

KAISER'S GATE: ADVENTURES & ARCHETYPES

A *Savage Worlds* adventure by Bryan Hitchcock



The Savage World of Kaiser's Gate

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To make the most of this adventure, you will need a copy of the *Savage Worlds* Deluxe Edition as well as the *Kaiser's Gate* setting book.

Kaiser's Gate combines the adventure and magic of high fantasy with the vast conflict of World War One. Created by Mike Lafferty, *Kaiser's Gate* is now available for *Savage Worlds* in print or PDF.

#1: Boots on the Ground

Welcome to the first of the *Adventures & Archetypes* series for *Kaiser's Gate*. Each adventure in this series explores a different aspect of the setting with pre-made characters. In addition, each adventure provides a new piece of gear or a new foe to use in your *Kaiser's Gate* adventures.

Boots on the Ground is a Novice rank adventure for *Savage Worlds* characters. Players take the roles of a newly trained German spellbinder squad with orders to take out the Russian command apparatus during the battle of Tannenberg at the end of August 1914. They are members of the 13th Landwehr Division, a commando unit for Spellbinders.

Overview of the Action

The battle of Tannenberg was a tremendous victory for the German military at the beginning of the war. In *Kaiser's Gate*, the player characters have a key role in winning the battle and disrupting Russian communications.

The first thing they need to do is make their way across the farmlands around the town. The plan is to send the spellbinder strike force in to take out the Russian command post on the southeast of town,

while the main German force moved in from the west.

Next, the squad must penetrate the Russian defenses where the wall around the town had crumbled. Here they risk getting bogged down in shootouts with an ever growing number of Russian soldiers.

If they make it past the wall and into town, they can assault the town hall, where the Russian command has established its base. The squad's resilience and creativity will be tested when they learn that the enemy is lead by a creature out of Russian myth, a Fext.

Under the Hood

Magic in Kaiser's Gate: Spellbinding

Kaiser's Gate does not use Power Points. Instead, casters roll Spellbinding skill with a target equal to the Power Point cost of the spell or 4, whichever is higher. If he rolls over four, but under the target, he is still casting the spell and can be interrupted by being Shaken or wounded. A roll of 1 on the Spellbinding die makes the caster Shaken, unless he spends a benny to re-roll. A 1 on both the Spellbinding die and the Wild Die earns the caster a point of fatigue, as well as Shaken status. He may spend a benny to re-roll, removing the Shaken status, but he *still suffers a level of fatigue*.

Cantrips in *Kaiser's Gate* allow a spellbinder to perform Tricks by rolling Spellbinding skill instead of Agility or Smarts. The target may oppose with Agility or Smarts at the GM's discretion.

Tear Gas Grenades

Range: 5/10/20, Large Burst, Vigor check at -2 or become Shaken, effect lasts 3 rounds, victims cannot attempt to recover until they leave the cloud.

Tear gas saw its first use during World War I, and with the aid of magic from beyond the portals, the Russian have it early on in the world of *Kaiser's Gate*. The Russian soldiers in this adventure are equipped with a tear gas grenade, and



they will not hesitate to deploy the gas to slow and debilitate the enemy.

Be prepared for your squad to acquire some grenades from fallen foes. A smart team will deploy them against the Russian command center. They will need every trick to defeat the Fext and his soldiers.

Scene 1

The squad has orders to make their way through the fields and orchards to the southeast of Tannenberg and assault a weak point in the town wall. This is a trek of two hours in the darkness before dawn. The terrain is cultivated, but bears the occasional ditch or small creek.

To arrive successfully, each squad member must accomplish a Dramatic Task. In this case, the -2 to checks is due to darkness. If the characters cooperate, like using magic to create a light source or cast Boost on the Notice skill for each other, they can eliminate the usual -2 for Dramatic Tasks. Cooperation also allows the member with the best Stealth (probably Kraus) to make a roll each round to cover the entire team. Otherwise, each soldier has five rounds to make it to town before the group's approach is noted. Each failure denotes a Russian sentry who has



ADVENTURE #1: BOOTS ON THE GROUND

grown suspicious, making a Notice check at -2 each round. Deal them in to initiative. If any of the soldiers notice the squad, or a team member does not obtain five successes in five turns, go immediately to Scene 2.

RUSSIAN SOLDIERS

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrance: Loyal

Edge: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Knife (Str+d4), Rifle (2d8, 24/48/96, 8 shots), one tear gas grenade

Scene 2

If the squad is discovered before they all make it to the wall, assume each member who did not make it is 6" away from the wall for each success they are short of the five required. For example, if Hugo Deitrich has accumulated only one success before one of his squadmates is spotted by a guard, Hugo is 24" from the wall. There should be some cover and the Germans may want to proceed forward at a crawl. Or they may try a charge...

The wall is manned by Russian soldiers, one per player, who have piled stones on their side of the wall. This allows them to fire from superior cover over the 6' wall. There is a crumbled portion of the wall that can be passed through as Difficult Ground. The section of wall to each side can be leaped with an Agility check as part of movement. The rest of the wall must be climbed.

If the squad makes it to the wall without being spotted, they can hear the guards arguing about the state of the battle. The squad must succeed on a final Stealth check against the guards' group Notice check to take the guards by surprise.

Once one squad member is past the wall, a new Russian soldier will arrive on the scene at the end of each round in which shots were fired. Assume NPCs find at

least minor cover after each shot. Encourage your players to include cover in the narration of their characters' actions.

If all the Russian soldiers are slain at the end of a round, no more will appear for a few moments. This gives the squad an opportunity to move on the town hall, beginning Scene 3.

Scene 3

The command center is in a walled yard behind the town hall building. The defending Russian commander, General Karloff, is here with a small camp and a handful of staff. The walls help conceal the squad's approach. There is a 1" gate in the side from which the squad approaches, though it is padlocked and guarded.

Within the 15" x 20" yard are six Russian soldiers and their undead leader. There is decent cover behind a set of marble pillars and benches at the center, or the trees that line the inside of the wall. The squad has 5 minutes (50 rounds) from the beginning of combat to accomplish their mission before a platoon of Russian soldiers arrives to reinforce the command post.

Wrap Up

Investigating the commander's papers reveals a notebook with the Russian communication codes!

Historical Disclaimer

The Battle of Tannenberg was a real event where thousands of men died. The Russian army, mis-led by two Generals, was badly defeated by the Germans. As near as I can tell, there was no "good" side of the 1st World War, except the side of each person's nation and monarch.

Kaiser's Gate, as a roleplaying setting, seeks to foster exciting games and cele-



GENERAL KARLOFF, FEXT (WC)

Undead Warlord: General Karloff died during the Russo-Japanese war. But in 1910, a Russian necromancer raised the general from death, to prove the value of his magic to the Czar. The necromancer did not survive the experience, as General Karloff was none too happy to be raised into un-life. He found himself reborn as a creature out of Russian legend.

The Czar ordered the necromancer raised and the process repeated to create more *fext*. General Karloff is typical, but Skills and Edges may vary.

Fext are undead creatures rumored to have led Russia in many battles during the 30 years war of the 17th century. These creatures are invulnerable to anything but glass, so your squad is going to have to adapt and improvise very quickly. Encourage the use of cantrips to create advantages for the squad. The environment is covered in broken glass from the fighting.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge: Battle d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8

Gear: Cutlass (Str+d6), Luger (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6)

Special Abilities

Command

Invulnerability: Fext can only be harmed by glass. They may be Shaken by other attacks, but never wounded.

Level Headed

Two-Fisted

Undead: +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra. No wound penalties.

brate the heroism of soldiers, without looking too deeply at the motives of their leaders. Perhaps in romanticizing WWI with gryphons, magic, and dragons, we can keep the memory of these men alive. It's another way to remember the past, that we might not repeat it.

Any resemblance these adventures have to reality is tribute to the people who lived it. For deviations, defamations, and anachronisms, you have only me to blame.



HUGO DEITRICH (WC)

Calculating Fire-binder: The first time Hugo Deitrich cast a fire spellbinding the magic was too powerful for him to control. By the time his instructors could save him, he had hideous burns on his face and upper body. Wielding the magic was such a thrill, that Deitrich could not resist the allure in spite of his painful injuries. He dedicated himself to mastering the techniques of spellbinding until he could fully control his natural talent. Now he is a powerful offensive spellbinder in service to the Kaiser.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Healing d4, Notice d8 (+2), Shooting d4, Spellbinding d10, Stealth d4, Survival d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: -2; Pace: 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Cautious (m), Ugly (m), Vengeful (M)

Edges: AB: Spellbinding – Fire Magic, Alertness

Spells: Novice: Cantrips (Fire), Bolt, Damage Field (with fire trappings)

Gear: Knife (Str+d4), Lucifer Brand Cigarette Lighter, Tobacco & Papers

TOBIAS BERGMANN (WC)

Mad Warlock: Bergmann studied the Svaldon Madness school out of spite and was one of it's first graduates for the Kaiser's army. It also drove him irretrievably insane. Too valuable an asset to leave in a hospital, the squad must deal with Bergman's outbursts and conversations with shadows because, once the shooting starts his Stun with madness trappings can keep an enemy force reeling while the heavy hitters like Reinhard close in. Bergmann uses his Two-Fisted Edge to fire Madness spells by waving his dagger in his main hand and firing his Luger or throwing a grenade with his off hand at -2.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Spellbinding d8, Stealth d6, Survival d4, Throw d6

Charisma: 0; Pace: 5 (d4); Parry: 5; Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Big Mouth (m), Delusional (M), Obese (m)

Edges: AB: Spellbinding – Svaldon Madness, Two-Fisted

Spells: Novice: Cantrips (Sound), Conceal Arcana, Madness (Confusion)

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4), Luger (2d6, 12/24/48, Semi-auto), 3 Potato Mashers (Hand Grenades, 3d6-1)

MATTHIAS KRAUS (WC)

Sneaky Spy: Kraus always knew he was meant to be a spy. His curiosity often brought trouble, but just as often, it provided him with the dirty secrets he needed to keep from being punished. It was only natural that he pursue his gifts in service to the Kaiser. The subtle art of Svaldon spy magic proved a perfect fit. Kraus will try to keep his head down while scouting or during battle, providing support with his cantrips. Once the Russian command is secured, it's his job to gather intelligence for command.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d4, Investigation d4, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Shooting d4, Spellbinding d6, Stealth d8, Survival d4

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Curious (M), Greedy (m), Habit (m)

Edges: AB: Spellbinding – Svaldon Spying, Thief

Spells: Novice: Cantrips (Shadow), Silence (Obscure v. hearing), Detect/Conceal Arcana

Gear: Binoculars, Luger (2d6, 12/24/48, Semi-auto), Survival Knife (Str+d4)



WOLFRAM REINHARD (WC)

Melee Mage: Reinhard is a shock trooper, always hoping to work into close range so he can hack his foes with his long sword. He's not very bright, but smart enough not to charge into enemy fire... unless he's ordered to. He uses Boost on himself and the person he knows best on the team (player's choice) to improve Vigor and therefore Toughness. He'll cast Smite on his long sword just before melee.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d8, Notice d4, Riding d4, Shooting d6, Spellbinding d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 8 (3)

Hindrances: Arrogant (M), Clueless (m), Loyal (m)

Edges: AB: Spellbinding – Svaldon Warrior-Mage, Brawny

Spells: Novice: Cantrips (Shadow), Boost, Smite

Gear: Luger (2d6, 12/24/48, Semi-auto), Long Sword (Str+d8), Plate Corselet (+3, 25 lb.)

ERICH MAHLER (WC)

Battle Healer: Mahler is a devoutly religious. Though he does not believe in inflicting harm, he is fiercely proud of his homeland and will not stand to see Germany dishonored. A pacifist, Mahler will not fire until fired upon, or under a direct order to fire. Staying in cover is paramount when playing Mahler, as his true skill is ability to heal wounds. He will also contribute with Light cantrips to trick the enemy and provide an advantage to his squad mates.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Healing d6, Notice d6, Riding d4, Shooting d6, Spellbinding d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Heroic (M), Pacifist (m), Stubborn (m)

Edges: AB: Spellbinding – Svaldon Healer, Healer

Spells: Novice: Cantrips (Light), Healing, Diagnosis (as Detect Arcana with medical trappings, used to diagnose diseases and any other ailments, including curses)

Gear: Crucifix, Luger (2d6, 12/24/48, Semi-auto), Medical Kit (+1 Healing, 4 uses)

ARNULF SCHMIDT (WC)

Odin-sworn Leader: Schmidt's family turned to the old gods when the portals opened, and found the deities to be powerful allies ready to lend magic in exchange for service and worship. During battle, Schmidt often calls out to the All-father for protection or aid as he casts boost to aid his comrades' Shooting or Spellbinding. Odin demands a sacrifice at least once a month and Schmidt will ritually gouge one eye of anyone he personally kills in battle, to let Odin know, "this one's for you."

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Spellbinding d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty (M), Quirk (m), Vow (m)

Edges: AB: Spellbinding – Odin's Gift, Command

Spells: Novice: Cantrips (Air), Boost, Deflection

Gear: Luger (2d6, 12/24/48, Semi-auto), Satchel of Runes, Whistle, Flask of Liquor