

An Infamous Traffic



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Rules marked in red have been clarified or added since the first printing of the game in November, 2016.

"[The Chinese government] gave you notice to abandon your contraband trade. When they found you would not do so they had the right to drive you from their coasts on account of your obstinacy in persisting with this infamous and atrocious traffic...justice, in my opinion, is with them [the Chinese]; and whilst they, the Pagans, the semi-civilized barbarians have it on their side, we, the enlightened and civilized Christians, are pursuing objects at variance both with justice and with religion...a war more unjust in its origin, a war calculated in its progress to cover this country with a permanent disgrace, I do not know and have not read of. Now, under the auspices of the noble Lord [Macaulay], that flag is become a pirate flag, to protect an infamous traffic."

- William Gladstone, speech to the British House of Commons, 1840

1. OVERVIEW OF PLAY & GENERAL RULES

1.1 OVERVIEW

Over the course of several decades (turns) players will invest in infrastructure, conspire to influence foreign and domestic policy in China, and attempt to complete supply chains that will provide eager buyers in China with access to Indian opium. Their profits will serve to expand their operations in China and purchase respectability back home.

1.2 GOAL, TIEBREAKER, AND REVOLUTION

The game ends after a maximum of four turns (three if there are five players) and may end sooner. Normally, the player with the highest score (prizes + industry leader bonuses) will win the game. However, if China plunges into revolution, this score is disregarded, and the player with the most counters on the map will win. In either case, ties are broken using the number of Prize counters players have amassed with further ties being broken in order from the player currently holding the Start Player marker.

1.2.1 Condition for Revolution

If the dice pool is ever empty, the game ends immediately.

1.3 DICE

There are ten dice in An Infamous Traffic. Dice are used to determine the price of opium in each region and to measure the political stability of China. Dice are only rerolled when they are added to a region.

1.4 REVENUE AND COSTS

Unlike most economic games, players do not deal with cash. Instead, their companies gain and lose revenue. The amount of revenue a player has determines if they can take the invest action (5.1). In some instances a player may be forced to lose revenue beyond negative four. If this happens he simply remains at negative four. Players track their revenue by using a cube on their company ledgers. There is no limit to the amount of revenue a player can have.

1.5 GAINING REVENUE

Players gain revenue through the completion of Supply Chains. See section 7.

1.6 COUNTERS AND COUNTER-FLOW

Players are constrained by their counters. Player fleets, opium, and merchant counters begin in their stock and are brought into their holdings using the invest action (5.1). These counters are then deployed on the map using the place action (5.2). If removed from the map, player counters are returned to a player's holdings.

1.7 LIMITS ON INVESTMENTS

The amount of invest actions a player may take each turn is determined by their company's current revenue. Each revenue bracket is linked to a value from one to five. The highest bracket a player occupies with at least a single point of revenue determines if additional invest actions may be taken this turn. Players track the number of investments they have taken this turn on the track above revenue. As long as a company's revenue is in a higher bracket than the one linked to the number of investments they have taken this turn, the player may take the invest action. Historical Note: The limits on the invest action reflect public confidence in the company and its current access to credit.

1.8 OPPORTUNITY

In order to take the place action with a counter in his holdings, the acting player must have the "opportunity." A player has opportunity if at least one of the dice in the dice pool matches one of the dice in the region. Players always have the opportunity to place counters in any open ports, regardless of the dice in that region. Ports become open through an opium war (6.2). Historical Note: It was very difficult to coordinate international business in the early 19th century, and, as China destabilized, firms found it even harder to operate.

1.9 CONSPIRACIES

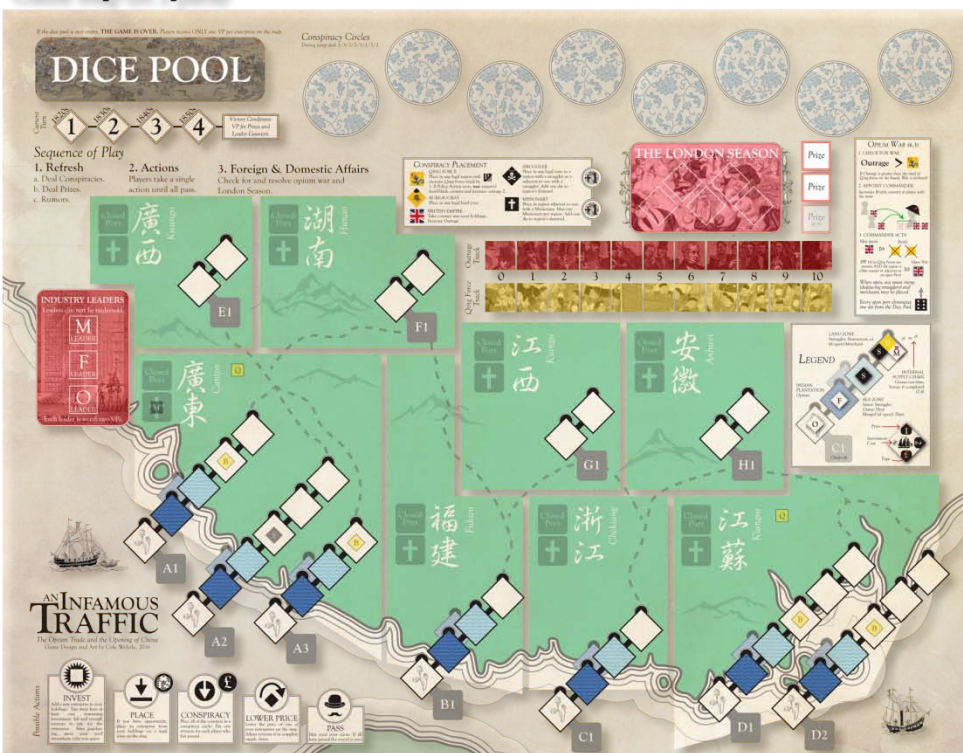
Many counters in the game are conspiracy counters. These counters begin in one of the eight conspiracy circles (at the top of the map) and enter play through the conspiracy action. Players will use these counters to help them complete supply chains and either stabilize, or undermine, China.

1.10 NEGOTIATION AND TABLE TALK

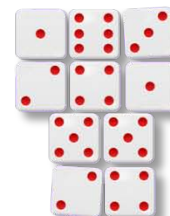
Players, especially new groups, may find it helpful to allow table talk and negotiation during play. The game may be played with binding or non-binding agreements or without any verbal negotiation at all.

2. COMPONENTS

Game Map (in 2 parts)



10 dice

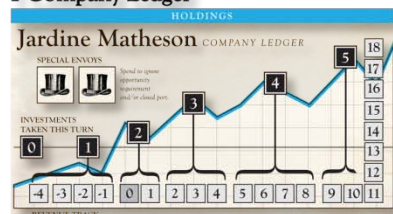


20 wooden cubes



Each player has:

1 Company Ledger



15 Enterprises (5 each)



Opium

Fleet

Merchant

1 Scion (doublesided)



3 Industry Leaders
(1 each)



Other Markers

Conspiracy Counters



Smugglers
x 16



British Influence
x 11



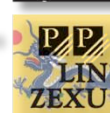
Bureaucrats
x 13



Missionaries
x 8



Qing Forces
x 15



Lin Zexu
x 1

Prize Counters x 12



Game Status Markers



3. SETUP

3.1 REGION A & D COUNTERS

Place two “1 price” bureaucrats (one per chain) on any land zone in A1 and A3. Place a “1 price” smuggler on any land zone in A2. Place two “1 price” bureaucrats (one per chain) on any land zone in region D. Place a Qing Force (without police action) in region A and in region D. Place a missionary in Region A.

3.2 DICE

Determine the starting demand by rolling two dice and placing them in Region A. Roll the remaining dice and place them in the dice pool.

3.3 CONSPIRACY POOL

Place the remaining Missionaries, British Influence, Smugglers, Qing Forces, Lin Zexu, and Bureaucrats together, face-down, to form the conspiracy pool.

3.4 CONSPIRACY CIRCLES

Deal the starting conspiracy circles. Deal one counter to each of the eight conspiracy circles. Then, deal a second counter to the first four. Then deal a third counter to the first two. All counters should be face-up.

3.5 PLAYER LEDGERS

Each player takes their company ledger. Place one cube on the “0” space to track revenue and one cube on the “0” space of the Investments Taken track.

3.6 PLAYER COUNTERS

Each player takes their counters and places them below their company ledger. This will be called the player’s stock. Each player also has holdings, which should be kept above the company ledger. Players begin without any holdings.

3.7 OUTRAGE & QING FORCES

Place the outrage marker on the “0” space of the outrage track. Place the Qing Force marker on the 2 space of the Qing Force Track.

3.8 THE LONDON SEASON

Mix the 12 Prize counters face down and place two on the boxes below the London Season (three if playing with four or five players). Give the “Start Player” token to a random player. Play passes clockwise.

3.9 THE FIVE PLAYER GAME

If playing with five players, two alterations are made to the game’s setup. First, place the turn marker on the second space (the game will only have three turns). Second, place a British Influence counter in region A to indicate that the port is open. **Remove one die from the dice pool.**

4. SEQUENCE OF PLAY

4.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

Each turn is composed of three parts: a Refresh Phase, an Action Round, and Foreign & Domestic Affairs. The majority of play will be spent in the Action Round where players will take actions until all players have passed.

4.2 REFRESH PHASE

On the first turn, skip every part of this phase except Rumors. Otherwise:

4.2.1 Advance Turn Marker

Advance the Turn marker on the Turn track.

4.2.2 New Conspiracies

Deal one counter (face-up) from the conspiracy pool to each of the eight conspiracy circles.

4.2.3 New Prizes

Deal two Prize counters (face-down) to the first and second position of the prize track on the London Season chart. If playing with four or five players, deal a third prize.

4.2.4 Rumors

Each player (in turn order) may inspect one Prize of their choice and then return the Prize face-down.

4.2.5 Reset Investments

Return each cube on the Investments Taken track to the “0” space.

4.3 ACTION ROUND

One at a time, players take a single action. The round is over as soon as all players have passed. See Section 5 for a detailed list of the actions.

4.3.1 Demand Expands/Contracts

After a player takes their action, all regions should be checked to see if they have the correct demand, starting with region A and proceeding in alphabetical order. There should be one demand die for each smuggler not in a completed supply chain and for the region’s missionary (if it has one). If the region has too few dice, the player who just acted should take the necessary dice from the pool, roll them, and place them in the region. If the region has too many dice, return the necessary dice to the pool, lowest first. If, at any point, the dice pool is empty, a revolution is triggered and the game is over (1.2.1).

4.4 FOREIGN & DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

Check for major events and the end-game conditions. See Section 6 for details.

5. ACTIONS

5.1 INVEST

If you have remaining Investments (1.7), pay the cost of any opium, fleet, or merchant counter in your stock and add it to your holdings. The cost of each counter is listed in the dark square on the counter. Move your cube up one space on the Investments Taken track on your company Ledger.

5.1.1 Special Envoys

A merchant may be appointed as a special envoy when bought with the Invest action. Instead of being added to your holdings, place the merchant on one of the two special envoy slots on your company ledger. **At any given time**, a player may only have two special envoys. Special envoys allow players more flexibility (5.2.5), **but do not count towards Industry Leader (5.1.2)**.

5.1.2 Industry Leader

If a player has more counters of a type in his holdings **and/or on the map (combined)** than any other player, that player is the industry leader of that type. The player places the appropriate industry leader counter on that industry leader space on the board; it does not require an action to do so. Industry leaders cannot be undersold (5.2.4) in their type. If two or more players are tied for the position, no one is considered that industry leader. If the game ends without revolution, each industry leader will grant its owner two bonus points. **Note: Special envoys are not merchants!**

5.2 PLACE

If you have the opportunity (1.8), place a counter **from your holdings** on a legal zone and set its price. The rules on a counter's placement shift depending on the status of the region and the type of counter the player wishes to place. Note: Placing counters may complete Supply Chains and is the only way to gain revenue (see Section 7).

5.2.1 Fleets

In closed regions, fleets may only be placed on the outer waters. In open regions, both sea zones merge to form one zone where you can place a fleet.

5.2.2 Merchants

Merchants can be placed in a land zone in an open region.

5.2.3 Opium

Opium can only be placed in an opium zone.

5.2.4 Underselling

Underselling allows you to place a counter in a zone that is already occupied. The price of the new counter must be set lower than the zone's previous counter and must be allowed to place there. The former occupant should be returned to its owner's holdings or removed from the game if it is a bureaucrat or smuggler. If the new counter is placed in a completed supply chain, then the player losing the counter should pay revenue equal to the price of the replaced counter.

If placing a counter from your holdings, you gain revenue as indicated by the price on the counter you placed. Reminder: the Industry Leader (5.1.2) cannot be undersold.

5.2.5 Special Envoys

Players may spend a single special envoy to ignore the opportunity requirement during the place action OR to place a merchant (from their holdings) in a legal zone in any closed region. The spent counter should be returned to the player's stock.

5.3 CONSPIRACY

Place all of the counters from a single conspiracy circle and pay one revenue for each player who has passed during this turn. All counters in a chosen conspiracy circle should be placed according to the following rules:

5.3.1 Qing Forces

Qing Forces may be placed in any region. Some Qing Forces have the ability to trigger one or more police actions. See 5.3.6. Increase the Qing Forces track by 1 each time one is placed.

5.3.2 Bureaucrats

Bureaucrats may be played on any land zones that are empty or where they can undersell the current occupant. If underselling, follow the rules in 5.2.4, but the acting player will not take any new revenue. Note: in very rare instances there may be no legal zones; in this case discard the unplayable Bureaucrats.

5.3.3 British Influence

British Influence is added to your holdings. Increase the Outrage track by the number of British Influence counters taken.

5.3.4 Smugglers

Smugglers may be played on inner sea zones or land zones that are empty or where they can undersell the current occupant. In addition, smugglers must only be played in regions with at least one smuggler or that are adjacent to a region with at least one smuggler. If there are no smugglers on the board, a smuggler may be played anywhere. If underselling, follow the rules in 5.2.4, but the acting player will not take any new revenue. Note: in very rare instances there may be no legal zones; in this case discard the unplayable smugglers.

5.3.5 Missionaries

Missionaries may be placed in any region that is adjacent to a region that already has a Missionary. If there are no Missionaries on the board, they may be played in any coastal region. Each region may only have one Missionary counter.

5.3.6 Police Actions

If a player places a Qing Force with the Police Action icon in a region containing a black counter (smuggler or missionary), that player *must* take a police action in that region: remove a single black counter from the game and increase the Outrage

marker two spaces. **This may break a supply chain (7.3).** Strategy Note: A player may place in a region without Smugglers/Missionaries to avoid taking a police action.

5.3.7 Lin Zexu

One Qing Force labeled “Lin Zexu” has two police actions. If possible, the player placing him **MUST** place him in a region where he can use as many police actions as possible (max 2). Historical Note: Lin Zexu was a powerful and effective official of the Qing dynasty whose crackdown on the trade in Canton led to the First Opium War (1839 - 42).

5.4 LOWER PRICES

Lower the price on one of your placed counters. If the price was lowered on a counter in a completed supply chain, then the player must pay revenue equal to the difference in values. For example, in order to protect his opium counter, a player decides to sell it at a loss and lower the price from 2 to 0. Because the chain had been completed, the player must lower his revenue by two.

5.5 PASS

A player may opt to pass. Players who pass may not re-enter play. The first player to pass will be the start player for the next turn and should take the Start Player counter (with the arrow pointing in the current direction of play). The second player to pass will determine if the course of play will be clockwise or counter-clockwise (the player with the Start Player counter should point the arrow to the appropriate direction to indicate this). If all players have passed the round is over.

5.5.1 Scions

After passing, a player may choose to send one of their scions back to London to secure the family’s reputation. The wealth of the scion is equal to the player’s company’s revenue. **The maximum value of a scion is 7 and any excess revenue is disregarded.** The player may choose to spend revenue to “boost” the wealth of their scion one or more steps, paying one revenue for each step (but not beyond negative four as per rule 1.4). After the final wealth number is determined, choose the correct side of the Scion counter and orient it so that the scion’s “price” matches the correct amount. Note: the lowest possible value for a scion is zero, and thus it may be impossible for a player to send a scion. Then place the scion on the London Season chart. Scions are arranged so that their value is on top. The highest-value Scion is placed in the leftmost spot on the London Season chart with any ties being broken by the Scion that has been there longest.

5.5.2 Game End Tiebreaker

Ties are broken in favor of the player with the most Prize markers. Further ties are broken by turn order, from the player currently holding the Start Player marker and following the direction of play as indicated by the arrow on the counter.

6. FOREIGN & DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

6.1 IN GENERAL

During this phase, players check to see if an opium war breaks out and see how well their scions did in the London Season. The game will end at the end of this phase on the fourth turn.

6.2 OPIUM WAR

An opium war will destabilize China and open up more opportunities for profit.

6.2.1 Check for War

If the current outrage is greater than the number of Qing Forces on the board then an opium war will erupt.

6.2.2 Delegate Command

The player with the most British Influence commands the army. If there is a tie, all tied players will command the army. If any disagreement cannot be settled, then the war ends and all remaining British Influence in player holdings are removed from play.

6.2.3 War Procedure

The commander(s) should collect all of the British Influence from all of the players. Each counter can be spent in a variety of ways:

(1) Battle

Discard an Influence counter to remove up to two yellow counters (Qing Forces/Bureaucrats) in any one region. Qing Forces in that region **MUST** be removed before Bureaucrats. This may break a supply chain (see 7.3). Removed pieces are taken out of the game.

(2) Open Port

In a coastal region without any Qing forces or in a region adjacent to one that is already open without any Qing forces, place an Influence counter over the “closed port” space. The port is now open. Once a port is open, merchant counters can be played on any land zone, and the outer and inner sea zones merge into one zone. Remove any Smugglers in the inner sea zone. Any player fleets on the outer zone should now move into the new merged zone. **Then, remove a die from the pool for every port opened (highest first).** This may trigger a revolution (1.2.1). Strategy: Opening ports makes it easier to place counters as players always have the opportunity in open ports (1.7).

(3) Discard

A commander may choose to discard any number of British Influence.

6.2.4 Clean-up

After the war, reset the Outrage marker to zero on the Outrage track and adjust the Qing Forces track to reflect the number of Qing Forces remaining in China. Then check for any newly completed supply chains (7.2). Finally, check each region to see if demand expands or contracts following the procedure in 4.3.1. If demand expands, the player with the Start Player counter chooses which dice from the pool are added to the necessary regions.

6.3 THE LONDON SEASON

Reveal the Prizes and sort them by value. Then assign Prizes, from highest to lowest, to the top scions from left to right (one per scion). Return the scion counters and any Prizes they earned to their players. Any leftover Prizes are removed from play.

6.4 GAME END

After the 1850s the game is over. A player's score is the sum total of the value of all of their prizes, and their industry leader bonuses. Ties are broken using the number (not the values) of Prize counters players have amassed, with further ties being broken in turn order from the player currently holding the Start Player marker. The game may end sooner if there is a revolution (1.2.1).

7. SUPPLY CHAINS

7.1 IN GENERAL

Supply chains are the only source of new revenue available to players. Each supply chain has a status, either complete or incomplete. All supply chains begin incomplete.

7.2 COMPLETION OF SUPPLY CHAINS

As soon as all zones in a supply chain have been filled AND the total price of the chain is equal or less than the region's demand (the total of all of the dice in the region), the supply chain is complete. Players must now take their profits and lower the demand **as described in 4.3.1.**

7.2.1 Profit

Players gain revenue equal to the total price of all of their counters in the supply chain.

7.2.2 Completed Chain Mnemonic

Place a single revenue cube on the chain ID space (the grey box at the bottom of each chain) to indicate that it has been completed.

7.3 BREAKING SUPPLY CHAINS

If a counter is ever removed from a completed supply chain due to an opium war (6.2) or police action (5.3.6), the chain is considered broken. Every player with a counter in that chain loses revenue equal to the total price of all of his counters in that chain and should take all of his counters back into his holdings. Remove the revenue cube from the chain ID space. **Broken coastal chains do not impact completed internal chains.**

7.4 INTERNAL SUPPLY CHAINS

In addition to the normal requirement for the completion of a supply chain (7.2), internal supply chains must also be able to trace a path to a completed coastal chain to be complete. As soon as an internal supply chain is completed, the player who took the action that completed it should choose which coastal supply chain will be its source. Sources must be directly connected by road (dotted line) and cannot be traced through other internal supply chains. Once the source is chosen, every player with a counter in the source chain should increase their revenue by one for each such counter.

8. DESIGN NOTES

8.1 THE ARGUMENT

Historians often note the ways that imperialism left its mark on the domestic life of early 19th century Britain. Empire obviously transformed the island nation. Less remarked upon are the ways that the nation changed empire. The domestic culture and society of Britain shaped imperial culture. Those that looked abroad for their fortunes at this time usually did so with the desire to return home with riches and the ability to assume a respectable position in society. Thus the fortune made by James Matheson was ultimately used to ensconce himself in the aristocracy. Upon his return from China he purchased, among other things, the Island of Lewis which he ruled like a benevolent feudal lord from his sprawling Victorian estate of Lews Castle.

There is no shortage of games about empire or about trade. In these games players are asked to conquer the world or else pile up the largest stack of cash. While those goals can reproduce some of the tensions of their era, I think they misunderstand the forces that shaped the period. To be sure, Britain's empire was a global project and one filled with hubris. But, it was also a domestic project, undertaken by a class of people who looked beyond their home to realize their personal ambitions. Money and land were never enough. For this reason, inspired by Jeroen Doumen and Joris Wiersinga's brilliant *Greed Incorporated*, I decided to create the scion system, which I think provides a set of reasonable motivations that foreground the behavior of the player's companies. Though the prizes to be won in the London Season may seem silly, I certainly don't mean to denigrate them. As a cultural motivator, a fashionable hat might be just as serious a force as power or wealth. Indeed it can be a symbol of both. We who are students of that time would be wise to treat these cultural motivations with the same gravity we afford to matters of war and finance.

8.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In many histories of modern China, the first Opium War is a foundational moment, kicking off the "century of national humiliation." Its central figure was Commissioner Lin Zexu who tirelessly worked to control a crippling opium epidemic enabled by British merchants. It's a classic story of the terrors of globalization, but, if this narrative sounds a little too easy, it's because it is. In point of fact, both the story of isolationism and drug use in China have longer and more tangled histories. Opium, for one, had been used for nearly two centuries in China. The drug, cultivated from poppy seed pods, was one of the few medicines offered by practitioners that tended to provide results. Usage of the drug was rampant in China, though it did increase dramatically in the decades leading up to the 1830s. The history of usage in the middle kingdom also demonstrates a second common misconception: Chinese isolationism. China long traded with both its near neighbors and other nations around the world. Though there was a powerful isolationist faction in the emperor's court, Qing China was both expansionist and cosmopolitan. Goods moved into and out of its territories.

This trade was exceptionally good for China, which boasted a massive trade surplus. However, the expansion of opium usage and the deregulation of the East India Company in 1833 set the stage for a swing in fortunes as demand for the Indian drug outpaced exports, pulling silver out of the celestial kingdom.

8.3 DESIGN BACKGROUND

I began work on *An Infamous Traffic* while finishing up *Pax Pamir* in early 2015. The design began as a somewhat chaotic historical card game that sought to capture the drama of Britain's trade with the far east in the first half of the nineteenth century. However, as a business simulation it was simply too random to be very interesting as a game. The design was put on ice, while I worked on other projects. I revisited the design at the request of Tom and Mary Russell in 2016 and the skeleton of a new design was sketched out on the backs of brochures while I waited anxiously in our hospital room for the birth of my second son. The original game was inspired by a heady combination of Tom Russell's *Northern Pacific*, Martin Wallace's *Brass*, and Franz-Benno Delonge and Thomas Ewert's *Container*. My initial desire was to attempt to invert *Container* and have the players work the supply chain backwards. This proved somewhat more complicated than I anticipated. The game received the bulk of its development that summer during an extended trip back to the Midwest. It was during these many sessions that the dice were introduced and much of my debt to *Container* was replaced by a new debt to Dieter Danziger's still formidable *Locomotive Werks*. I am grateful for the many playtest games and conversations about the design with my brothers Drew and Blake Wehrle as well as a host of close friends, especially Corey Porter and Chas Threlkeld, who made the design possible. I'd also like to thank Mark Crane for providing edits for these rules.

8.4 THE VICTORY CONDITIONS

Despite the focus on company revenue, this is a game about personal enrichment. In the game this is modeled by the somewhat necessary risk of the London Season and the scion bid. The successful orchestration of the opium trade within Qing dynasty China built personal fortunes that would last generations. Warren Delano's success at the opium trade helped lay the foundation for a dynasty whose power would culminate with the presidency of his grandson, Franklin Roosevelt. In England, the Keswick family's massive wealth is still tied to the operation of Jardine Matheson, a firm closely related to the opium trade. Of course, not everyone in the game will be so lucky as the Jardines and Mathesons. Those who do find themselves leading in revenue will have a vested interest in keeping China stable and, perhaps, the British Empire at bay. Those who might have been cut out of early deals will seek to agitate in hopes of getting a bigger piece of market share or look to expand the trade into other regions. To these tensions is the added concern of the looming revolution. Underselling can be a destructive practice to the bottom line, but if China falls into anarchy, presence on the ground is the only thing that will count. The overlap between

these various concerns is part of an effort to approximate the chaos of both official policy around China, and the various political and social divisions within that country.

8.5 QING STRENGTH

In this game, as in history, the opium wars could never have been "won" by the Qing. Their army was simply too poorly equipped and too disorganized to put up a fight. The reluctance of government officials to even recognize that a war was taking place only compounded these problems. For this reason, the central question of a trade war is not one of outcome but one of scale. That scale is informed chiefly by the lobbying of the players through the taking of British influence which represent visits back to England to drum up support for an intervention. William Jardine undertook such a journey in 1839 when he lobbied the British Foreign Minister, Lord Palmerston. His trip home (along with the actions of Lin Zexu) was likely the key event that pushed the British towards action. The biggest obstacle to war comes not from the Qing but from rival British factions who can lock parliament in indecision. This is represented by the shared command rules (6.4.2) which allow a dissatisfied partner to essentially cancel the war.

8.6 THE SUPPLY CHAIN

Opium counters represent contracts with production facilities managed by the East India Company in India. Most opium was produced in India (Malwa) and then shipped through Bengal. Shipping counters in the outer sea zone represent ocean shipping lines to Lintin island, near Canton. The inner sea zone represents illicit traffic from that shipping hub to the various other ports in China. By opening a coastal region, fleets can travel directly to Chinese ports, cutting out middlemen and increasing company profitability. From there the opium could travel through official channels via bribes (bureaucrat), through black markets (smugglers), or, if opened, via company sales reps (merchants).

8.7 THE OPPORTUNITY REQUIREMENT

This feature came rather late in the design. Many economic games, especially those set before the 20th century, give players far too much latitude in creating long-term plans. International trade, especially before the submarine telegraph cables knitted the world together, was a dicey affair. For this reason, players may not always be able to make the best use of their holdings. This is especially true as China destabilizes. These operational barriers can be partially mitigated by investing in special envoys, but that usually requires some foresight. Of course, those regions open to the British are easier to operate in but this usually translates to sharper competition and smaller profit margins.

8.8 MISSIONARIES

Christian missionary work in China has a long and storied history. They were critically important both in the breakout of the opium war and in destabilizing China. So much of Chinese culture is built on an assumption of cultural superiority. The Christian missionary project undermined that claim, with disastrous results. The opium trade provided a new point-of-

entry into Chinese life and was embraced by many missionaries though some were put off by the trade's problematic morals. While designing the missionary component to the game I could not help but think of missionaries such as Karl Gützlaff whose evangelical project was closely tied to the opium trade and who saw the trade and its expansion as a key component in the Christianization of China. Of course, not everyone agreed with this connection and, especially in the years following the First Opium War, many Christians began to argue against this logic.

9. STRATEGY

9.1 NOT AN ENGINE BUILDER

Unlike most economic games it can be hard to make money and it's not uncommon for games to end with a company's final revenue close to or less than a player's starting score. As you play, keep each counter's profit capabilities in mind. Expect your score to fluctuate over the course of play and don't get disheartened when you find yourself without an investment. As long as you've got holdings to be placed, you might be able to stage your comeback.

9.2 DON'T THROW AWAY YOUR SHOT

Where you might be able to place pieces on the board is largely a matter of chance. At the start of the game, this isn't much of an issue as the dice pool is likely robust enough to allow you to place anywhere where there is demand, but as China slips into turmoil it can become difficult to get your counters where they need to go. Keep in mind that you can improve your chances by stabilizing China with police actions (5.3.6) or by adding smugglers to a region in hopes of making a new contact.

9.3 FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

Expect an opium war to happen at least once over the course of the game. Most games have two, but it's possible that they could break out every turn in some instances. The player who leads the British has a lot of power to shape the rest of the game. Opening ports will provide more opportunity for British traders, but will also push China closer to the brink. Attacking Qing Forces will increase the likelihood of more wars in the future, and clearing out Bureaucrats can be a good way to disrupt the trade routes of your opponents.

9.4 THE YOUTH

If China is stable, your scions will be an important part of your victory. Don't neglect passing early for a better shot at the big prizes, but also be careful not to commit yourself too early.



"The Opium Ships At Lintin, China, 1824", William John Huggins

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

It's a three-hander with Dent, Russell, and Jardine playing. The opening draw for the Conspiracy Circles: first circle, two 1-value smugglers and a Qing Force; second, three British Influence; third, two Bureaucrats (1-value and 2-value); fourth, British Influence and a 0-value smuggler; fifth and sixth, a missionary; seventh, a 1-value smuggler; and finally, a Qing Force with a police action. The demand in Region A is 7 (a 4 and a 3), while the Dice Pool contains two sixes, two twos, and one each of one, three, four, and five.

RUMORS

Dent and Russell inspect the first prize, Jardine the second.

Dent: I've inspected the first prize which is a Bad Marriage (-1). That's as bad as penalties get and there's a reasonable chance that the other penalties are out there. I'm going to be cautious this round and watch how Jardine plays.

Jardine: The second prize is Swindled (0). That's one of three zero-value prizes. There's also two minus-ones, and seven other prizes with values ranging from one to three. So, 18% chance it's a minus-one, 82% chance it's between zero and three: I like those odds. Even if I end up with another zero, it's still going to help me at game end if I need to break a tie in my favor.

ACTION ROUND

1 - Dent

Dent takes the conspiracy action and takes the second circle. He takes three British Influence into his holdings. The outrage track is increased three spaces.

Dent: Three British Influence is a lot of influence to have this early. Even if I get behind on trade, I might be able to use the war to disrupt completed supply lines.

2 - Russell

Russell purchases a fleet. He first increases his Investments marker and then lowers his revenue by one. He puts the fleet counter in his holdings. As he has more fleet counters than any other player, he places the corresponding Industry Leader counter on the board. At this point because his revenue is beneath his investments taken, he will not be able to take any further investments until he can get his revenue to at least 1.

CREDITS

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3 - Jardine

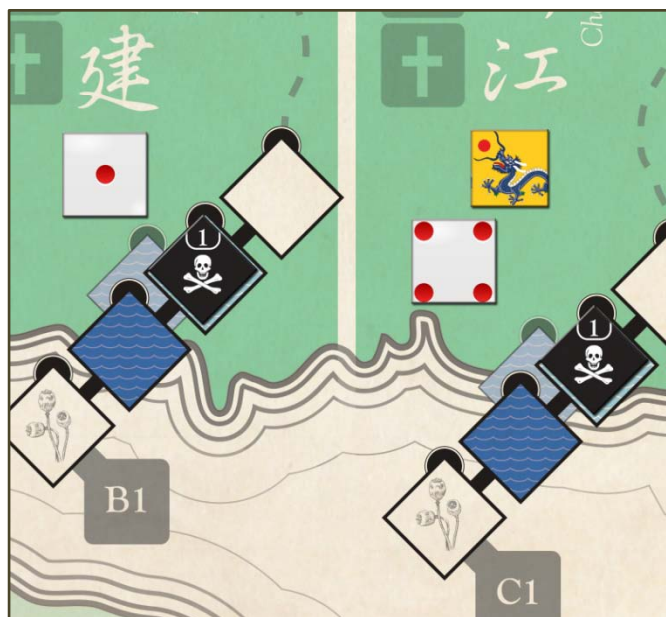
Jardine purchases an opium following the same procedure as Russell. He also places the corresponding leader counter.



Jardine: Russell committed so I know that my opium will have transport. Now we just need to find enough smugglers.

4 - Dent

Dent takes the first conspiracy: two smugglers and a Qing force. He puts the force in region C and increases the Qing Forces track to 3. The two smugglers are placed on the inner seas in region B and C. When each smuggler is placed, Dent will take a single die from the pool and roll it and add it to each region, establishing the demand. He takes the 3 and the 4 from the pool and rolls them, getting a 1 in B and a 4 in C.



Dent: With Jardine and Russell in league my best bet is to hang back and try to disrupt the trade. By taking the 3 and 4 out of the pool, they will now lack the Opportunity to place counters in region A.

5 - Russell

Russell takes the fourth conspiracy circle. He takes the British Influence into his holdings and increases the outrage 1 step (now at 4). He then places the Smuggler in the inner sea of the short supply chain in region A. This increases the demand. He takes a 2 from the pool and rolls a 5 which he places in the region. The demand in region A is now 12.



Russell: Without Opportunity, I couldn't play in Region A so I chose to boost demand in A, hoping that I would roll something that matched a die in the dice pool. The newly rolled 5 did the trick.

6 - Jardine

Jardine places his opium on the short supply chain and sets the price at 3.

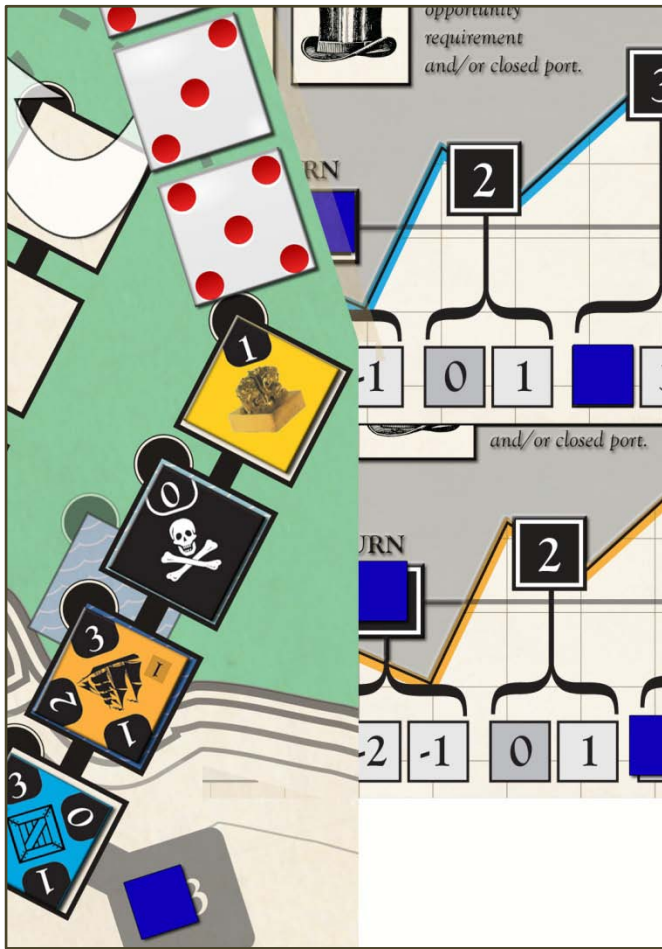
7 - Dent

Dent purchases a merchant and takes the corresponding leader counter.

Dent: I've got the edge on influence and it's possible that an opium war may happen this turn. By recruiting merchants I can prepare for postwar opportunities. And, with a cost of zero, I can purchase two this round without having to worry about revenue.

8 - Russell

Russell places his fleet on the short supply chain with a price of 3. The total price of the chain is 7: opium (3), fleet (3), smuggler (0), bureaucrat (1). As this is less than the region's demand, the chain is now complete and both Russell and Dent will increase their revenue by three. Because the chain contained one smuggler, the demand in the region is lowered. The 3 is returned to the die pool and the current demand is now 9.



9 - Jardine

Jardine purchases an additional Opium.

Jardine: With some revenue finally established, I can start expanding. I choose another opium counter in hopes of scaring off the competition.

10 - Dent

Dent purchases another merchant.

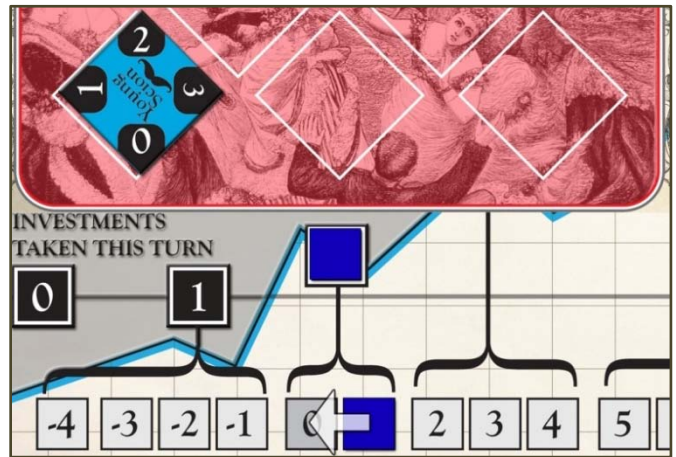
11 - Russell

Russell purchases an envoy. He places a merchant counter in one of his two envoy slots.

Russell: I'm a little concerned that if an opium war doesn't happen, it will become difficult to trade in A. By taking an envoy, I can keep some flexibility.

12 - Jardine

Jardine passes and decides to send a scion, taking the Start Player marker. He chooses to "boost" the value of his scion by paying one revenue, so his scion will have a value of 2 (1 base revenue + 1 boost).



Jardine: I know that the "0" prize I saw isn't appealing, but I'm willing to take a risk on a better prize. If Russell wants to top me, he'll have to spend revenue for a boost as well since I've got the tie breaker.

13 - Dent

Dent passes (and decides play in the next turn will move clockwise) and does not send a scion.

14 - Russell

Russell passes and sends a scion, and, like Jardine pays for a boost. The value of his scion will be 3 (2 base revenue + 1 boost). His scion takes the first position.

FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

The outrage (4) is higher than the number of Qing forces (3). There will be an opium war. Dent has the most British influence and will be the commander, taking Russell's influence as well. He has four influence to spend. He spends his first influence to remove a Qing force and a bureaucrat (in the short chain) in region A. Now without forces, he spends his second influence to open the port. With his last two influence he chooses to open ports in region E and F. After opening three ports, he must remove three dice from the dice pool.

With the bureaucrat removed in the short supply chain, the chain is broken. Russell and Jardine lower their revenue by three each and take their counters back into their holdings. *Additionally, because the port was open, both sea zones merge and the smuggler occupying the inner sea is removed from play.*

