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**Special Thanks to:** All those artists, authors, editors, designers, and fans who kept Deadlands alive for twenty years!

*Deadlands created by Shane Lacy Hensley.*

**Author's Dedication ('96):** Michelle. My love.

**Author's Dedication (2016):** Michelle, Caden, Ronan, Mom, Dad, and all the fantastic PEG staff through the years.

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**PINNACLE**  
**ENTERTAINMENT GROUP**

It doesn't seem like *twenty-two* years ago that I first saw that Brom painting on the cover of White Wolf Magazine #46. I remember the long drive through the night from GenCon 28, thinking about an undead cowboy bursting up out of the grave and what could be so important that he'd fight through Hell itself to return. The image quickly morphed in my mind from the original pale confederate to something else, a sort of revenant marshal with a six-gun and a hole in his badge. His back was to the viewer and he wore a tattered blue vest. He looked more like the Rawhide Kid from Marvel comics than the vampire that originally sparked the idea.

It was a year later before I decided to do something with the idea. I had already started Pinnacle to do a historical miniatures game called *Fields of Honor*, and this new game—Deadlands was the name that came to mind—would be our first roleplaying game. I gathered up my friends in Blacksburg, VA, and we took the first steps into a world that would, more or less, come to define my career.

I already talked about the first adventure in the Afterword, but another stands out in my mind as well. It was about a phantom the locals called the Revenant, a former slave who'd come out West to find a new life and run afoul of former slaveholders. They hung the unfortunate man, but his spirit returned a year later to settle the score. It was a heavy tale of horror and racism told among close friends who could handle such a dark theme. As predicted, the party had more sympathy for the spirit than the townsfolk he was hunting down. If memory serves, John Hopler, my wife Michelle, and the others stopped the spirit *after* he'd taken his vengeance. Frontier justice and all.

Between this and a few other forays into the Weird West my friends seemed to enjoy, I decided to make it real. I also decided to change the tone a bit. While we'd have dark adventures, we also wanted a little "tongue in rotted cheek" camp to relieve the stress. It would be equal parts "Indiana Jones" high adventure, *Evil Dead* horror, and *Evil Dead II* camp where it felt appropriate.

A few months later, I asked Matt Forbeck and Greg Gorden to join me and help me launch *Deadlands*. They came down and added lots of great input, and soon after, Matt joined the company and moved to Blacksburg, Virginia, to help put it all together—the game, miniatures, adventures (including our unique Dime Novels), and even a soundtrack. I learned PageMaker, stayed up all night for weeks, and got fat on chocolate donuts (I don't drink coffee—I'm a sugar and soda guy when it comes to all-nighters).

We finished just in time to launch it at GenCon 1996. We took a ton of demo folks, most of whom had no time at all to read the rules or the adventure we put together but did a stellar job anyway. Dozens if not hundreds of people ran through those games, stumbling over the rules but having a great time doing bad Western accents and learning that the death of their character wasn't necessarily the end of the trail.

We sold out of everything we took but best of all, people told us how much they'd enjoyed just reading it. One of our friends at TSR got the book on Thursday and by Saturday morning told us he'd read the whole thing and couldn't stop grinning from ear to ear.

We'd done it. *Deadlands* was a runaway hit. We sold out of the initial print run in a month or so and three more would follow over the coming year. We published dozens of supplements, boxed sets, and miniatures, creating an incredible "wall of orange" (due to the bright orange trade dress) that folks still brag about to this day. (I wanted orange trade dress so it would stand out on store shelves among the overwhelming black trade dress of the time.)

In 1997, we launched the *Great Rail Wars* miniatures game to similar success, and in 1998 we followed up *Deadlands* with what was—at the time—a well-kept secret...the good guys lost in a possible future sequel called *Hell on Earth*. *Lost Colony* followed in 2000, which was essentially "Deadlands in space," and then *Deadlands Reloaded* for our smash-hit *Savage Worlds* system in 2005. Matthew Cutter took over as the line editor soon after, or "Big Bug" as he likes to call himself, and we did our first Kickstarter for the amazing *Deadlands Noir* by my long-time friend and fan-favorite John Goff in 2011.

We've had numerous attempts at movies and television shows, comics, novels, computer games, and even a shot at a real Massively Multiplayer Online game before the economy tanked in 2008. Some of those have worked out, some haven't, and some are still on the way. Some of those stories are loaded with heartbreak that would make a Harrowed weep, but most are just like our titular heroes—not dead yet.

I can't imagine what the next 20 years will bring for *Deadlands*, but I thank each and every one of you who has fanned the hammer or slung a hex-card for us. It's a privilege to watch your baby stand the test of time, and there's a lotta trail left, amigos.

—Shane Hensley  
October, 2016

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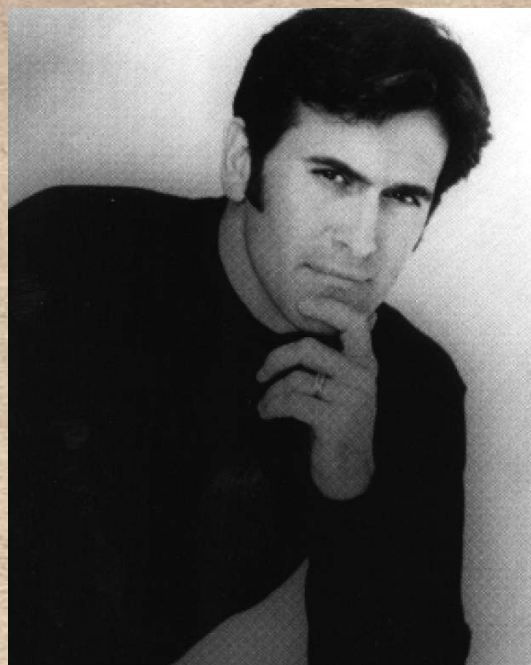
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# FOREWORD



Most likely, right now you're standing in aisle three of *Guy's Game World* in Boot Lick, Indiana, trying to decide whether to fork over part of your paycheck from *Blockbuster Video* to buy this book.

Take heart, dear reader, it's only money. Buy it fast, before a *Game World* clerk kicks you out of the store and bans you from, gasp, GAMING.

In your darkest dreams, could you ever imagine that? A life away from Gaming? A life devoid of the indispensable information found in this revised edition of the *Deadlands* roleplaying game?

I don't think so.

Of course, at first you'd try and kick the gaming habit. You'd buy a fist-full of self-help tapes (at a cost far exceeding this book) and listen to New Age music while you feverishly tried to meditate your addiction away. But it won't do any good.

Those weekend nights just wouldn't be the same, staying home and actually interacting with your family instead of spending 48 straight hours trying to become "Harrowed." The tremors will return, and the headaches will increase in frequency until you

just can't take it any more - you've just got to be *Ronan Lynch ONE MORE TIME!!!*

If you don't know what I'm talking about, then you'd better cough up the moola and start reading, pardner.

Let's face it, your family doesn't really miss you anyway, unless of course you're 35, still live at home and the grass hasn't been mowed in over a month. It really all depends on just how badly you need that 10-dollar allowance. Speaking of which, maybe you'd better take a weekend hiatus, cut the grass and use Dad's cash to buy this book. Kind of a *Catch-22*, isn't it?

I can hear you whining from here—"Is this game really worth it?" What am I, a mind reader? I didn't write the darned thing—buy it and find out for yourselves. There's obviously a good reason why these fine people would harass me to write the foreword.

Tell you what...I'll make you a deal. If you buy this book and learn to master the game (I'll know when you're ready, because your personal hygiene will decline rapidly), I'll personally come over to your house every other weekend (I do have a life, you know) and play the game with you. We'll go at it, battling *Raven* and *Dr. Darius Hellstromme* until the cows come home.

If, after this marathon session is concluded, I win—you pay me my full hourly rate, including fringes, per diem and bus fare to your small town. If you win (oh yeah, right), I'll be your personal slave for a month, no questions asked. Just bear in mind that I don't do windows.

Sound like a good deal? I thought so.

Now, you're probably sitting in the parking lot of your local Strip Mall, tearing through these pages, trying to find out how to rectify *Raven's* tragic mistake, aren't you? Come on, admit it, I won't tell anyone...just the whole world, that's all!

Well, Gamehead (that's an affectionate term), I do hope Dad understands about the ratty-ass lawn you're neglecting. *Deadlands* might just be the one game worth getting the health department to condemn your house for.

Best to all you Knuckleheads,

Bruce Campbell  
April, 1999

# The Tombstone Epitaph's Newcomers Guide to the Weird West



Everything a Greenhorn needs to know  
about surviving the Horrors of the Weird  
West—Don't travel without it!

# The Epitaph's Newcomers Guide to the Weird West

1877 Edition

"Believe it or Else!"

Only 10¢

## A Word From The Editor

Welcome, friends, to the *Tombstone Epitaph's* latest attempt to educate the masses and illuminate the truth in the *Newcomer's Guide to the Weird West*. My name is Lacy O'Malley, your erstwhile investigator and humble reporter. You might remember me from such guidebooks as our original *Guide to the Weird West*, the 1877 Update, the *Guide to the City o' Gloom*, the *Guide to the Mighty Mississippi*, or the Back East North and South guidebooks. These are available in finer mercantiles everywhere, or for rush order from the fine folks at Smith & Robards.

Many scoff at the bizarre tales we expound here in the pages of the *Epitaph*—stories more "distinguished" papers refuse to print. But experienced travelers know our reports are amazingly accurate, paranormally insightful, and uniquely designed to save the lives of those who venture into the often dangerous locales of the frontier.

But many are only learning the dark truths about our fair continent and the mysterious things that crawl upon it. They have yet to feel sinister eyes upon them as they move

through the back alleys of Dodge City. They have not witnessed the awesome power, or the frightening intelligence of the rattlers. Nor have they heard the rustling grass of the High Plains as some feral creature stalks its prey.

It is to these newcomers—greenhorns the frontiersmen call them—that we dedicate this issue. In the pages of this guide we have taken a step back from our wild proclamations and dire warnings to ease a new generation into the truth man was not meant to know.

And for those foreign travelers who know little of our shores, we have briefly recounted the amazing history of our land—including the Great Quake of '68, the discovery of ghost rock, the state of our war-torn homeland, and the rise of the Indian nations.

It is our hope to provide you with the basic information you must know to survive here in the West, dear newcomer. Good luck in your travels, and Godspeed. The Good Lord knows our cemeteries are full of those of you who have come before. Perhaps some tidbit here will save you from this dire fate.



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## Welcome to the Weird West!

We should begin our tale with the Great Quake of '68, for the quake—and what was revealed when it split the entire west coast of America apart—has shaped our country, and indeed our world, more than any other single event.

California had long been a land of dreams. Gold was discovered there in '49 and the tales of those who had become millionaires overnight were the stuff of legend.

The migration of hundreds of thousands of settlers looking to partake in this miracle was what formed the early history of the "Old West." The dangers of the frontier, the Indians, outlaws, burning deserts, and freezing mountains, created the legendary gunfighters, adventurers, and heroes that so many read about in the dime novels and penny dreadfuls. Men like Wyatt Earp, Wild Bill Hickock, and Bill Pickett were forged in this harsh land, drawn westward by the lure of gold or the notion they would bring law and order to this wild, reckless land.

### The Great Quake of '68

Now imagine the power of a mineral twice as valuable and a thousand times more useful than gold. That's what happened in 1868 when California fell into the sea.

An earthquake the likes of which he world has never seen before or since shattered the west coast from Mexicali to Oregon. In its wake was left the "Maze," a labyrinth of jagged mesas towering over the flooded sea-channels below. Magnificent new beasts such as the Maze dragon, were discovered in those troubled waters, but more amazing was the discovery of what some at first thought was simple coal. In fact, the sundered landscape had cracked open to reveal a new mineral heretofore undiscovered.

This new fundament burns a hundred times hotter and longer than coal. When burned, the strange stuff gives off a ghostly-white vapor and howls like the Devil Himself, so the first survivors of the quake who discovered it called it "ghost rock."

The name stuck.

### The Power of Ghost Rock

While you have no doubt seen inventions powered by steam and ghost rock wherever you're from, you must understand the impact this amazing mineral has had on California and the Maze.

Immediately after its discovery, a great number of hopeful inventors headed to the Maze. In months, they had perfected devices powered by steam and fueled by ghost rock. Reports of horseless carriages, ghost-rock powered ships, and even weapons capable of spewing a torrent of bullets or spewing great gouts of flame became common.

### The Battle of Washington

Confederate President Jefferson Davis was the first to realize ghost rock's potential value to his war effort. Under his supervision, a number of incredible devices were developed in a secret base near Roswell, New Mexico (the base has since been destroyed by an unfortunate accident). These secret weapons were shipped Back East and used in the South's biggest offensive ever.

In February of 1871, General Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia attacked the Union lines around Washington D.C. The attack, backed by weird science, was devastatingly effective, so effective, in fact, that Lee's forces actually seized the Union's capital!



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The struggle to build a transcontinental rail-line has often been punctuated by the sound of gunfire!

## The Great Rail Wars

The Yankees eventually took their city back as the Rebels' devices began to malfunction or run out of ghost rock, but the message was clear—ghost rock powered weapons and devices were the way of the future.

Though ghost rock had since been found all over the country, the greatest concentrations were still in the Maze, and no single rail line yet connected them to the battlefields of the East. Once back in the White House, President Grant offered the exclusive government contract for ghost rock to the first company to build a transcontinental rail line. The Confederates followed suit the next day.

While a host of railroads answered the government's call, the competition soon boiled down to just six. These six companies began a bloody war that has sometimes rivaled the one raging between the North and South themselves.

I will return to the subject of the Rail Wars and the bloodthirsty participants who race to the coast later. For now, allow me to continue with the incredible impact ghost rock had on our nation.

## A Nation Sundered

As many of you know, the American Civil War began in 1861. The textbooks carried by most schoolmarms claim our nation was split in two, but that's not exactly true. In fact, what used to be the United States of America is now six separate nations. Had it not been for the war, there is little doubt there would be no Sioux Nation, no Coyote Confederation, no Republic of Deseret, and certainly no City of Lost Angels.

## The United States of America

President Ulysses S. Grant has ruled the north since 1872. Many thought he would lose last year's election, if he even ran. President Grant seems more suited to commanding the military on the battlefield than from the White House.

Grant's administration claims ownership of the entire country and refuses to acknowledge the existence of any other nations. The truth however, is that Washington has no authority, no control, and little or no presence in the other nations I will describe presently.

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## President Grant

Many thought Grant would lose the election after his troubled term—if he even ran for reelection. But last year's "November Offensives" (so-called because each side stages a major military campaign prior to any election to win the incumbent votes) convinced the Yankees that the challenger, pro-peace candidate Samuel Tilden, would cave in to the Rebels. When a British column took Detroit, Michigan by force, seemingly in coordination with Confederate plans, the public was convinced "Unconditional Surrender" Grant was their man.

Grant responded with his own campaign, bombing Richmond, Virginia with amazing air carriages. Simultaneously, his old friend General Sherman marched the Army of the Ohio through Kentucky, burning everything in his path as he had done in Georgia over a decade ago.

But when the smoke of fall finally cleared, the Confederates had managed to defend themselves and not an inch of ground was gained.

Now the president broods in his capital, watching his beloved nation fall apart around him. But though scattered, his military remains strong, and the fight isn't over yet.

## The Agency

One of President Grant's most effective forces is the Agency, a shadowy organization formed in 1877. The US had formerly relied upon the Pinkerton Detective Agency for its intelligence gathering, but it gradually became clear a private company could not carry out all the actions a wartime government must perform.

The men and women of the Agency now infiltrate, attack, and sabotage all perceived enemies of the state. Though I said we would stay away from the most controversial topics in this guide, I must also tell you that the Agency's other function is to investigate bizarre and supernatural events. Just like the Texas Rangers, which I'll discuss shortly, the Agents do not like people talking about these mysterious events. They have used bribes, blackmail, and even personal threats to keep these stories from appearing in the press. Should you find yourself involved with the paranormal, the Agency is

often well-equipped to deal with it, but do not be surprised if the price of their assistance is your silence.

## The Confederate States of America

Our young and hot-blooded nation was born in blood and seems forever cursed to remain that way. Though the Civil War has had many lulls with no major battles, there has never been a day in this country's history in which it wasn't "at war." I am afraid it is a curse we shall not soon lift, for Mexico seems ready to pounce upon us once again.

## President Davis

The leader of our violent land is President Jefferson Davis. He has ruled our nation unchallenged since the war began. He was reelected in the '67 campaign (after the mysterious death of his opponent, Senator Robert M.T. Hunter died mysteriously mere days before the election), but ruled by martial law until free elections were restored last year. His administration faltered more than once, and the devastated economy and inability to make the North recognize Southern independence made him the underdog.

The Whig party nominated the beloved Robert E. Lee to challenge Davis. The election in the Confederate States made the old general the winner, but highly suspect votes from the territories swung the race in favor of Davis.

Our leader has had one recent bit of true success. During last fall's campaign, he seems to have convinced the British to finally enter the war in force. A column of troops marched on Detroit from Canada and took it in a day. The rumor is our European allies are preparing an even larger forth up North and may invade after winter. They would not likely attempt to "conquer" the Union, but would instead use their incredible military to force peace and recognition of the Confederacy.

Unfortunately, recent news has come to me that the US has increased its diplomatic ties with France (which currently control Mexico, as well). It could well be that Grant hopes to counter the British invasion with a Franco-Mexican invasion of the South.

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Texas Rangers: Southern sentinels or enemies of the Truth?

## The Texas Rangers

The Texas Rangers were first used as spies and scouts in the Mexican War of '46-'48. Afterwards, they protected Texas against Mexican invasions, then later became the law throughout this wild young state.

Early in the War, several detachments of Texas cavalry were dispatched East. They fought in many of the most important battles, including Gettysburg. It was there that the Rangers first began their new careers as monster hunters.

That's right, dear reader. This is not a typo. There are things out there you do not yet understand. The Texas Rangers hunt down these evils and destroy them. That is why they have jurisdiction throughout the South these days. Just like their counterparts in the Agency, the Rangers do not like news of the supernatural to get out. They feel it terrifies the public and somehow makes the forces of darkness that much stronger. As a journalist, I believe the

bright light of truth can only illuminate and strengthen. The Rangers do not agree, however, and use whatever means are necessary to keep their activities from the public.

## The Sioux Nations

Perhaps the people who have benefitted most from the Civil War are the Sioux. Since the Union Army's attention has remained focused south, they have had little manpower to patrol and control their red neighbors in Dakota Territory.

## Sitting Bull & Custer

The leader, or "hunkpapa wicasa" of the Sioux is Sitting Bull, a wily old Indian chief who is far more belligerent than the rest of the wicasas (a council of elder chiefs, medicine men, and revered warriors).

It was Sitting Bull who was responsible for defeating General George Armstrong Custer recently at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Since then, the Union has given the Sioux a little more respect

Unfortunately, the headstrong Custer, who single-handedly survived his "last stand," has not forgiven the Sioux for his humiliating defeat. He has pieced together a mercenary army and is threatening to invade when his band of claim jumpers, troublemakers, and freebooters is ready. Custer is acting without authority from Washington, but the Sioux don't see it that way. Since he wears the rank of a US Army officer, to them, he is an officer.

## Deadwood

Since ghost rock was discovered in the sacred Black Hills of the Sioux Nations, thousands of white prospectors violated the Indian's borders in search of riches. This caused so much trouble that the wicasas finally allowed the whites to mine the Black Hills, but only if they would not stray from there, paid a fee to the Nations, and lived only in the treaty city of Deadwood. Those who strayed outside these boundaries were considered trespassers and subject to Sioux law for that charge—which is inevitably death.

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Unfortunately, Custer and the greedy miners of Deadwood constantly violate the treaty. It is only a matter of time before an incident sets off a war between the Sioux and any white man who sets foot in Dakota Territory.

## The Old Ways

Outnumbered as they are, the isolated whites of the area have one important advantage—or so they think. The wicasas claim things changed a little over a decade ago, that evil spirits had returned to the world to punish them for adopting some of the "polluted white man's evils," such as fire water and guns. This philosophy eventually came to mean the "People" were not to use any sort of technological device. They were supposed to return to the "Old Ways," and the movement was born.

Many young braves feel this is foolish. Why should they attack Gatling guns and cannons with arrows and tomahawks. The wicasas have forbid this kind of talk, but this only gave rise to a secret rebellion calling itself the "Order of the Raven." The wicasas feel this poisons the People in the eyes of their gods, and so put to death any young brave found with the distinctive and hidden tattoo that marks them as a Ravenite.

## The Coyote Confederation

Down south, in what used to be known as the "Indian Territory," a coalition of Cherokee, Comanche, Creek, Seminole, Kiowa, Chickasaw, and Choctaw Indians saw the success of the Sioux and formed their own nation. The Confederation's leader is a mysterious figure known only as "Coyote." I suspect that since this leader remains cowled in a red cloak even among his own people, the tribe's true leaders, Quannah Parker and Satanta, or one of their most trusted medicine men, act as Coyote. This would explain why Coyote has often been reported hundreds of miles apart on the same day.

In either case, "Coyote" seems wiser than the sometimes hot-headed leader of the Sioux, but he does not take as active a hand in the Confederation's affairs, leaving each tribe to its own devices. Because there is no single, strong

leader, some of the braves carry on the age-old tradition of raiding white settlements, a habit that brings them into frequent conflict with settlers in the Disputed Lands.

## Brothers in Arms

The Coyotes rarely raid into the Confederacy, and truth be told, rarely venture into towns in the Disputed Lands that are sympathetic to the Southern cause. This led many to believe the Confederation had a secret alliance with the Rebels. During the offensives of '76, this became very clear, and is now basically public knowledge.

Presumably, the Indians believe we Southerners are an oppressed people, just as they are, making us brothers-in-arms.

## The Republic of Deseret

No doubt most of you know the story of the Mormons. They practice a different version of Christianity that didn't seem to sit well with their neighbors Back East. Eventually, things got so bad the "Latter Day Saints," as they call themselves, trekked west. Far west—to a desolate parcel of earth called Utah. There their new leader and prophet, Brigham Young, founded Salt Lake City in 1847.

## President Brigham Young

Young was a clever man, and he orchestrated Utah's conversion to a territory rather quickly. The Mormons enjoyed isolation, anonymity, and even their own laws until the Gold Rush of '49. Though the Saints prospered financially as a waypoint for thousands of miners headed for California, the new "Gentiles" could not always live by their laws. Once again, the Mormons found themselves battling for their way of life, which included polygamy among other things—a practice the rest of the country couldn't tolerate.

The Saints muddled along until 1866. By that time, with no end insight for the Civil War and several unfortunate conflicts with non-Mormons (including the Union Army), Brigham Young declared that the Mormons would rule themselves until such time as the government

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had the time and resources to properly address the Saints concerns and complaints. The new nation is called "Deseret," and encompasses all of Utah.

## The City of Gloom

Salt Lake City is often called the "City of Gloom." This is not some satirical comment on the Mormon's lives. The city is called such because of its incredible factories.

These factories build ghost-rock powered devices of steam and steel. The constant cloud of ghost-rock soot that hangs in the air and permeates certain sections of the city give it its less than cheerful moniker.

If you want more information on Deseret, see the *Tombstone Epitaph's Guide to the City of Gloom* for a more complete story.

## The City of Lost Angels

Our last stop on this tour takes us back to the Maze.

After the Great Quake of '68, one band of survivors who made it to shore from the deadly Maze was led by the Reverend Ezekiah Grimme. He provided a large band of survivors with both food and water during their arduous escape, and eventually came to call his followers his "Lost Angels." The group founded a city where they came ashore and Grimme named it after his beloved flock—the City of Lost Angels.

## Reverend Grimme

Since then, Reverend Grimme has become a bit more stern. He had the city's co-founders build its streets in a circular pattern with the "Church of Lost Angels" cathedral at the center. He claims he was inspired by a divine dream that told him to create the "Celestial City" that way.

It wasn't long before the city became the center of the ghost rock trade between the isolated boomtowns of the maze and the rest of the world. Grimme maintained his leadership for one simple reason. Food is incredibly scarce in the city. The high desert on the landward side of Lost Angels is arid and poorly suited for crops, and the few herds someone has tried to raise there are ravaged by a variety of

natural diseases. Starvation is a very real threat in the Maze. Or it would be if not for Reverend Grimme.

Every Sunday, following his sermon, those who attended may join the congregation in a great feast. Fruit, vegetables, and especially meat (which is scarce and expensive but Grimme never seems to have any trouble finding) are all free for the taking.

Even in a normal city, Grimme's free feasts would make him a popular man. In the Maze, where a loaf of bread sometimes costs as much as a man makes in a week, Grimme seems but one step lower than the Almighty Himself.

And that's just what Grimme seems to believe.

## The Edict

Reverend Grimme believes a transcontinental railroad will bring only graft and corruption into his city. At least that's what he tells his congregation. Most believe he is merely afraid that the rail lines would make food more available and spoil the source of his power.

He preached against the coming of the railroads for years, but finally the iron horses must have come too close. In late 1877, Grimme took control of the city and declared it a sovereign state. I guess he figured if the Vatican could do it, so could he.

In his famous "Edict of '77," he proclaimed that only true believers in the Church of Lost Angels could live in the city (though thousands of hopefuls live in the "tent cities" outside). Those who do not recognize the Church's sovereignty are not only exiled, but considered enemies of the state as well.

## Grimme's Crusade

Needless to say, no one liked seeing one man control the world's largest supply of ghost rock. The USA, CSA, Deseret, and a host of other nations condemned the move and called Grimme a despot. Even the zealous Grimme knows he cannot defeat the entire world. To convince people the Church of Lost Angels is acting in everyone's best interests, he has sent small bands of missionaries out across the West to proselytize and recruit new followers.

Of course, the railroads he keeps from fulfilling their dreams do not take kindly to