

Deadlands 1876

AGENCIES, MILITIAS, & SECRET SOCIETIES

THE NORTH

National Office of Unspecified Services

Alternate Names: NOUS, The Agency, Intelligence, The Noose

Status: Official Union intelligence agency

Operations: USA and Union Territories; limited illicit operations in the CSA and elsewhere.

In 1861, Secretary of State William H. Seward founded an unnamed agency dedicated to ferreting out “treasonous” elements in US politics. Under Seward’s leadership, this controversial group arrested dozens of pro-Confederate legislators in Baltimore, New Jersey, and New York City; imprisoning such “traitors” without due process. After these actions earned the near-unanimous censure of the press, Lincoln relocated the agency to Edwin M. Stanton’s War Department. There, combined with elements of Allen Pinkerton’s “Secret Service,” the “Agency” was instructed to present a more palatable public demeanor, and it moved its more extreme operations into the shadows. In 1864, it was responsible for breaking up a rebel plot to capture the *U.S.S. Michigan* and free the Confederate prisoners being held at Johnson’s Island on Lake Erie; and later that year the Agency foiled a Sons of Liberty plot to provoke election day riots in New York and Chicago.

After the assassination of President Johnson in 1866, the Agency was placed under the command of General D.F. Incandenza, a high-ranking Freemason from Boston and close personal friend of both Allan Pinkerton and Schuler Colfax. Under General Incandenza, the Agency was reconstituted as a general intelligence and security organization, given its official—if unorthodox—name, and granted departmental independence. Although much NOUS activity is conducted in the open, covert operations are still the Agency’s forte, and NOUS prides itself on its ability to gather intelligence, execute complex missions of espionage, and disseminate tactical disinformation.

Invested with both domestic and foreign capacities, the Agency is also charged with the *sub rosa* investigation of the supernatural—a function quietly, but insistently, denied by Boston. Such “unacknowledged” activities are directed under the auspices of “Bureau Six,” originally an independent group established in 1866 to study the so-called “Sharpsburg Incident.” After that project closed—and its director, Dr. Julian Quire, defected to the CSA—Bureau Six was absorbed into the Agency and placed under the direction of Colonel Edgar Poe.

Union Blue Security

Alternate Names: UBS, The Blues, Meeker's Men, The Meeks

Status: Quasi-official corporate security

Operations: CSA and Union territories

Established by Union Blue in 1864, UBS is responsible for promoting the interests of the Federal railroad system, from conducting armed raids against hostile Indians to simply guaranteeing the security of Union Blue passengers. Organized by retired colonel Josiah Meeker, the rank and file of UBS "Regulators" are often drawn from discharged Union veterans, former Pinkerton detectives, and quasi-independent adventurers. Because of the heavy Federal investment in Union Blue, UBS operates under a somewhat ambiguous legal status, similar to modern corporate security forces or mercenary companies. As the Rail Wars have become more dangerous, UBS has turned to increasingly extreme measures to accomplish their goals, and have quickly earned a Pinkerton-like reputation for union-busting, strike-breaking, and industrial espionage. In addition, it's something of an "open secret" that many UBS agents are on the NOUS payroll as well, although it's occasionally unclear just which agency is interpenetrating the other.

Pinkerton National Detective Agency

Alternate Names: Pinkertons, The Pinks, The Unsleeping Eye

Status: Private detective agency, mercenaries

Operations: USA

Formed in 1850 by Allan Pinkerton, the "Unsleeping Eye" foiled an early plot to assassinate Abraham Lincoln in Baltimore, and has been a faithful servant of Union interests ever since. With offices in every Northern city, the Pinkertons have evolved from their humble origins as private detectives, bounty hunters, and security agents to the status of private militia, recently lending their services to the interests of Big Business as strikebreakers, union-busters, and spies. For obvious reasons, there are many connections between the Pinkertons, Union Blue Security, and NOUS, and more than a few men have worked for all three of these agencies at one time or another—or even simultaneously.

John Brown's Body

Alternate Names: JBB, J-double-B, Brownies

Status: Secret society, extralegal militia

Operations: USA, CSA border

Inspired by the words and deeds of John Brown and Theodore Parker, this radical sect of abolitionists employs guerilla warfare in an attempt to foment insurrection and abolish slavery. Organized along a network of clandestine "cells," John Brown's Body resembles the later Bolsheviks in many ways; not the least of which is a humorless devotion to ideology. Largely a Protestant organization, the Brownies are often perceived as religious zealots, an image they do little to alleviate. Although John Brown's Body is officially denounced by Northern politicians, Richmond repeatedly accuses Boston of tacitly supporting their activities—hardly an unfounded claim, as their membership features more than a few prominent Federal officials, clergymen, professors, journalists, and army officers. John Brown's Body refuses to recognize the

philosophical and moral validity of the Armistice, recently amending its charter to declare “perpetual war” against the CSA until “that great and momentous hour they emancipate our enslaved brethren.” Framing themselves as a military organization, the Brownies limit their acts of violence to military targets, slaveholders, and “institutional support structures.” They have become quite adept at gun running and smuggling, and have been known to rob CSA banks and trains to secure extralegal sources of income.

The Gideonites

The Gideonites are a sub-sect of John Brown’s Body. Composed exclusively of escaped slaves, these feared commandos often volunteer for the most dangerous assignments, carrying out raids across the border and escorting their liberated brothers and sisters to freedom.

The Underground Railroad

Status: Quasi-legal aid organization

Operations: USA, CSA, Canada

Devoted to aiding the plight of escaped slaves, the Underground Railroad generally maintains a pacifist stance, and is largely operated by Quakers, sympathetic farmers, and black freemen. Although the Railroad maintains loose ties with John Brown’s Body, they tend to disapprove of the Brownies’ more extreme activities—although they have been known to turn to the JBB for support when the going gets rough.

The Sons of Liberty (Philadelphia)

Alternate Names: SOL, The Sons, The Resistance

Status: Underground armed resistance

Operations: Philadelphia, Bucks County

Generally known in Philadelphia as “The Resistance,” the Sons of Liberty announced themselves by assassinating a Confederate colonel during the first week of the Occupation. Brazenly reclaiming the “Sons of Liberty” moniker from the “copperhead traitors who make a mockery of our American traditions,” the Sons are somewhat analogous to the 1920s IRA and operate underground, assassinating CSA officials, pillaging supply lines, disrupting communications, and blowing up Confederate structures. They are distinctly loathed by the Southern occupiers, and even some Union officials repudiate their acts of violence, which “do little to promote the eventual peaceful Exchange of our beloved city.” However, as the Armistice matures and little visible progress has been made in advancing the Exchange, the Sons have been gathering increased support among the general population, and have recently stepped up their activities.

The Minutemen

Alternative Names: The Seventy-Six, The 76ers

Status: Underground armed resistance, terrorist group

Operations: Philadelphia, Bucks County

A radical splinter group cleaved from the Sons of Liberty in early 1876, the Minutemen are utterly uncompromising, and believe that only violent acts of terrorism will weaken the Confederate hold on Philadelphia. They first made their presence known on New Year’s Day by burning down a church holding mass for Confederate officers and their families, an act that

killed two dozen men, women, and children. Later that day, handbills around the city proclaimed, “No Peace. No Surrender. The Minutemen Do Not Sleep. Freedom or Armageddon Awaits. Signed, the Seventy-Six.” Considered a terrorist group by even the most staunch Unionists, the Minutemen do not restrict themselves to military targets, and consider all CSA citizens and “copperhead collaborators” as fair game. Recent Minutemen attacks include the kidnapping and murder of a Confederate officer’s wife who was accused of being a spy; the dynamiting of a public house hosting a Klan meeting; and the 3:00 am execution of twelve “doughface” collaborators, who were found in the morning hanging naked from lamp posts, signs around their neck proclaiming their numerous “sins.”

The Kanawha Zouaves

Alternate Names: The KZ, The Mountain Men

Status: Extralegal guerilla militia

Operations: West Virginia, Occupied Pennsylvania

Organized by Colonel Edward J. Allen of the 155th Pennsylvania Infantry, the colorfully-captioned Kanawha Zouaves served as a semi-official guerilla unit operating in West Virginia and Pennsylvania during the so-called “Kanawha Campaigns.” Unlike most of the “Eastern jayhawkers,” the KZ declined to lay down their arms during the Cease-Fire, and have been conducting an extralegal campaign to “maintain the integrity of West Virginia against the interference of tidewater despots.” Overtly hostile to President Grant’s proposed exchange of West Virginia for CSA-occupied Maryland and Pennsylvania, and resistant to the idea of a “neutral” Kentucky, the Kanawha Zouaves have as few friends in Boston as they do in Richmond. Lately, rumors have been heard in both capitals that the Zouaves have been receiving aid from new allies—although it’s been hard to credit reports of a “free army alliance” under the guidance of a shadowy “General Hiram.”

THE SOUTH

Richmond Secret Police

Alternate Names: RSP, The Winders, the Provost Marshals, the Provos

Status: Official CSA intelligence agency

Operations: CSA and Confederate Territories; limited illicit operations in the USA and elsewhere.

Established in 1862 by the provost marshal of the Richmond district, General John Henry Winder, the organization now known as the RSP began their reign of terror as a particularly ruthless corps of military police, charged with maintaining the security of the Confederate capital. During their first year of operation, they banned the sale of liquor, established a passport system, set controls on mercantile pricing, policed unruly CSA regulars, and jailed numerous “disloyal” citizens without due process. When Richmond newspapers complained, Winder threatened to shut them down, and the Southern press quickly fell in line. Soon Winder’s portfolio included running the CSA’s military prisons, and in 1864 Winder put Swiss-born “Doctor” Heinrich Wirz in charge of the newly-constructed Camp Sumter, better known to Union POWs as the infamous “Andersonville.” Meanwhile, Winder’s provost guards employed

increasingly draconian measures to keep control of Richmond during the Siege of '64–65; breaking up bread riots, censoring the press, and enforcing emergency induction protocols. (At one point during General Grant's advance, the provost guards actually forced a few unpopular cabinet members into the trenches surrounding Richmond!)

After Winder's death in 1865, President Davis placed the Provost guards under formal review, expanding their power and reorganizing them into a centralized bureaucracy responsible only to the President's office. Introduced as part of the Emergency Powers Act of 1866, the Richmond Secret Police officially came into being with Dr. Wirz serving as General Provost Marshal. Under Wirz's rule, the RSP has become a first-rate intelligence organization, charged with protecting Confederate security at all cost. Operating much like the bureaucratic but brutal KGB, the RSP is one of the most feared organizations in North America. With its countless branches and divisions, the RSP is responsible for maintaining Southern labor camps, ensuring the loyalty of CSA troops, and orchestrating covert operations on domestic and foreign soil.

Much like the Union's NOUS, the RSP is also responsible for the discreet monitoring of paranormal activity and supernatural events. More generally acknowledged by government officials south of the Mason Dixon line, such "occult" activities are the purview of the RSP's "Department of Esoteric Studies and Control." Directed by Colonel Randolph Delapore, DESC has acquired a somewhat sinister reputation even within the marble halls of Richmond, and more than a few Confederate senators have demanded a "full accounting" of its activities—only to be stymied by President Davis himself. There is a widespread belief that if elected, Stonewall Jackson will reorganize the RSP, placing the mysterious DESC firmly under more "Christian" leadership.

The Sons of Liberty (Old Northwest)

Alternate Names: SOL

Status: Secret society

Operations: Old Northwest, Canada

Formed in the Old Northwest by various copperheads, Northern sympathizers, and "peace Democrats," the Sons of Liberty claims exiled Ohio politician Clement Vallandigham as its "Supreme Grand Commander." During the height of its powers in the mid-sixties, the Sons of Liberty acted as a fifth column, working within Union borders to bring about "peace" through Recognition. Although most of its plots were foiled by the early efforts of the Agency, in 1864 they came close to capturing a Lake Erie ironclad and liberating the prison at Johnson's Island. Widely vilified (and exaggerated in scope) by the Northern press, after the assassination of President Johnson the Sons of Liberty were nearly eradicated by a combination of Agency interference and widespread Northern distaste. After a period of quiescence during the Cold War, the Hammer of '74 triggered a renewed burst of SOL activity; with the subsequent Armistice hailed by Sons as a vindication of their cause. Today the Sons are a waning force, content to support the campaign of Horatio Seymour and peacefully agitate for full Recognition.

Order of the American Knights

Alternate Names: O.A.K., The Knights

Status: Extralegal militia organization

Operations: Missouri, Kansas

Emerging from the same culture that produced the Sons of Liberty, and often sharing members as well as a general agenda, the Knights pursue a more violent path toward realizing the goal of Recognition. Seen by some as the “political wing” of various bushwhacking guerrilla outfits, the Knights are lead by General Sterling Price, a former Confederate officer who refused to accept the Cease-Fire. Although many older, less violent Knights have drifted away to join various Sons of Liberty chapters, the Missouri Knights are still very much active, working to keep northern Missouri unstable and therefore within the sphere of CSA control. They have numerous connections to the Kentucky State Guard, not to mention such bushwhackers and outlaws as Quantrill’s raiders and the James gang.

Knights of the Golden Circle

Alternate Name: Bickley’s Knights

Status: Secret society

Operations: CSA, limited USA

Founded in 1854 by Virginian expansionist George W. L. Bickley, the Knights of the Golden Circle are a secret society dedicated to the establishment of a “golden circle” of slave states stretching from the Confederacy “through Mexico and Central America to the rim of South America, curving back northward again through the West Indies to close the circle at Key West.” Counting Franklin Pierce and William Walker as its most famous members, the Knights operate with tacit Confederate approval, and numerous CSA legislators and military officers may be found at private “Castle” meetings. Although primarily a political organization, the Knights frequently coordinate filibustering expeditions, and can call upon a sizable number of affiliated mercenaries to back their intrigues. Aside from their perennial interest in adding Cuba to the CSA, the Knights have been especially active in Texas, offering their support to the beleaguered Republic and urging them to conquer as much Mexican territory as possible. Needless to say, the Knights have earned the enmity of the Mexican, Spanish, and French governments, all of whom have called upon the CSA to officially repudiate the group and dismantle their support networks.

Kentucky State Guard

Alternate Names: KSG

Status: Extralegal militia organization, terrorist group

Operations: Border states

Formed in 1861 under the guidance of Kentucky governor Beriah Magoffin, the KSG began their career dedicated to keeping “political actors” out of then-neutral Kentucky. As this soon proved to be an impossible task, the Confederate leanings of the KSG exerted themselves, and in 1863 the Kentucky State Guard rejected Magoffin’s political philosophy and sided with the provisional Confederate government exiled in Tennessee. Soon the KSG built a reputation as a cadre of bloodthirsty bushwhackers, waging guerilla warfare against Union sympathizers and pushing Kentucky toward the CSA. Once the Union seized control of the Bluegrass State, the KSG metastasized and spread along the other border states. Organized into loosely

interconnected terrorist cells from Missouri to West Virginia, the KSG want no part of a modern “neutral Kentucky.” Despite their original charter, the slogan of the Kentucky State Guard is “The South for Southrons.”

Ku Klux Klan

Alternate Names: KKK, The Klan, Night Riders

Status: White supremacy group; illegal in Union states.

Operations: North America

Founded in 1865 by Confederate veterans from Tennessee, the Klan of *Deadlands 1876* is larger and better-funded than its historical counterpart. Religiously devoted to the preservation of slavery and the destruction of Abolitionism, the Klan has spread throughout all of North America, serving each region in a capacity best determined by its particular needs. In the South, the Klan represents an open political force; while in the North, they act as a secret society attracting Democrats and copperheads. They are at their most pernicious in the Territories and along the border, where they spread terror through acts of lynching, abduction, raiding, robbery, and gun-running. Needless to say, the Klan and the Brownies are in diametrical opposition, and have clashed on numerous occasions, usually with bloody results. The Klan is extremely well-organized, and uses a hierarchy based on a strange combination of ancient myth and apocalyptic Christianity. The current “Grand Wizard of the Invisible Empire” is believed to be a Confederate general, but there are darker rumors that he’s actually a Northern senator.

The Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord

Alternative Names: The Covenant, The CSA

Status: Illegal white supremacy group, religious cult, terrorist group

Operations: Missouri, Kansas

Confusingly abbreviated as “CSA,” this fanatical group splintered off the Klan in 1869, and believes that the Apocalypse will occur in 1900. Even more radical than the KKK, the CSA is most active around Missouri and Kansas, and wages a campaign of terror designed to keep these states “in the fold of the Lord.” Not affiliated with the Confederacy, the Covenant bears the “hypocrites in Richmond” little love, and recently made news by conducting a series of bank heists in CSA territory.

Deseret

The Specific Authority

Alternate Names: SA, The Temple, The Brethren

Status: Official Deseret intelligence agency

Operations: Deseret and elsewhere

Established in 1865 during the Second Utah War, the Specific Authority gets its name from President Young’s executive letter ordering the creation of a Mormon intelligence apparatus, or a “specific authority” in charge of overseeing state security. More aligned in spirit with the Agency than the RSP, the SA largely works in the daylight, and lacks the punitive associations that makes the RSP so feared by its own citizenry. They do not have authority over the Nauvoo Legion, and

must report directly to the Mormon General Authorities. Located in a brand-new building close to the Temple, the SA is headed by Apostle Roswell Stevens, Jr., a trusted, longtime associate of President Brigham Young. Unlike NOUS or the RSP, the Specific Authority has a distinctly religious character, and does not balk at accepting the supernatural. Among Mormons the Specific Authority is generally referred to as “The Temple,” while Gentiles call its agents “The Brethren,” a term more properly applied to the Saint’s ruling body of twelve apostles.

Angels of June Twenty-Seventh

Alternate Names: Black Angels, the Danites

Status: Mormon “special operations” group

Operations: Deseret and elsewhere

An “officially non-existent” special operations group of the Nauvoo Legion, “The Angels of June Twenty-Seventh” are named for the day Joseph Smith was martyred. (Although they are more commonly called the “Danites,” after an early group of Mormon vigilantes.) Undergoing an arduous process of initiation and training, a Black Angel culminates his training by enacting a ceremonial “death,” a ritual that allows him to assume his burden without ties to the “mortal world.” And quite a burden it is—the Black Angels are charged with the preservation of the Saints’ sovereignty by “any and all means.” Disguising themselves as Indians to massacre an unwanted village of white settlers; assassinating troublesome officials on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line; providing Indian “allies” with contaminated supplies—being “already dead,” the Black Angels have little regard for convention, morality, or mercy. Although both NOUS and the RSP suspect their existence, official inquiries (and unofficial accusations) encounter only a stony wall of Mormon denial.

The Salamanders

Alternate Names: “Mormon separatists,” “Mormon Luddites”

Status: Extralegal militia organization

Operations: Deseret and elsewhere

Formed in 1875 to resist the Union Recognition of Deseret, the Salamanders take their colorful name from a legend concerning Joseph Smith, one that places a strange, toad-like being present with the Angel Moroni. The Salamanders are intensely religious, and hearken back to a more mystical interpretation of Mormon doctrine, one that has no desire to be compromised by Gentile politics and tainted by modern technology. The Salamanders first became known outside of Deseret when they hijacked a private airship and crashed it into the *Prophet*, a locomotive they believed was carrying an Analytical Engine to Deseret. They are believed to be guided by a group of men known as the “Seven Salamanders,” the most prominent being Martin Harris, Virgil Sharkey, Heywood Chance, and Kael Harman.

OTHER

Texas Rangers

Alternate Names: The Rangers

Status: Law enforcement

Operations: Republic of Texas, CSA, Territories

Formed in 1823 by Stephen Austin, the original function of the Texas Rangers was to protect new settlers moving into land freshly acquired from Mexico. Over time, the Rangers developed into a crack outfit skilled in mounted law enforcement, bounty hunting, and limited guerilla tactics. Since the Declaration of Texan Independence, the Rangers have been tasked to serve the Lone Star Republic in a much broader capacity. Still operating on a quasi-independent level from the newly-established Texas Army, the Rangers have recently expanded their portfolio to include investigations of the supernatural. Because of the Republic's "Grand Old Alliance" with the CSA, Texas Rangers have virtually unlimited freedom to operate within Confederate territory, providing they coordinate with "local authorities" and keep the RSP abreast of their activities.

Ned Ludd's Army

Alternate Names: Luddites, NLA

Status: Terrorist group

Operations: Industrialized areas of USA, CSA

Founded in 1865 by a mysterious figure calling himself "Captain Ludd," the American Luddites draw influence from the British anti-machine movements and Swing Riots of the early century. Articulating their philosophy through the periodic dissemination of anonymous manifestos, the Luddites believe that the "Three Devils known as Capitalism, Industrialization, and Banking" are responsible for the creation of a dehumanized workforce and an oppressed populace. Railing against such allegorical figures as "Moloch," "Mammon," and "King Steam," the Luddites generally restrict their activities to organizing nonviolent protests, fomenting strikes, and perpetrating acts of industrial sabotage. However, as the Rail Wars heat up and the pace of industrialization gains momentum, the Luddites have sharpened their rhetoric, and Ned Ludd's Army played an important role in the Great Unrest of '71, as well as the recent labor riots in St. Louis, Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Boston, Richmond, and Atlanta. Although Union and Confederate authorities have managed to root out and destroy several Luddite cells—most famously the "Carondelet Conspiracy" of the St. Louis shipyards—the group's confusing system of organization and mania for secrecy make it difficult for authorities to isolate and neutralize Luddite leadership. Many Union officials believe the Luddites are secretly funded by the Algonquin Commune, but Communard officials categorically deny such allegations.

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