

G U R P S[®]



ACES
AND
EIGHTS

1
DIME
NOVEL

By MICAH T. J. JACKSON

B.R.D.M.
974
STEVE JACKSON GAMES

THE DEAD MAN'S HAND!

Jim Wright high-tails it out of Denver, one step ahead of his would-be killers, on a journey that takes him from a fancy riverboat on the Mississippi to the dingy warehouses and opulent mansions of New Orleans. Now Wright has to figure out who wants to kill him, and why, and what a New Orleans gambler has to do with his murdered partner back in the Disputed Lands . . .

Aces and Eights continues Pinnacle's tradition of merging great action-packed stories with ready-to-play adventure scenarios. Our first Dime Novel is a great way to bring your **GURPS** heroes into the Weird West of *Deadlands*!

GURPS Deadlands Dime Novel 1: Aces and Eights includes:



The story. Hexslingers, voodoo magic, and the undead – what more could you ask for?



The adventure. Think your posse is tough enough to go toe-to-toe with the enemies Jim Wright faced?



BONUS!! A 16-page section of conversion rules, so current *Deadlands* Marshals can hit the ground running when *GURPS Deadlands: Weird West* comes out later this fall!

Look for more **GURPS Deadlands** Dime Novels in the months to come!
The Weird West is getting weirder all the time . . .



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GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition, Revised and *Compendium I* are required to use this supplement in a **GURPS** campaign. *GURPS Deadlands Dime Novel 1: Aces and Eights* can be used with *any* roleplaying system.

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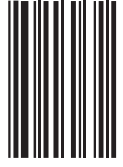
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STEVE JACKSON GAMES

ABOUT GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of *GURPS* players. We can be reached by email: info@sjgames.com. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Resources include:

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Store Finder (storefinder.sjgames.com): Discover nearby places to buy *GURPS* items and other Steve Jackson Games products. Local shops are great places to play our games and meet fellow gamers!

Bibliographies. Bibliographies are a great resource for finding more of what you love! We’ve added them to many *GURPS* book web pages, with links to help you find the next perfect element for your game.

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Errata pages for *GURPS* releases are at sjgames.com/errata/gurps.

PAGE REFERENCES

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* – e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Page references that begin with CI indicate *GURPS Compendium I*. Other references are STM for *GURPS Steampunk* and VE for *GURPS Vehicles*. For a full list of abbreviations, see p. CI181 or the updated list at gurps.sjgames.com/abbrevs.html.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first Dime Novel to support the new *GURPS Deadlands* line of roleplaying supplements! Dedicated fans of the Pinnacle Entertainment Group *Deadlands* line are familiar with the Dime Novel concept, but this is something new for *GURPS* – fiction and an adventure, all in one package! (As a special bonus in this first installment, we’ve included conversion rules – bring your *Deadlands* posse into *GURPS Deadlands* – or any other of the hundreds of worlds that *GURPS* has to offer!)

In “Aces and Eights,” Agent Jim Wright (working for the North), voodoo priestess Claude Bonvillian, and U.S. Marshal Eric Terrill uncover a conspiracy to smuggle guns from New Orleans to rebels in Utah – a conspiracy that cost the lives of Wright’s partner and Terrill’s deputies. In the adventure, your posse takes the part of these heroes, with twists and surprises even for people who have read the story. Bring the culprits to justice . . . and stay away from the Texas Rangers, pardner!

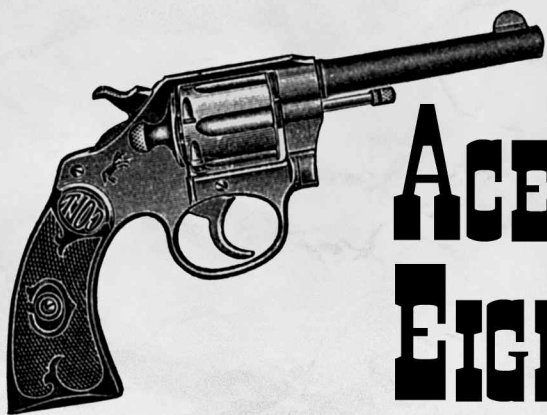
Paddlewheel steamboats. Voodoo magicians. Confederate officers. And people who will do anything at all for money . . . even bring the dead back to life. Welcome to the Big Easy.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Like most everyone in the gaming industry, Micah T.J. Jackson began as a player. His first professional break came in 1991 when he began to work at Virtual World Entertainment’s BattleTech Center in his home city of Chicago. Later jobs included a stint as a computer game designer and producer for VictorMaxx Technologies and a tour as the Director of Licensing and New Media for Steve Jackson Games. Now that he has become an author, he has reached the apex of the industry at last. His previous credits for Steve Jackson Games include numerous articles and reviews for *Pyramid* and the *In Nomine* 2001 Calendar, which he compiled with Kenneth Hite. He continues to live in Chicago with too many books, very little furniture, and no cat.

Michael Suileabhain-Wilson can’t recall when he began roleplaying, but remembers being indignant at the recommended age on the box. Aside from gaming, his hobbies include playwriting, reading, cooking, and seeking gainful employment. He lives south of San Francisco with his girlfriend and many hypothetical cats. This is his first work in print.





ACES AND EIGHTS



CHAPTER 1

The *Scarlet Queen*'s paddlewheel churned through the water, leaving Memphis behind in the dark night. Memphis was a Confederate city and could hardly be considered safe for a Pinkerton like Jim Wright – but it was safer than Denver had been recently. Still, he had bigger problems now, like getting another King to make three of a kind. He looked over his cards at the other four players. Marshal Terrill tossed his two new ones into the center of the table along with the rest of his hand. Grissom and Gabel had already folded. That left just Skinner, the gambler.

Jeff Skinner was a pro – he had been beating Wright all evening. Not on every hand, just the big ones. This was a big one, and Skinner was playing smart. He had only drawn one, and seemed as pleased with his card as his poker face allowed. Even so, Jim wasn't going to lose this hand – not if he drew the King he needed. "Dealer takes three," he said, counting the cards into his hand. King of Hearts, King of Clubs, Queen of Spades, Three of Hearts, Three of Spades. Not what he wanted . . . but maybe close enough.

"Sawbuck," Skinner said. He tossed two five-dollar Confederate bills onto the pile of money already in the center of the table.

"Call." Jim answered. "Kings and Threes."

The gambler laid his cards down on the gently rocking table. "Aces and Eights."

"The dead man's hand!" Grissom gasped.

"Not tonight, gentlemen," Skinner replied, adding the pile of bills in the center of the table to the one already in front of him. He stuffed the money into his black leather wallet and replaced it in his inside breast pocket. "It's been a pleasure." He tipped his flat-crowned hat in the general direction of the company and strode out of the saloon.

That ended the game. Grissom folded a blue handkerchief around the deck and tucked it in his jacket pocket.

Jim hadn't lost much money, considering. He put his remaining money in the front pocket of his pants and, touching his hat, bid the group good night.



CHAPTER 2

Up on deck, Jim leaned on the balcony rail. He could see only a little of the river on any side of the boat, and the land was only the blackness between the river and the stars. Jim found the river vaguely disconcerting; he thought of himself as much more of a rail man. One thing about the riverboats reminded him of his native Chicago, though. There were always people somewhere, and the constant thrumming of the engines meant that the *Scarlet Queen* was never silent.

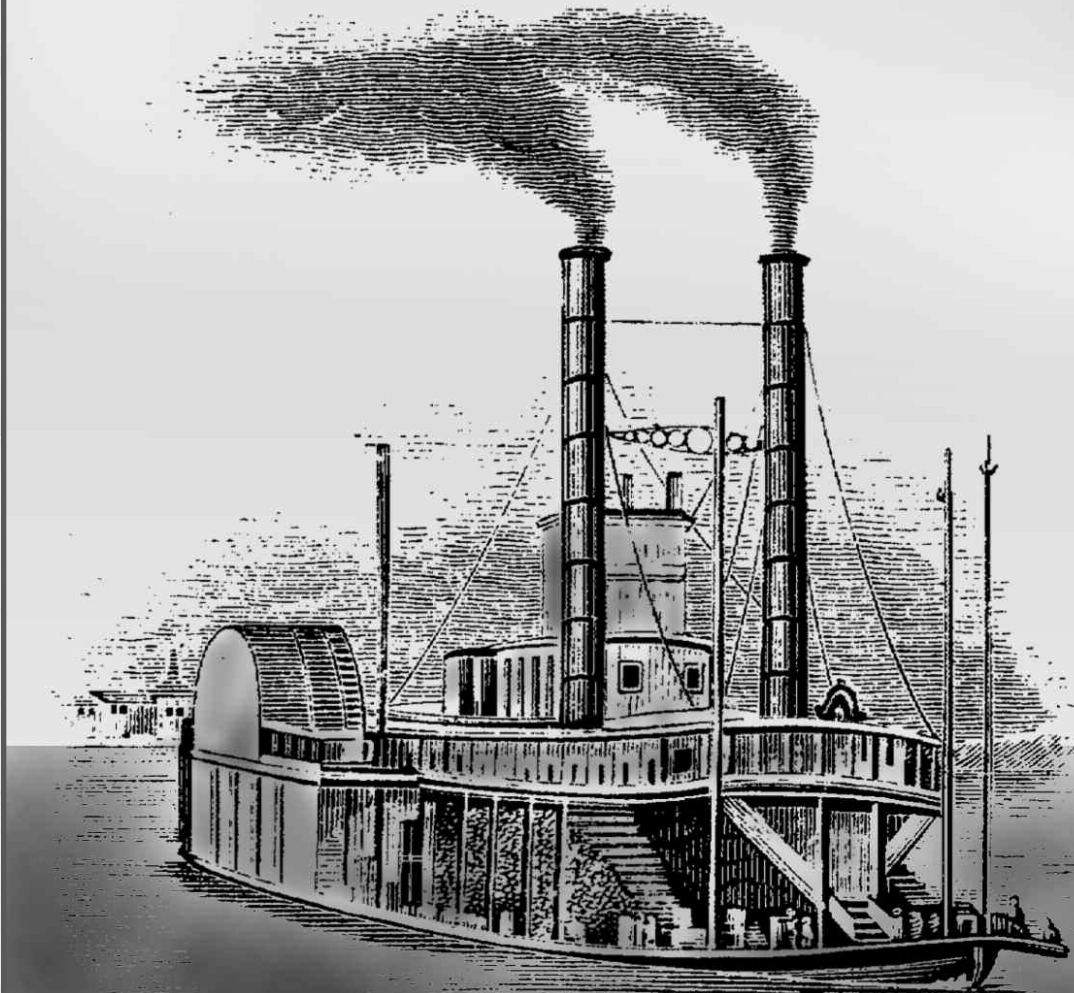
WHAT'S IN THE CRATES? — 1

The deck of a riverboat is not only a promenade for the wealthy; it's also the steerage passengers' cabin. Third-class tickets don't come with any indoor accommodations. Those passengers just bed down on the deck in good weather, or under the boiler deck's balcony in bad. In addition, the main deck is always stacked high with crates being shipped up or down the river. The *Scarlet Queen* is no exception.

If the posse is able to identify Granos as the man they overheard, they might be able to follow him long enough to learn that several of the crates belong to him. He and his henchman have third-class tickets and sleep at night near the crates, but with a suitable diversion, the posse can get a look at the contents of the crates. The crate lids aren't nailed shut but closed with coffin locks. Anyone with the Lockpicking skill or stevedore training opens them easily.

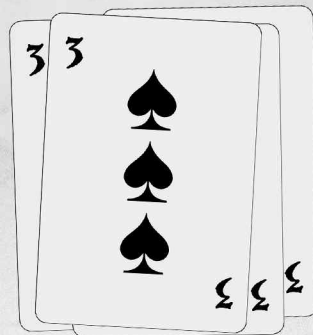
Anyone doing so finds that each crate contains a coffin. There's no way to ascertain the contents of the coffins on the open deck, but PCs might be interested enough to track the crates once they're offloaded in New Orleans.

Investigators of a more larcenous bent might check out the other crates. Most of them are going to a Mr. Darius Grenoble, who owns a dry goods store in New Orleans. They contain clothes, staple foods like flour, printed matter including books and magazines, and several sets of horse tack. There are also two crates belonging to the postal system, but they are always guarded by an expressman. If he is somehow disabled, the crates are found to contain only personal mail, with one crate bound for Natchez and one for New Orleans.





CONVERSION NOTES



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Many gaming groups will come to *GURPS* with an established *Deadlands* posse and saga that they'd like to continue playing. For them, we offer the following guidelines for converting characters and other game materials from *Deadlands* to *GURPS Deadlands*. These guidelines may also be useful to *GURPS* GMs who wish to convert some of the abundant material available from Pinnacle Entertainment Group's *Deadlands* line for other campaigns.

CHARACTER CONVERSIONS

When converting characters from *Deadlands* to *GURPS Deadlands*, players and GMs use the conversion guidelines below for Traits, Aptitudes, and other characteristics all characters possess. Some characters with special abilities may require reference to the guidelines in the *Special Character Types* section (p. 39).

Because *Deadlands* has a partially random character generation system, these conversion rules do not produce a party of *GURPS* PCs with uniform point totals from a party of equivalent starting *Deadlands* adventurers; however, they produce characters which feel and play like the originals.

ATTRIBUTES

To convert *Deadlands* Traits into *GURPS* attributes, first convert all 10 Traits into numerical values by comparing the die type and Coordination of the Trait on the following table, then convert those values into *GURPS* attributes according to the rules below.

Coordination	Die Type				
	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12
1	8	9	10	11	12
2	9	10	12	13	14
3	11	12	13	14	15
4	11	13	14	15	16
5	12	14	15	16	17
6	13	15	16	16	17
7	14	16	17	17	18
8	15	16	17	18	18

ATTRIBUTE GUIDELINES

Strength becomes ST.

Vigor becomes HT.

The average of Deftness, Quickness, and Nimbleness becomes DX.

The average of Cognition, Knowledge, and Smarts becomes IQ.



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