dwarf will beg the Players to "Recover my lost treasure, before midnight strikes and all is lost!" But he will not explain the reasons behind his request.

Chapter Three

A Chase in the Vienna Woods

In which the Rogue and the Lady are traced to a park in the Vienna Woods and confronted by the Players. And also in which we discover the Rogue has a few wizardly tricks up his cloaked sleeve, and that Others also have an interest in the Lady.

Scene Mechanics:

- The fiacre driver can be located by visiting the cab company a few blocks away. He knows the Rogue well; He is Count Antonio Navarre, a man-about-town and lady-killer who has been pursuing the Lady Cecily for some time. The driver dropped the couple off in a park in the Vienna Woods.
- While chasing after the Count, the Players will encounter another very similar

The Cafe

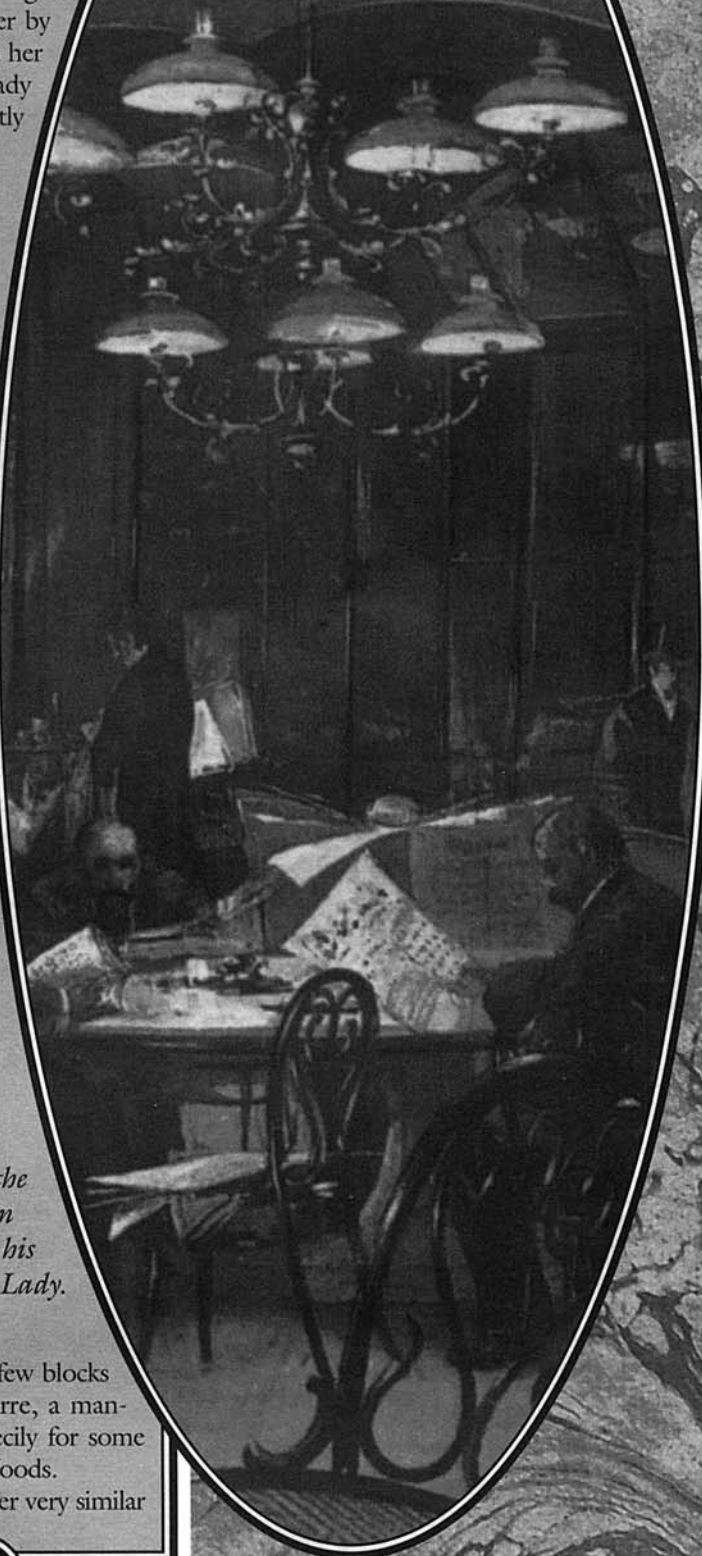




figure in black. Should they accost him, they will discover that he isn't the Count, but is actually a Dragon who is also pursuing the fleeing couple. He will offer his help, explaining that the Dwarf is an old friend.

- Count Navarre mentioned to the fiacre driver that he would be attending the Ball tonight to show off his new conquest and would require his services (of course, once the players locate him, the Count will certainly use other means to go to the Ball).

- If pursued in the park, Count Navarre will employ an Illusion Spell to create hundreds of copies of himself fleeing in all directions. During the confusion, he will once again escape.

Chapter Four

Glitter and Glamour in The Prater

In which the Dragon joins the players at the Great Masked Ball; a Man in Black is sought. And in which Sorcery and Deduction must be used to find a kidnapper before the stroke of midnight.

Scene Mechanics:

- The Count cannot be found at any time that afternoon or early evening. He is hiding in the townhouse of his sister, who will provide a costume for Lady Cecily.

- The Players may not enter the Ball without a costume. The entrance fee is 4p apiece. Once in the ball, the players will have roughly two hours ('til midnight) to sort through the waltzing, costumed throngs to find the Lady. Their clues will be 1) the couple will always be together and 2) Count Navarre will be unable to resist showing off by wearing all black (his signature color). In this case, he is wearing a black "Zorro" caballero's costume complete with cape.

- If confronted, Count Navarre will challenge a likely player to a Duel for the Lady's hand (to first blood).

- Lady Cecily is in reality a clockwork automaton with a spell placed upon her by the Dragon, who often works with Master Eleric. If midnight arrives before she is rewound, the spell will be broken and she will become an inert machine again. If the Dwarfmaster can reach her in time, he can use his tiny golden key to rewind and save her.

- If the Players are successful, the Master will reward them with 500c between them and his thanks; if not, he will sadly cradle the collapsed Cecily in his arms while the Dragon expresses his regrets and offers to pay their expenses.

In either case, Navarre will soon discover Cecily's real identity and leave her, never to return.

Adventure Settings

Need a quick Adventure fast? **Adventure Settings** are tiny thumbnail descriptions of Entertainments you can modify to your own needs, adding or changing characters, altering the Adventure's locale, or even putting in new twists and Plot Elements. The following pages contain a wide variety of possible Settings for your use. In addition to being a valuable Host's tool, Adventure Settings are also a good way to grasp the wide scope of adventures possible in the *Falkensteinian* world.

Adventure Settings

Master of the World!

No power can stop me, not Empire or Agency!" So boasts evil Lord Leslie, vengeance-driven leader of the insidious League of the Four, fiendish agents dedicated to conquering the world. Can you, with the aid of an Agent of the French Police, confound him as he travels from Paris to Vienna aboard Bayern's new Oriental Express Airship with his Klystron Bomb; the destruction of the Franco-Austrian Imperial Summit as his objective?

Dramatis Personae

Lord Leslie, inventor of the Klystron Bomb

A thin, nervous madman, wild-eyed and muttering.

Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [GD] • Physique [PR] • Tinkering [EXC]

Monsieur Henri Falcone of the Sureté

The elegant and suave detective who is never at a loss for a quip.

Fisticuffs [GD] • Physique [GD] • Marksmanship [GR] • Perception [EXC]

A Faerie Tale ...

A late night in a lonely Bayernese mountain inn. They came to her by night, to steal her away for their dark purposes. She fled to your room for help. Now, you must together defeat the forces of the Wild Hunt, as they attempt to kidnap the sister of an important member of the Second Compact, and make sure no witnesses remain alive!

Dramatis Personae

Lady Margret Morrolan, sister of the Sorceror

Beautiful, clever and accomplished.

Fisticuffs [PR] • Marksmanship [GD] • Physique [GD] • Charisma [GR] • Comeliness [EXC]

The Master of the Hunt

A huge horned man with glowing eyes and fangs.

Fisticuffs [GR] • Marksmanship [GD] • Physique [EXT] • Glamour [EXC]

Once Upon A Time ...

Once upon a time: an innocent beginning to a child's bedtime story. But when the forces of the Unselcie and the agents of ambitious Chancellor von Bismarck ally to turn the arrogant young heir to the throne of West Burgundia into a creature of Grimm Legend, it's up to you to provide the Beauty to his Beastliness and restore him to his rightful place.

Dramatis Personae

Prince Alon, Rightful Heir and Now Beast

In human form, a vain blond braggart. As a beast, somewhat were-wolf-like and violent.

Physique [EXC] • Fisticuffs [GR] • Charisma [PR] • Connections [GR]

Marcus von Hamill, Agent of the Imperial Secret Service

Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [GR] • Physique [GR] • Perception [GD]

The Game Of Empire

A secret document holds the fate of three nations hostage: an all important Treaty of Alliance stolen from your safe this very night as you and your guests waltzed and dined at an elaborate Diplomatic Ball. Which of your guests is the culprit—and can you unmask him before he can escape with the Treaty and reveal the Alliance to the world?

Dramatis Personae

Marquis DeLong, Agent of the French Secret Service

Intense and suspicious, he suspects everyone at the Ball.

Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [GD] • Physique [GD] • Athletics [GR]

Count Saft, Agent of the Prussian Secret Service

Pleasant and well-mannered, his manner hides a keen mind.

Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [GR] • Physique [GD] • Athletics [GD]

Murder By Gaslight!

London, 1870. A terror stalks the fog-bound streets of the city, murdering young women in their beds! Yet a cryptic request for help from an aged Inventor sends you off on a quest to locate the killer he has identified: a horribly wounded soldier driven mad by the clockwork prosthetics the Inventor has attached to his body!

Dramatis Personae

Doctor Lowell, creator of the Clockwork Man

A kindly old man, once a doctor, who wants to help the Sergeant.

Education [GR] • Perception [GR] • Physique [PR] • Tinkering [EXC]

Sgt. Samuel Lewis, the Clockwork Man

A good man, horribly wounded in the War, now driven mad by the pain of his clockwork limbs.

Fisticuffs [GD] • Physique [EXT] • Perception [GR]

Into the Æther!

The Æther—the Final Frontier! American millionaire and industrialist K. Evanston Koop has financed the building of a massive Rocket Space Projectile to be launched from the Florida Keys. Its destination: a mysterious "Black Asteroid" that threatens to collide with the Earth. Your mission: to journey to the on-rushing rock and destroy it with the Cataclysmite bomb you carry onboard. But beware the Creatures of the Black Planetoid and their deadly mind-control powers!

Adventure Settings

Dramatis Personae

K. Evanston Koop, American millionaire and Space Aficionado
Bald, loud and brash, used to getting his own way through fists or finances.

*Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [GD] •
Exchequer [EXT] • Tinkering [PR]*
Captain Jacques Y. Piccard, Pilot of the Space Projectile

A French-Canadian daredevil, fond of fights and the ladies.

*Fisticuffs [EXC] • Marksmanship [GR] •
Athletics [GR] • Helmsmanship [EXT]*

Master of Magick!

When you encountered the gentleman struggling in the grip of cloaked ruffians, little did you suspect that the thugs were creatures of the Undead and the man you rescued, a master of the Art. Now he requests your aid as he battles an Evil Renegade Wizard who is draining the Life force from innocent victims and turning their lifeless bodies into his undead slaves!

Dramatis Personae

Sir Robert Craft, Master Adept of the Freemasons

A tall, dashing Sorcerer, who has devoted his life to upholding Right.
*Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [GR] •
Education [GR] • Sorcery [EXC]*

Adam Sardonis, Renegade of the Golden Dawn

Twisted, yet attractive, he cares for nothing but satisfying his evil desires.
*Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [GR] •
Education [GR] • Sorcery [EXC]*

The Dark Brotherhood

Who are the mysterious grey-cloaked men who are following you all over London? What is the meaning of the cabalistic symbol painted in blood that has

appeared on each of your doors in the night? Why has the Dark Brotherhood chosen you to become the victims of its evil? Who have they mistaken you for, and why do they want to sacrifice you to their schemes?

Dramatis Personae

The Faceless Man, Leader of the Dark Brotherhood

Who knows his identity behind that hood? His whispery voice is *everywhere!*
*Fisticuffs [GR] • Marksmanship [GR] •
Physique [GD] • Perception [EXC]*

The Brothers of Darkness

Hooded denizens of darkness!
*Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [GD] •
Physique [GD] • Perception [GR]*

Agent of the Crown

A Secret weapon stolen, and you're on the case as the Agents of His Majesty's Secret Service. Recover the stolen Norfeld Device (that allows rockets to be aimed with clockwork precision anywhere in New Europa) from its terrorist captors, or face the specter of explosive death raining down upon millions of innocents!

Dramatis Personae

Sergiovich Sebastian, Leader of the Balkan Terrorists

Huge and balding, with baleful eyes.
*Fisticuffs [GR] • Marksmanship [GR] •
Physique [EXC] • Fencing [PR]*

Yorgiov Poriscovik, our Agent in the Balkans

A small man with contacts everywhere.
*Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [GD] •
Physique [PR] • Perception [GR]*

For King & Country!

The Border Fort was all but wiped out in the first skirmish, and when the shooting died down,

only you were left: a handful of troops and a group of travellers trapped when the hostilities broke out between rival nationalist groups. The last telegraph signal before the partisans cut the lines said that help would be coming within 24 hours. But can you hold out that long?

Dramatis Personae

Colonel Wilhelm, Commander of the Fort

An old campaigner; stalwart, brave but not too imaginative.

*Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [EXC] •
Physique [GD] • Fencing [GR]*

Jurgen Jannick, leader of the Partisans

Charismatic but a zealot, he'll sacrifice anything for his Cause.
*Fisticuffs [GR] • Marksmanship [GD] •
Physique [GR] • Charisma [EXC]*

Stanley, I Presume?

Deepest Africka, the Unexplored Continent. Many years ago, the great explorer Sir Basil Rathingspoke vanished into the Interior, seeking the source of the Great Zambian River. Now, a telegram has arrived at your door, asking your help as Sir Basil and the peaceful jungle nation of Mabidia fight off a party of New Eurpoan imperialists bent on colonial conquest!

Dramatis Personae

Sir Basil Rathingspoke, Explorer
A classic Great Hunter: noble, brave, but very stubborn.

*Fisticuffs [GD] • Marksmanship [EXC] •
Physique [GD] • Perception [GR]*

Lord Yuppa, Leader of the Mabidians

Wise, determined, and justly wary of the ambitions of the Empires.
*Fisticuffs [GR] • Marksmanship [EXT] •
Physique [GD] • Charisma [GR]*

A Falkenstein Bibliography

Although the World of Castle Falkenstein takes place in a universe with only a passing similarity to our own Victorian Age, here are a number of books which I found useful in deciphering Tom Olam's notes and expanding upon matters of Steam Age importance. As Tom himself has cautioned, however, this isn't our history and any of the facts contained within the following bibliography may not actually have a direct bearing upon New European reality. But most are lots of fun to read anyway and may help improve your sense of the Falkenstein universe. Enjoy!

—Mike Pondsmith

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Castle Falkenstein



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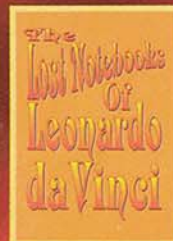
Upcoming releases:



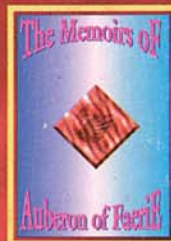
Player's Guide



New Inventions



Engine Magick



The Faerie Veil