

## WEATHERGUARD GOLD ~2013 MUSIC BOX PROTOTYPE



Dear Weatherguard, this letter is to acknowledge the debt you paid to own a piece of gaming history--The original 2013 Music Box ProtoType.

The concept of a music box for Spell Saga was there from the earliest design drafts. The original idea was to have various iterations of the game, IE, Spell Saga I, Spell Saga II, and ETC. Each was to have it's own special moment when the package was first

opened.

This was back in 2009, when making things as still hard, but the "opening moments" were (if not still) impossible: boxes that would blow confetti, boxes that would have little pennants with starting cards rising up out of the top. Someone was going to die. This is what I am saying. But a box that played music sounded like I could do it.

I had a song too. In 2005 I had received a friend request online by a band named Cricket Engine. Their song Grain became a staple of my listening for many years, until I tracked the lead composer down, a man named Sean Maylone who now lived in South Korea. Sean gave his blessing for Grain to be the official theme song of Spell Saga.

In the Summer of 2011, I was putting together the first ever working version of Spell Saga (version 4.0) in a mad attempt to have it published at the world's largest board game convention. I took special precautions to set the tone of the game at first site. This meant making the packaging as close to a final product as I could think of. I purchased a sound chip from some seller online and spent a sorry time attempting to get the song uploaded into it (imagine half-English directions and a program that only ran on a computer I didn't have). In the end I did it--the sound chip worked--only back then, there was no such thing as a purchasable light sensitive chip, so this one worked with an inserted-tab mechanism. I rigged the box so that when it opened, the song "Grain" by Cricket Engine would play. It worked incredibly well! Until it snapped in half the moment I looked away.

A year later, after deciding to put Spell Saga through a fundraising platform, I decided it was time to go back to the drawing board. We would have our music box. The original plan was to have two boxes: one of the complete game (including a secret trap door with a two-deck epilogue), and then have a special edition box (the one that would play music). After getting the go-ahead and quote from our manufacturer in Hong Kong, I set about building a prototype. I installed a new light sensitive chip (still hard to get the music on) inside of a 300 count card box, and made a little prototype sleeve for the it (now lost to time).

When the 2013 fundraiser failed, I let a friend named Paul Hinman borrow the box, as it contained my personal prototype deck of Spell Saga 6.0. I retrieved it from him a year later for the 2014 fundraiser, and on my shelf it died, awaiting new life. In 2018 Lauren Rogers illustrated a character named Tooklebok Shid Foogar along the sides. For my part, I installed a brand new sound chip inside of it (no computer needed, louder than ever) before filling it with various goodies.

Inside the Music Box you will find my 2013 6.0 white-sleeve prototype deck--wrecked, as it began to morph into the 2016 Deck 1.5 ~ The Undersky Prototype. You will also find my aqua-sleeve Hong Kong manufactured edition of Deck One ~ The Highlands, which is what I used when playtesting the final version of Deck Two ~ The Forest. You will also find a bag of my personal tokens that I use whenever playing Spell Saga. Some of these go back to 2009, and some might even stretch back to EPIOCH test games in 2007.

*This Box is the 2013 Spell Saga Music Box Prototype, crafted in Nashville Tennessee, and illustrated by Lauren Rogers, specifically for Derek Davis in Winter Park, Florida. The microchip on the left is the original sound source, placed in 2013, and the microchip on the right is the newer edition, placed in 2018. The music is the song "Grain" by Cricket Engine IE Sean Maylone, most likely recorded in San Francisco, California sometime between 2004 & 2005.*

