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The Hollow West

A Role Playing Game of Fantastic Adventures in The Hollow Earth.

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Contents

A Players' Guide to the Hollow West

Chapter 1 About this Book	4
Chapter 2 The Hollow West	7
Chapter 3 Game Concepts	11
Chapter 4 Characters	13
Chapter 5 Extras	19
Chapter 6 Playing the Game	30

The Referee's Guide to the Hollow Earth

Chapter 7 Secrets of the Hollow Earth	40
Chapter 8 Factions	46
Chapter 9 People	51
Chapter 10 Monsters	68
Chapter 11 Thrilling Locations	76
Chapter 12 Hitting the Trail	86
Chapter 13 The Great Dinosaur Hunt of 1896	94
Chapter 14 The Great Secret at the Centre of the Hollow Earth	114
Index	116
Character Sheet	118

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A Players' Guide to the Hollow West



Chapter 1

About this Book

The Hollow West is a role-playing game set in a Wild West at the centre of the Hollow Earth.

The world is hollow, and deep within the Earth's depths is a lost world where dinosaurs still live. After the Spanish Conquest of Central America, the Aztec survivors escaped here and re-established their empire. Native Americans, displaced from their lands by the white man, have arrived more recently, and begun to set up hidden communities. This settlement, in turn, has led the European settlers in America here. Finding gold and gems, a promise of more has caused a new gold rush and a new wild frontier. Every day, the new Great Subterranean Railway line brings new settlers to New Texas.

Players take on the role of cowboys, gunslingers, academics, Native Americans, and even occultists all looking for adventure on the edges of civilisation, in the wondrous and vast unknown of the Hollow Earth in the year 1895 AD.

In this book, we present complete game. There are rules for character generation, how to play, and details of this fantastic new Wild West. There are details of the different factions present, along with the geography of the Hollow Earth, supernatural beasts and a complete introductory scenario.

The Fortune System, by Paul Michener

The Fortune System is a light version of the Fate rules (<http://www.faterpg.com/>), designed for historic fantasy RPGs.

This version of Fate was influenced by the Jadepunk RPG (<http://jadepunk.com/>). The Fortune System provides a straightforward approach to resolve tests and conflicts in historic fantasy settings.

Useful Links

- For more information about D101's range of Fortune Games visit, D101Games.com/fortune.
- Dr Mitch's Patreon Campaign, patreon.com/drmitch.
- The Fate system's home page, faterpg.com.

The Hollow West Player's Summary

At the end of the Great Indian Wars of the 19th Century, high numbers of the surviving Native Americans disappeared on the way to their new reservations. The reservation authorities discovered they had escaped via the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky and similar cave systems which reached deep into the Earth's crust. Initially, it wasn't clear where they had gone, but in 1865 cave explorers, sponsored by great East Coast industrialist and rail baron Frederick James "F.J." Stevenson found that they had fled to the Hollow Earth that existed within our own.

In 1869, the Trans-Continental Railway joining the Central Pacific line and Union Pacific line was completed, linking the east and west coast of America. F.J. Stevenson obtained the agreement of his fellow rail barons to begin work on the Great Subterranean Railway, from Mammoth Cave to the very centre of the Earth. By 1880 the town of Stevenson was built at the Hollow Earth end of the railroad.

Gradually, settlers from the USA and beyond started grabbing land in the region around Stevenson Town which became known as New Texas. The name was due to a similar climate to its surface counterpart. New Texas is experiencing both a rush for land and the newly discovered gold in the further reaches of the territory.

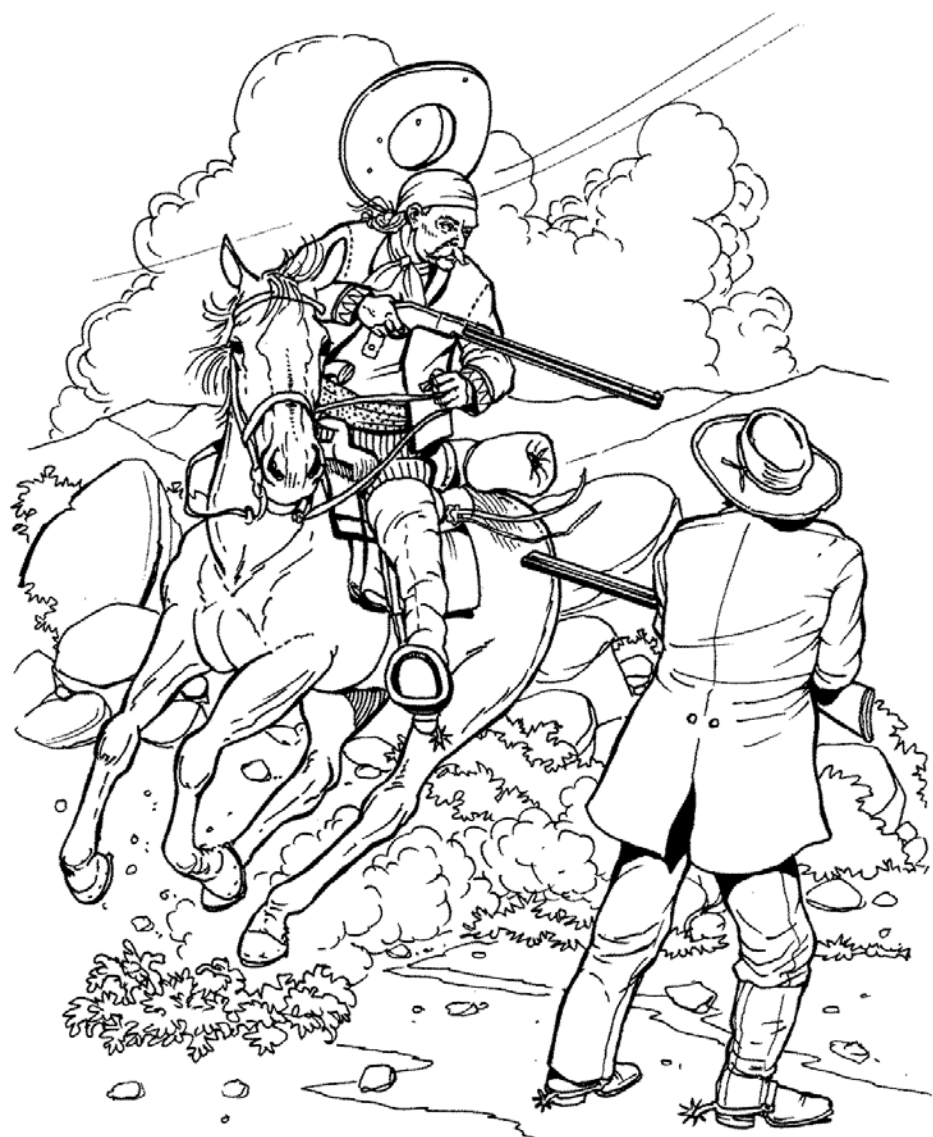
Beyond New Texas is the lawless Badlands, a homeland for outlaws and exiles. Native Indian tribes and dinosaurs both make their homes here.

Occultists and Mystics have travelled to the Hollow Earth drawn by the legends of the place, such as the mystical city of Agartha. Most are misguided charlatans, but a few are authentic students of magic.

The industrialised Age of Steam is in full swing, and engineers and inventors have travelled to Stevenson Town to take advantage of Mr Stevenson's generous patronage. As the Badlands become tamed, and New Texas expands, the Great Subterranean Railway stretches ever further west.

The Peoples of America

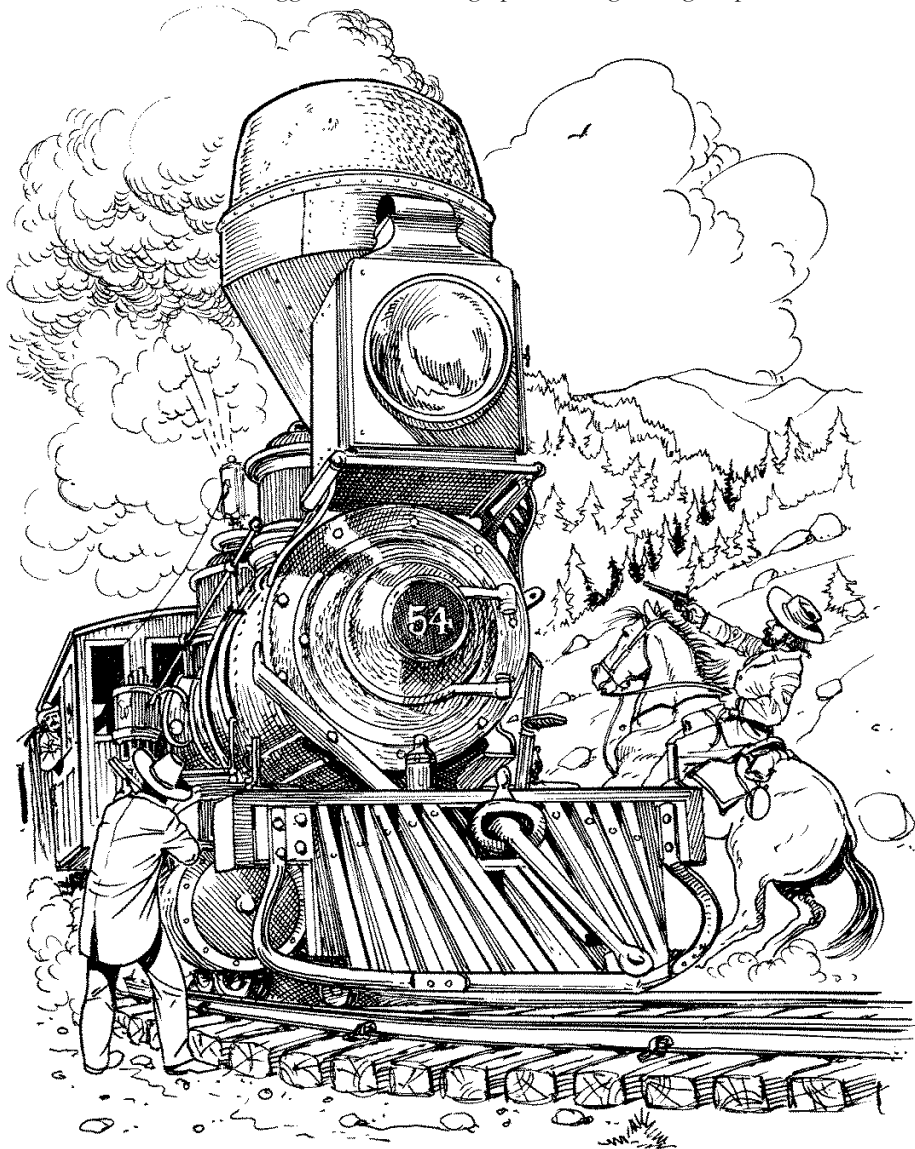
The indigenous peoples of America have suffered greatly in our history, in the face of the colonial expansion across modern day America, and nothing in this book is intended to make light of that suffering. There is some confusion on the correct terms to call these peoples. In this book, we use the term Native American.



Chapter 2

The Hollow West

This chapter provides both players and referees with a basic orientation to the wonderful hollow world that is the Hollow West. It's a roughly equivalent to the depth of knowledge of a resident who came from the surface world six months ago, who has stayed in Stevenson or one of the bigger towns, soaking up knowledge and gossip.



Getting to the Hollow West

The pioneers who initially found the Hollow West came through subterranean cave systems that have their entrances on the surface and went down through the mantle of the earth and emerged in the Hollow Earth. This route is an uncomfortable journey full of dangers. Modern settlers travel in comfort using the *Great Subterranean Rail Road*, which has its surface terminus at the entrance to the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky and plunges down through the mantle to Stevenson.

Stevenson was the first significant settlement in the Hollow West and has been the central hub for the colonisation of New Texas for the ten years since its establishment. It is a small city of about ten thousand permanent inhabitants and has all the facilities of a surface American city, provided by entrepreneurs encouraged to do business there by its owner, F. J. Stevenson.

Hollow West Basics

“When you talk to most folk, what they mean by the ‘The Hollow West’ is a territory as big as Texas on the surface. The sparsely populated settled area, has farms, cattle ranches and towns, is similar in terrain and climate to Western America, which is why many folks are right at home here and have called it ‘New Texas’.”

Beyond the line in the sand drawn up by F.J. Stevenson and the Cattle Barons, which defines the limit of New Texas, is the Badlands. Here the terrain is harder, rockier and in some areas breaks down into a desert. This place is where the outlaws and Indians live. Beyond the Badlands is anyone’s guess although explorers like Professor Susan Smith say the Badlands end with impassable mountains, which she’s christened the Skyreach Mountains (on account of how they reach up to the sky), and beyond them is a vast steaming Jungle filled with all manner of snakes.”

So far, I’m making it sound as if it’s just like on the surface? Well, there are differences, though you’ll soon get used to them. Instead of a horizon, the Hollow Earth has a “curvature”, where you can see the land curve upwards to the up to about 25 miles away, and up to a hundred miles if the terrain and weather are clear. Talking about the weather it’s somewhat predictable, and the daylight and seasons aren’t as variable as on the surface. There’s no snow in winter here, and you’ll need to go to the surface if you ever want a White Christmas.

Everything seems to be managed by our little sun – which looks like a smoky orb in the sky. We call it “Old Smokey” (it’s also a brand of traditional cigars made by the Stevenson Tobacco Company by the way). We’ve got weather scientists looking into how and why – so far they think the Hollow Earth follows its natural laws.”

Official Stevenson Welcomer at the Stevenson Great Subterranean Railway station, Stevenson New Texas.

New Texas

Named after its surface counterpart due to its similarity in terrain and climate. The New Texans are a mixed lot all attracted to this new territory by its opportunities. The vast majority of colonists – encouraged by the Stevenson Land Agency to resettle in New Texas – are of European descent and have come to work the land as farmers. Then there is a sizeable community of industrial workers who are mainly working on extending the Great Subterranean Rail Road into the wilds of New Texas and beyond. The Chinese are also present as workers on the railroads, and there is a sizeable contingent of Mexicans who have followed their Dons here. They have grabbed land and set up large cattle ranches.

New Texas has yet to join the Union. Negotiations underway and a small US Military presence, but everyone knows that the rail baron Frederick James Stevenson, an influential man of English descent who came to the Hollow Earth to amass power and land, will never let it slip out of his control. The ‘Stevensons’ are FJ’s private police force and are easily recognisable in their black leather long coats and broad-brimmed hats. They enforce his will and keep his order. Outside of this is a system of sheriffs and circuit judges who report to the town Mayors who are currently appointed by FJ.

The Badlands

This broken land is on paper the land of outlaws and exiles from justice, but it’s also the home for free thinkers and radicals whose view of the future does not match FJ’s industrial vision.

It’s also where the Native Indian tribes have ended up, carving up the lands into new nations during the two generations they have been here. So far there’s been no trouble between the Native Americans and New Texas, but the US Government have been gradually building up a military presence in a series of fort’s dotted around the settled lands in New Texas as a precautionary measure.

The main threat that’s emerging out of the Badlands are the dinosaurs. FJ’s scientists are beyond belief at the reports of lone carnivores, such as Tyrannosaurus Rex, coming out of the wilderness to prey on herds of cattle, while a whole new influx of big game hunters is arriving in Stevenson to hunt these terror lizards back into extinction.

Beyond the Skyreach Mountains

The sightings of the dinosaurs have intensified the exploration programme sponsored by FJ. Stevenson into the jungles that lie beyond the Skyreach Mountains, the traditional border of the Bad Lands. The archaeologists and historians who accompanied these expeditions not only reported herds of dinosaurs but also peoples of a civilisation long lost to the surface world



Timeline

The 1820s onwards. Native Americans escape to the Hollow Earth after losing lands in the Great Indian Wars.

1861-1865. US Civil War.

1865. The Deep Earth Expedition. Following rumours that Native Americans had used large extensive deep cave systems to make their disappearance, explorers sponsored by F.J. Stevenson discover the Hollow Earth.

1869. Trans-Continental Rail Road completed connecting the East and West of USA.

1870. With the agreement of the other rail barons, F.J. Stevenson starts building the Great Subterranean Railway, with the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky as its surface entrance.

1880. The town of Stevenson established at the Hollow Earth end of the Great Subterranean Railway Tunnel.

1895 Now, your adventurers arrive in Stevenson New Texas to find fame and fortune in the Hollow West!