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SPECIAL
i s s u e

For 2300 AD—
Ogres in 2300 AD
by Lester W. Smith

For MegaTraveller—
IRIS Characters in
MegaTraveller
by Charles E. Gannon

For Twilight: 2000—
Mortars
by Harold Martin



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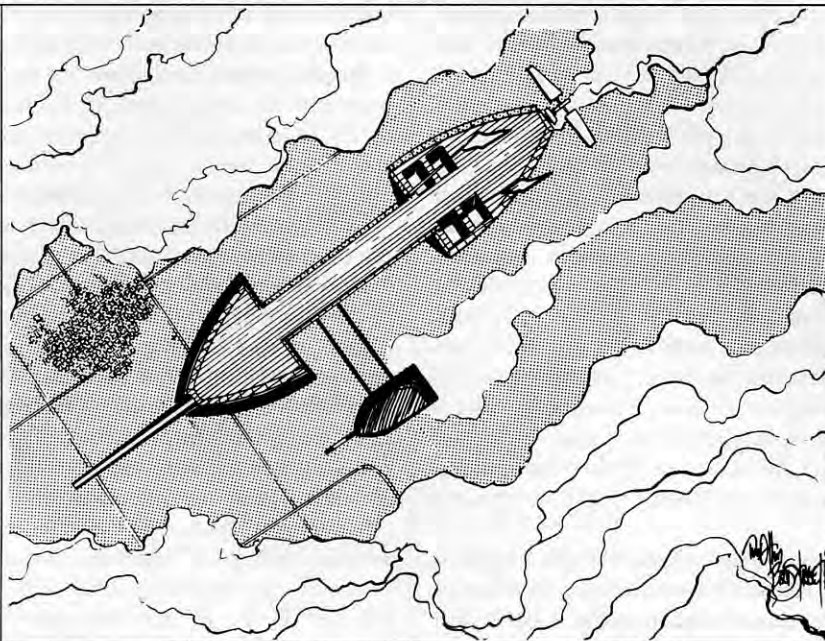
Cloudship Design

Sky Galleons of Mars is set in an interesting period of European colonial expansion on Mars. The scenarios and campaign game cover the period shortly before and during the Oenotrian War between Britain and the Oenotrian Empire. The British have now been building their armored steam-powered aerial gunboats for less than a decade, and the true modern screw galley has only been in existence for about twice as long. As such, everyone is still exploring the potentials and capabilities of their vessels and searching for "best" designs. It is entirely appropriate for players to join in this search with gusto. In fact, much of the enjoyment of the game comes from matching your own designs against those of an opponent. This article is meant to provide you with tips on what to try and what to avoid when putting together a (hopefully) successful design.

DESIGN PURPOSE

The first thing you need to do is identify what purpose the design is to serve. This sounds trivial and obvious, but it is the area where designs most frequently fail. Clearly define the purpose of the design in your own mind before you actually begin choosing components. If you do so, you will be better equipped to avoid the first pitfall of design, *over-specialization*.

In one of our many playtest sessions, a player showed up with a fairly small British gunboat positively bristling with Nordenfelts and 1-pounders. It was fairly cheap, reasonably speedy, could reach Very High altitude, and chewed up Martian screw galleys at an impressive rate. "Ah ha!" several players exclaimed, "It's the perfect ship!" Of course, when the *Hamburg* showed up on the Martian side, it suddenly didn't look so impressive, but there was only one *Hamburg* on Mars, and so the British player



argued that this shouldn't detract from the fact that he still had a superior pirate-killer. The truth is, though, that an off-the-shelf *Whisperdeath* kite will do the same thing to this lightly armed patrol boat.

The nature of ship design is such that a vessel will, over the course of its service life, be called upon to carry out a variety of missions against a variety of enemy forces, and it is usually impossible to determine in advance what type of opposition you will be running up against. If your vessels become specialized to deal with one type of enemy craft, the odds are that they will find themselves helpless (as in the example above) when confronted by another. Within limits, a ship should be able to do a little bit of everything. Otherwise it will inevitably run into an adversary against which it is completely helpless.

SPECIALTY SHIPS

Now, having given ample warning against the dangers of over-specialization, let me also admit that there is considerable fun to be had designing specialist ships. If these ships are to form part of a larger squadron, which is more often the case with Martian than European vessels, it actually makes considerable sense to have one or two. Two examples of specialized Martian ships come quickly to mind: the *Fire Bomber* and the *Boarding Ram*.

The Fire Bomber: Start with a moderately sized hull, say a four or five, and then pile enough turncranks on to get its speed up to 6. For armament, put on about six liquid fire racks, and fill out its weight with marines. Make sure it's light enough to reach Very High altitude, however, as it won't be much of a bomber if it can't get above its target. The *Fire Bomber* is one of those ships that has to hang back until the enemy vessels have been

forced, either by the tactical situation or battle damage, to a lower altitude. Its great speed then enables it to dash in and dump a big load of liquid fire on a target, enough to cripple or destroy all but the largest of ships. Afterward it has the speed to ram or grapple the enemy and be very annoying with its marines.

The Boarding Ram: This ship is very similar to the *Fire Bomber*, except that it doesn't need the fire racks, but instead requires a ram. Its speed gives it an excellent shot at ramming British vessels, and its altitude means no one is secure. Loading it up with marines gives it a good chance just to overwhelm a vessel in the first turn or two after boarding it. However, the large number of turncranks virtually guarantees that you will win a protracted fight. If there is a recipe for dealing with big, mean British ships, this is it.

THE MANY VERSUS THE FEW

In a limited budget game, whether the budget is tonnage-based or money-based, the real tough question is whether a few big ships are better than a lot of little ships. There is no single right answer to the question, as both alternatives have advantages and disadvantages; the correct choice is probably based as much upon the situation you anticipate facing as it is by any sort of universal utility.

So, what are the advantages and disadvantages? The potential disadvantage of a single large ship versus many smaller ones is well illustrated by an experience I had during one of the playtest games. We had a fairly large force of Martians against a small squadron of light British gunboats, and the British were getting beaten up pretty badly. To balance things out, I took a *Reliant*-class ship and waded in. As I approached the battle, one Martian *Hullcutter*-class ship zipped out of the melee and popped off a round from its lob gun, which hit. I missed my recovery roll from the loss of trim and plummeted to Medium altitude, missed it again and plummeted to Low, missed it again and plummeted to Very Low, and then missed it again and crashed. So much for the *Reliant*.

What this illustrates is the potential danger of placing all of your eggs in one basket. The advantages of several small ships versus a single large one is that your total force is less vulnerable to Critical hits. A Trim Critical, for example, will immobilize a ship for a full turn, regardless of its size. If you have three 300-ton ships, a Trim Critical on one of them immobilizes a third of your force; if you have one 900-ton ship it immobilizes your entire force.

So what are the advantages of a big ship? While a big ship is just as vulnerable to a Critical hit as is a small one, it is considerably less vulnerable to conventional damage. A small ship, on the other hand, has a good chance of having its utility severely curtailed by a single hit from a good gun. Take the *Aphid*-class as an example. One good hull hit (causing two points of damage) will knock one full altitude level off of its ceiling. A single gun hit can knock out its only heavy gun. It can only absorb two or three crew hits (depending on whether or not you feel like you need a signalman) before crew casualties begin reducing its firepower or speed. This is a very fragile ship! Bigger ships, on the other hand, can usually take considerable doses of conventional damage before suffering any significant reduction in their capabilities, and that ability to take it as well as dish it out adds considerably to your tactical flexibility.

When choosing armament for your ships, you face pretty much the same sort of choice between a few big guns or a

lot of little ones. The advantages of many little guns are that you have that many more chances to achieve Critical hits. Even though a Trim Critical is very easy to recover from when caused by a gun with a damage value of 1, it still immobilizes the ship for a full turn. Likewise a magazine hit is a magazine hit, and it doesn't matter at all how big the shell was that caused it. A second important advantage of many smaller guns is redundancy. One big gun can be taken out by a single gun hit from any but the puniest of guns, while it is difficult to suppress multiple gun mounts spread out along the length of the ship.

On the other hand, the advantages of big guns are that there are things they can do, such as penetrate armor and hit from extremely long ranges, that smaller guns normally cannot. Also, when they do hit the results can be really spectacular. A Trim Critical from a small gun usually results in a turn's worth of inactivity, while a Trim Critical caused by a 6-inch gun is usually fatal. Likewise, fires, bridge hits, jammed rudders and the like caused by small guns are more of an annoyance than a threat, while the opposite is true from big guns. A good design will usually be built around one or more large guns supported by "secondaries," as this provides most of the advantages of both without falling into the trap of over-specialization.

VARIANTS

It may seem a bit early to suggest variants to the ship design rules, but these are mostly minor variants which do no violence to the basic design system, and meet requests that have been advanced by a number of players.

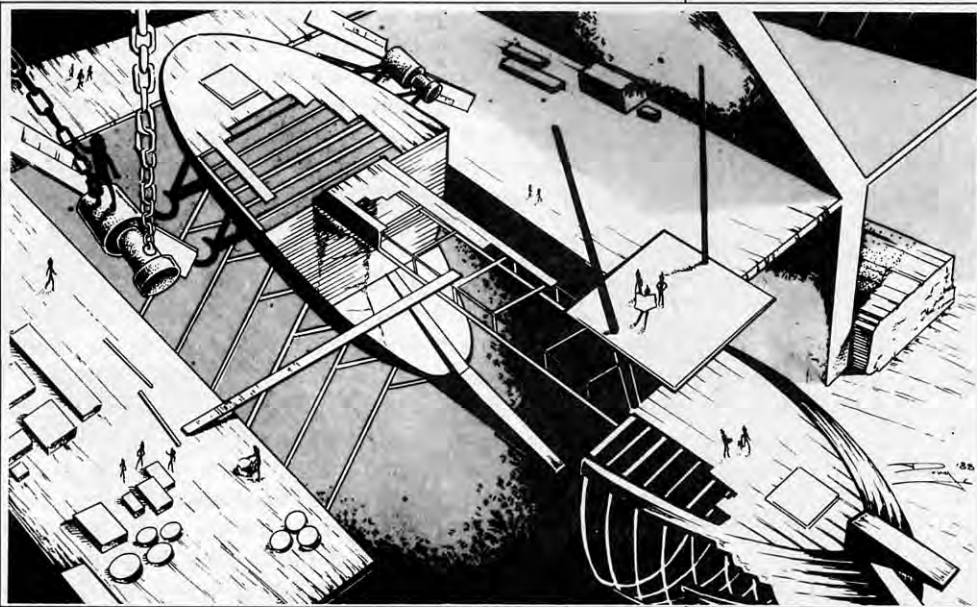
CONSTRUCTION TIME

If you are playing an on-going campaign and want a new ship built, how long does it take? Multiply the hull size by two, the result being the number of weeks that it takes to complete the ship.

MIXING COMPONENTS

Everyone wants to mix components from different shipyards, and demands to know why they cannot. Well, the reason is that Europeans will not normally sell high-tech equipment to

Martians and in turn do not have access to the plentiful supplies of liftwood that Martian shipyards do. The British have access to the Martian yards at Parhoon which has thus far been able to obtain adequate supplies of liftwood at reasonable prices. However, shipyards are neither wholesalers nor outlet stores. The fact that a shipyard at Syrtis Major can place a 1-pounder Hotchkiss gun on a vessel it is constructing for £160 does not mean that it will sell you that gun in a crate for the same amount. If you think otherwise, try going to your local Chevy dealer and buying just the engine for your car, and then take it to a Toyota dealer and ask him to put it in a Corolla for you.



However, since some switching of components will be done, use the following rule: The ship you design must be built in either a Martian or a European shipyard, and that yard determines the type of hull that can be built and its price. All components added to the hull that are not normally available to that shipyard cost twice their normal price. Smutts Dischargers may only be installed in steam ships.

DORSAL GUN MOUNTS

A dorsal gun mount is suspended from the keel of the ship. A ship may have dorsal gun mounts which fire into the same firing aspects as normal gun mounts or may have a single dorsal gun mount which fire into all firing aspects. Dorsal gun mounts are subject to the same limitations on fire as a normal gun mount. They may never fire at targets at a higher altitude and may only fire at targets at the same altitude at close range.

The gun costs and weighs 20 percent more than normal. If armored, it must be armored as a rotating mount and adds 10 percent to its normal gun weight for each armor level installed.

DEADFALL BOMBS

Deadfall bombs are carried in racks and dropped on land targets below the vessel. They are dropped during movement in the same manner as Martian liquid fire; roll one die per rack and subtract the difference in altitude between the ship and its target, the result being the number of bomb hits scored. Each bomb hit has a penetration of 1 and a damage value of 2. Bombs may only be dropped on large ground targets.

Each rack of deadfall bombs has no significant weight but costs £50. No more than one rack may be installed per hull size. Each load weighs five tons and costs £10. A ship may carry more loads of bombs than bomb racks, and four deckhands may reload empty racks from extra loads carried in five turns. (Add one turn to the reload time for each missing crewman.)

ADDITIONAL VARIANTS

The design system is clean and streamlined, and I think that it's important to keep it that way. However, a few variants never hurt, so feel free to add your own quirks to the system. The one note of caution I offer is to avoid piling so many or so profound variants onto the system that it isn't the same game any more. If you look at the variants presented here, none of them make existing ships worthless or change the basic nature of ship construction; they just add one or two handy items to the existing game. Likewise, adding a light-weight quick-firing 6-inch gun to the ordnance list would clearly violate the spirit of things.

CONCLUSION

One of the real joys of games like *Sky Galleons of Mars* is in building your own ships and matching them against the designs that other people turn in. I hope that the few hints we've discussed will help you avoid some of the bigger pitfalls in the system, and that the variants add a little more spice to the game for you.

—Frank Chadwick

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Ironclads and Ether Flyers

Now that **Sky Galleons of Mars (SGOM)** for short) has been out for several months, a number of people have been asking about the second game, **Ironclads And Ether Flyers (IAEF)**. What I'd like to do here is tell you a little bit about the game and how I designed the system which both of these games use.

Having said that, I suppose I've answered the most common question, "Are the two games compatible?" Yes. Both games use exactly the same ground scale, time scale, and game system. Gunboats and cloud ships from **SGOM** are usable in **IAEF** and vice versa. If you'd like, you can play with an ironclad gunboat on the canals of Mars being attacked by Martian screw galleys and kites, as easily as you can use a *Reliant*-class gunboat to attack the Imperial German ironclad battleship *Thuringen*.

The thing that made it very easy to make the two games compatible was that the original research for **SGOM** consisted mostly of research into actual naval vessels of the last quarter of the 19th century, and all of the equipment, particularly weapons, that are used on the aerial gunboats in that game are based upon the actual ordnance available. Since aerial gunboats are all fairly recent in construction, only the most modern weapons were covered, and **IAEF** will add the older muzzle-loading rifled guns

that some of the older naval vessels still mounted. But the basic range of modern naval guns presented in **SGOM** is grounded in the actual guns in use.

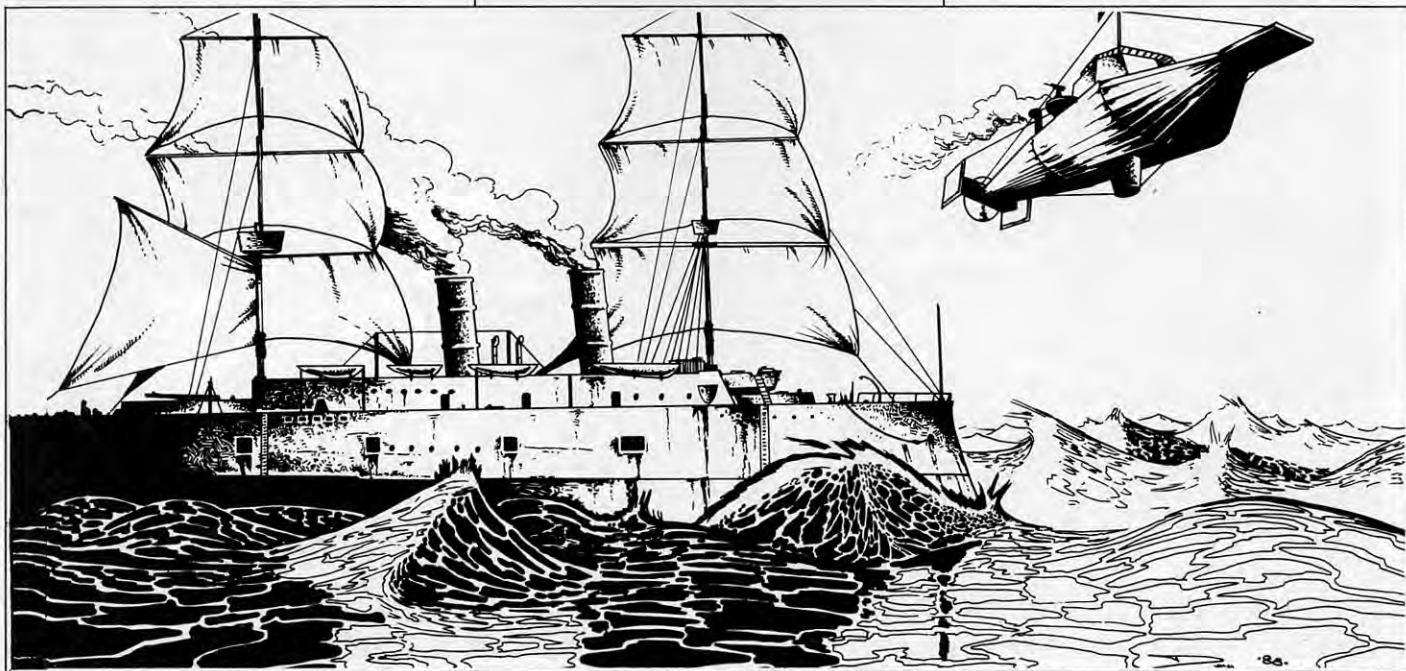
The other major component in ship design was also taken from the actual technology of the day: steam engines. The basic means of power in warships at that time was the coal-fired steam engine, as presented in **SGOM**. Railroads were also enjoying their heyday, and locomotives were powered by a more compact and powerful version of the conventional steam boiler, called the *forced draught boiler*, which enjoyed roughly the same fuel efficiency as conventional boilers, but was more compact. In the mid-1880s the Thornycroft shipyards began building high-speed torpedo boats which used what were essentially railroad locomotive boilers for power plants, and achieved impressive horsepower-to-weight ratios. By 1888, Thornycroft forced draught boilers were achieving one horsepower for every 58 pounds of weight of machinery, boilers, and water in the boilers, while earlier conventional boilers required as much as 480 pounds per horsepower. Most naval boilers were more efficient than this, and the efficiency advantage of forced draught declined as the boiler size increased above that used for locomotives. Nevertheless, most naval

vessels being built by the end of the decade were incorporating some means of forced draught and were almost universally achieving one horsepower for every 100 to 200 pounds of boilers and machinery, an amazing improvement over vessels built 10 years earlier.

Not all of this improvement was due to the adoption of forced draught boilers, as engine technology improved greatly in this period as well. From the early 1870s to 1881 there had been little change in the character of marine engines, virtually all of which were compound two-cylinder vertical engines; but by 1887 almost all new construction used the triple expansion engine. This new engine design doubled the mean working pressure of the engine (from about 75 pounds to about 150 pounds) and achieved some fuel efficiencies as well.

Because **SGOM** deals exclusively with small engines, we have adopted a constant efficiency for machinery, regardless of size, and given builders the option of forced draught or conventional boilers; all engines are assumed to be of the modern triple expansion variety. **IAEF** will elaborate on this a little, particularly when it comes to larger boilers, but will retain the same basic simplicity of the design system.

A change of greater impact in the long run, although it had little effect on naval



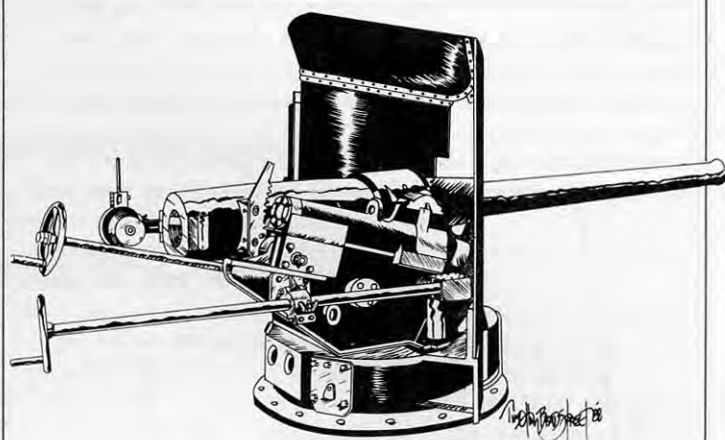
design at the time, was the adoption of "petroleum refuse" as a fuel in place of coal. Petroleum refuse was the waste by-product of crude oil after the paraffin and kerosene had been extracted, and it was coming into widespread use in areas where there were active oilfields. A Mr. Urquhart, writing in *Engineering* on June 25, 1886, described the Grazi-Tsaritsur Railway in Southern Russia: "There are now 143 locomotives running on petroleum on this line, in fact no other fuel is used for locomotive purposes, while 25 stationary boilers are fitted with the same arrangement, and give excellent results."

The enthusiasm for petroleum is easy to understand; it has an energy value about one-third greater than coal per weight, and thus use of petroleum either increases range or decreases fuel weight to accomplish the same task. The disadvantages from a military perspective were its very limited availability; you can't really have a world-wide naval commitment serviced by ships whose fuel is available only in a few places. Likewise, this type of engine is not covered at all in *SGOM*, since there are no significant petroleum deposits left on Mars (although there is still coal). We will include rules for petroleum-fired boilers in *IAEF*, however.

While the actual technological achievements of this decade were impressive, much of the interest in *Space: 1889* comes from the interaction of steam-age technology with space-age travel. In the *Space: 1889* universe, the most dramatic influence on naval architecture in the 1880s was the increasing appearance of aerial gunboats. As liftwood was still quite rare, there were never enough aerial vessels available to completely supplant nautical warships, but their presence exerted a profound influence on warship design.

One transitory design feature in the actual 1880s which will never catch hold in the *Space: 1889* universe is the barbette gun. Barbette guns were mounted in large open-topped armored barbettes which provided cover for the crew from small arms fire and some protection against flat-trajectory fire. There was no protection from overhead fire, but long-range gunnery was so difficult anyway that there was little danger from being hit by this sort of plunging fire. Furthermore, the weight savings over an armored turret were considerable. However, with the appearance of aerial gunboats, and their ability to deliver fire from overhead fairly easily, the barbette gun was abandoned before it ever really caught on.

A second departure from actual designs of the era is the mounting of high-angle guns, usually rapid fire guns of the Hotchkiss variety, but sometimes guns as large as 4-inch caliber. Many of these guns were historically adopted for close defense against small, agile torpedo boats, but proved equally effective as the earliest anti-aircraft weapons. Just coming into use at this time (but not yet available at the Martian shipyards, and hence not included in *SGOM*) is the Maxim-Nordenfelt 1-Pounder Pom Pom, a considerable improvement over the Hotchkiss gun of the same caliber. Statistics for this weapon will be included in the combat charts and

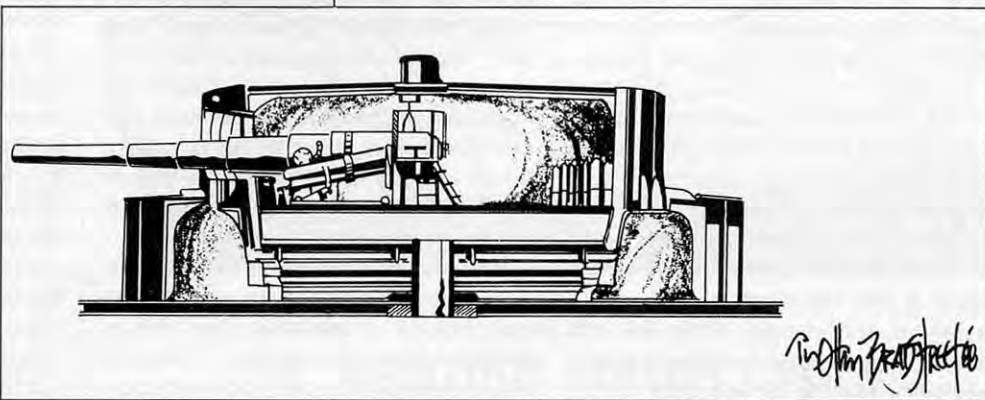


the design sequence for *IAEF*, and I'm sure that most local groups will adopt a house variant allowing their local Red Captains to send off for a mail order version, suitable for mounting in their own ships.

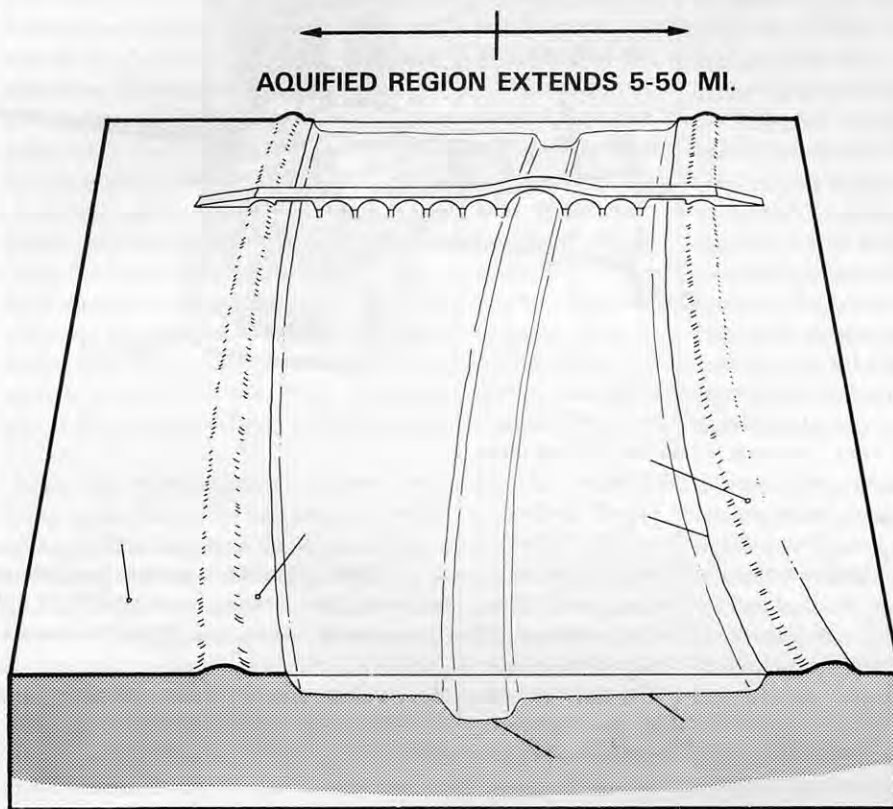
So far I've talked mostly about the differences in the design system, but I think that it's reasonable to close this article with a brief comment about the thing that provides the greatest difference between *IAEF* and *SGOM*: Naval vessels are BIG! Consider, for example, the HMS *Edinburgh*, a turreted battleship launched in 1886, which by the time of the game was neither the largest nor the most modern ship in the Royal Navy. Its displacement was more than 9000 tons. It mounted four 12-inch rifled breech-loading guns in its main turrets, five 6-inch rifled breech-loaders as secondaries, seven Hotchkiss guns, and 15 Nordenfelts. And its machinery, which alone cost more than £85,000, developed 7520 horse power and enabled it to make slightly more than 15 knots. The *Edinburgh* had more than 20 inches of armor plate on its most heavily protected sections. As for the total *Edinburgh* price tag: The cost is more than £640,000.

Try taking it on with the *Hamburg*!

—Frank Chadwick



The Canals of Mars



MARTIAN CANAL NOMENCLATURE

The most obvious characteristic of Mars is its network of canals. Seen from space, even from Earth, the canals draw a gridwork of lines on the face of the red planet. Their function is essential to the survival of civilization on Mars.

The Martian Water Cycle: Mars is a dry planet. Its seas dried up millions of years ago, and nearly all of its water is locked up in the iron oxides of its rust-red deserts. What little water that remains is frozen into the glistening white icecaps at its poles.

On Earth, water in the oceans evaporates in the heat of the sun, rises as water vapor into the air, and moves over the land. Eventually, changes in humidity and temperature force the water vapor to condense and fall as rain or snow. When it hits the land surface, some soaks into the ground, while the rest runs off into streams, creeks, and rivers, eventually making its way back to the oceans.

On Mars there are no seas, and the water cycle is reversed. Water is frozen into the Martian icecaps. In Martian summer, the icecap melts and the liquid water runs off to flood lakebeds or to fill the long Martian canals. Some of the water flows great distances in these canals, but virtually all of it eventually soaks into the ground to support agriculture. Eventually, it evaporates into the atmosphere as water vapor, and wind currents carry it around Mars. Only near the poles, however, is humidity high enough and the temperature low enough for the water to fall as rain or (more usually) snow. When the rain or snow does fall, it becomes trapped in the icecap until the next summer thaw.

The water cycle controls life on Mars. A desert is defined as a place where annual rainfall is less than five inches. Under this definition, virtually everywhere on Mars, except the icecaps, is a desert. Life is adapted to a desert en-

vironment and to sparse inhabitation levels. The canals are the Martian solution to unending desert.

When Martian civilization arose some 35,000 years ago, a temporary climatic spasm had melted large parts of the icecaps and flooded ancient, long-dry seabeds. On the shores of those newly refilled seas the great civilizations rose and flourished. Ten thousand years later, as the climate again shifted and the seas started to recede, the Martian civilizations struggled to reverse the flow. When that failed, they dedicated their energies to building canals which would carry the melted icecap waters to all parts of their globe. It is these canals which today mark the surface of Mars.

TYPES OF CANALS

Three types of canals are encountered on Mars: the Grand Canals, the Petty Canals, and the Dead Canals. Each has its own role in the master scheme of canals and irrigation on Mars.

Grand Canals: The major Martian canals are the Grand (from the French: big) Canals. The typical Grand Canal is approximately a mile wide and 100 feet deep. In cities, the banks themselves are paved promenades serving as plazas, markets, and bazaars; in the countryside, massive earthen levees help to contain flooding when the first rush of floodwaters comes in summer.

Water seeping through the bottom and sides of the Grand Canal creates an underground water table (an aquifer) which supports agriculture, forests, and animal life for miles on each side of the Grand Canal. In the ancient (and now dry) Martian seabeds, this aquifer may reach as far as 50 miles on each side of the canal; in the Martian landforms (what were once the dry land continents), the aquifer reaches less than five miles out on each side. The flourishing strips of land which are located on each side of the canal (whether in ancient, dry seabed or ancient continent) are called the Banks: They contain the croplands, the orchards, and the pastures of Mars. All Martian agriculture is dependent upon these Banks.

Petty Canals: Branching off the Grand Canals are the Petty (from the French: *petit*, meaning small) Canals. These small

watercourses lead off from the Grand Canals and extend to the limits of the Grand Canal aquifer. They serve two purposes: irrigation and transportation.

Petty Canals carry water to the edges of the Grand Canal aquifer and help to drain excess ground water back into the Grand Canal. Their primary purpose, however, is transportation: Barges venture off the Grand Canals to small farming communities to provide passenger, cargo, and mail service.

Dead Canals: Once upon a time, all of the canals were vital, essential parts of the globe-encircling Martian canal network. Over time, however, some of the canals have fallen into disuse or disrepair; eventually they have died. These Dead Canals have been filled with blowing desert sand and have become unnavigable.

Dead Canals, even though they are no longer passable for ships and barges, remain channels for water flow. Beneath the sand-filled surface, water still runs in deep channels and still creates an aquifer which (when compared to the desert around it) supports green plants and some animal life.

The Dead Canals are the highways of the Martian deserts. No longer carrying open water, their underground channels still support surface vegetation, and occasionally provide a well or spring with cool, fresh water.

NOMENCLATURE

In order to better understand the function and construction of the canals, it is important to know the terms used in describing them. A canal consists of a channel which lies between two banks. Along the bottom of the channel is a deeper section called the low flow channel which carries boats, even when the canal is nearly dry. Beyond each bank and paralleling it is a long mound of gravel and soil called the levee. The stretch of land between the canal bank and the levee is the promenade which functions as a road and a shore. Beyond the levee, the aquified swath stretches from five to 50 miles to each side of the canal.

The typical canal components are shown in the accompanying diagram.

CANAL CONSTRUCTION

The ancient Martians built with strength and cleverness. They intended their handiwork to last for millennia, and it has.

†Sir Basil Throckmorton of the Royal Society has calculated that a single double-turreted ironclad ship, suspended by lift-wood floaters, could blast one mile of channel (one square mile of a hole 30 feet deep) only by firing 250,000 one-ton projectiles at the rate of one per minute over the course of half a year. Since such an effort would take a fleet of a thousand such ships a thousand years to blast the 60,000 miles of Martian Grand Canals, and the industry required to produce the projectiles would outshine all of Earth's industrial might, the project was clearly impossible.

Professor John Smyth of Oxford has pointed out that "impossible" is clearly not the word since the canals do indeed exist.

Canal Channels: The ancient Martians were masters of technology. They harnessed forces that defy the imagination to blast or burn the mile-wide Grand Canals through the deserts and the dry seabeds of Mars.†

The Grand Canals are broad, straight channels built primarily to carry water from the poles to other regions of Mars. Since they also support water transportation, it is reasonable that they are also adapted to the many boats which travel their length.

Each Grand Canal has three possible water levels: Flood, Flow, and Low Flow; the names correspond to the Martian seasons of the same (translated) names.

- **Flood** is the short season in which polar meltwater rushes down the canal. It begins with the first swell of meltwater and lasts until the water level has again receded below the level of the canal promenades. Flood marks the beginning of the growing season, and is roughly equivalent to spring.

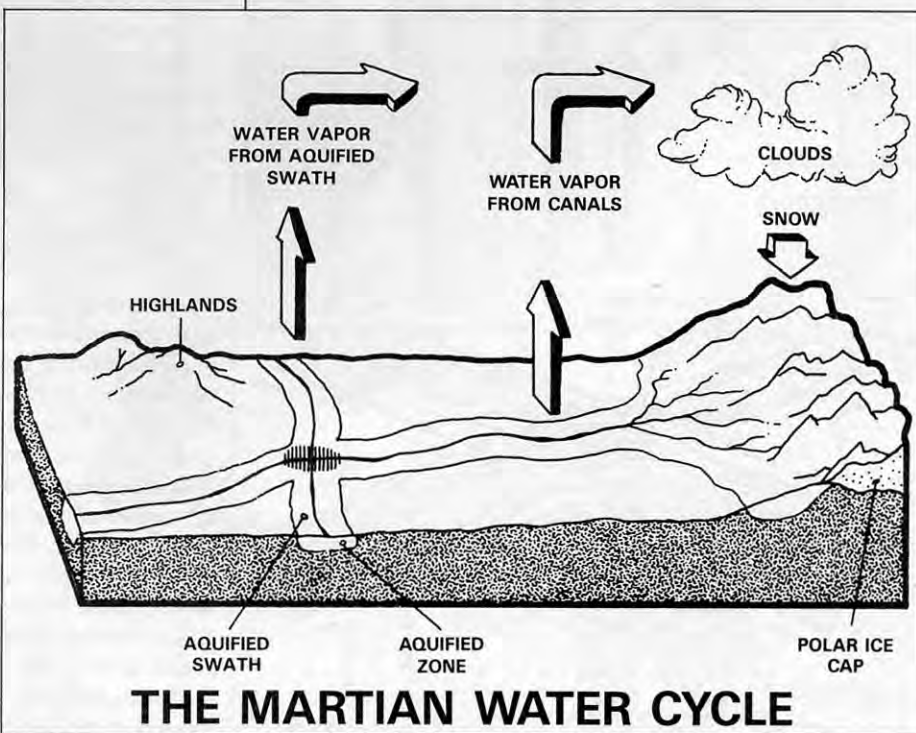
Flood fills the dry canals with meltwater from the polar icecaps. Especially in regions closer to the poles, this rush of water severely overburdens the capacity of the canal, often reaching to the tops of the levees and overflowing to the croplands beyond.

- **Flow** is the long typical season on Mars. Water fills the Grand Canals to within a few feet of each Bank. Navigation is easy and unimpeded; the locks connecting the Petty Canals to the Grand Canals are left open. Flow continues through most of the year and is equivalent to summer and fall.

Flow is the normal water level. Water reaches within two or three feet of each Bank.

- **Low Flow** is the dry season on Mars. The icecap providing meltwater has almost completely melted and can provide no more water for the canals. The Low Flow Channel in the Grand Canal remains wet, but in some areas or at some times may be completely dry.

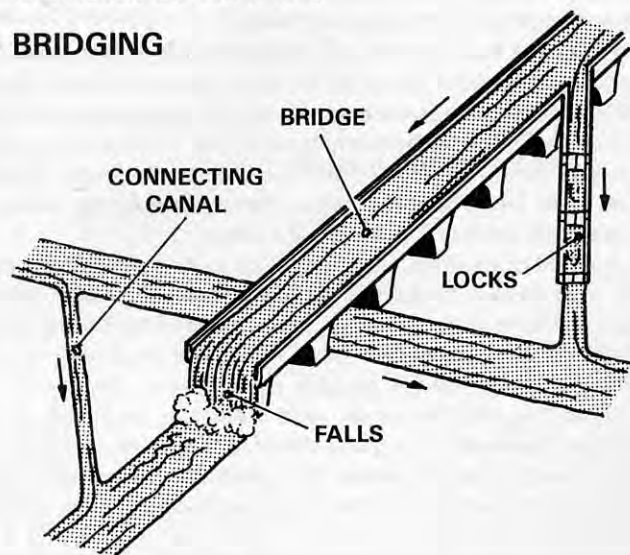
Low Flow is the typical water level in the dry season (late winter just before the spring icecap melt); water in the Grand



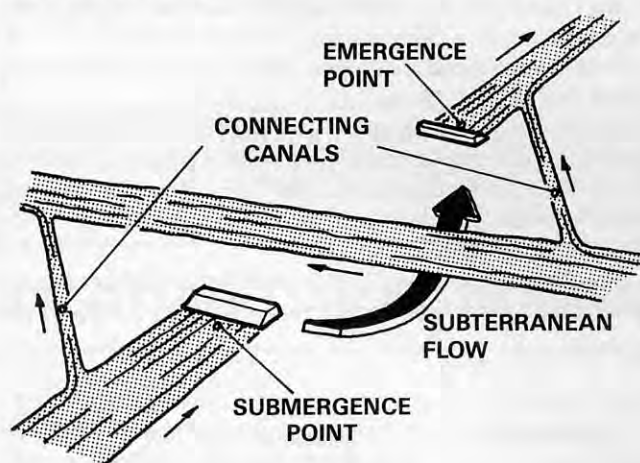
CROSSOVERS

(Arrows indicate direction of flow)

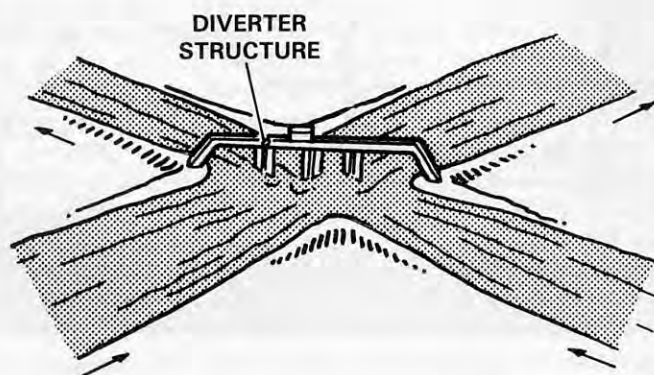
• BRIDGING



• OVER/UNDER



• MEETING



RWC

Canal is reduced to a mere trickle. Cut into the bottom of the Grand Canal is a Low Flow channel measuring perhaps 50 to 100 yards wide and 30 feet deep, clearly sufficient for almost any canal boat or barge. The Low Flow channel snakes its way along the bottom of the Grand Canal, first touching one bank, then angling over to touch the opposite bank some two or three miles downstream. This wandering of the Low Flow channel actually serves a useful purpose, reducing the distance merchants must move their goods across the dry canal bottom before they can reach a bank.

• **Surge** is a uniquely Martian season which takes place at some time during Low Flow. As the Low Flow season progresses in one Martian hemisphere, the Flood and Flow seasons are taking place in the opposite hemisphere. Some of the water flow from the opposite hemisphere makes its way, eventually, to some of the canals on the other side of the world. The surge of water that makes its way to the other hemisphere, where it does, produces a temporary replenishment of water in the canal beds.

Banks: The banks of the canals slope steeply up from the bottom, usually at an angle of 70 degrees or more. Cut into these steep banks, however, is a constant series of accesses. Staircases allow an easy descent to the current water level, or to the dry canal bottom when only the Low Flow channel is full. Docks (usually paired with the staircases) let boats pull in, out of the current. Broad, shallow-sloped ramps cut through the banks to allow the launching and beaching of barges.

Promenades: The flat edges of the canals are called promenades; in rural areas, the promenade is nothing more than a flat sandy edge to the canal. In cities and settled areas, some promenades serve as markets (holding permanent shops and storefronts) or bazaars (for temporary merchant sites). Other promenades are broad plazas or parks adding to the beauty of the Grand Canals as they pass through the city-state.

Levees: Rising above the banks of the Grand Canals are broad levees intended to contain the floodwaters of Martian spring. In the countryside, these levees are little more than mounds of gravel and clay. In Martian city-states, they are more solidly and carefully built. In their shadow, the banks of the canals become promenades used for markets, bazaars, and gatherings. On and behind the levees, the city-state's buildings rise in splendor.

Crossings: Innumerable bridges cross the canals of Mars. A few basic bridging principles are used to produce a great many different bridges that cross the broad Grand Canals. Almost all consist of a long causeway from each bank, meeting in a span that crosses the canal at the Low Flow channel. In order to accommodate barge superstructures and masts, the bridge either arches high enough to produce a 40-foot clearance above the normal flow waterline, or is constructed on a drawbridge or turnstile system.

Straits: Although the typical canal is about a mile across, there are places where this width must be reduced to 500, 300, or even 100 yards. The canal builders, in order to maintain the same water flow, were forced to dig the channels deeper at these points. These straits are often encountered as a canal passes through a rock escarpment, through a city, or when two canals draw close together.

The city-state of Oenotria (in southwestern Syrtis Major) is located at the junction of six Grand Canals. For most of the

year, the placid waters of the narrow canals give no clue to their depth. In winter and early spring, however, as their flow dries up, the city is transformed into a series of islands separated by canyons some 70 to 90 yards deep...the dry channels of the Grand Canals.

Locks: Locks help to contain the water at proper levels in the canals in spite of steep grades and slopes. Locks are placed at strategic locations along the Grand Canals and at the points where Petty Canals touch the Grand Canals.

The lock connections between the Grand and Petty Canals are especially important to transportation on Mars. The water level in a Grand Canal varies with the season. At the lowest Grand Canal water level, a Petty Canal would soon be drained of its water. The lock connection protects the water in the Petty Canal and still allows a barge or boat to return to the Grand Canal.

Cataracts: Water flow down over relatively great heights is, in many parts of the Martian canal network, left to gravity. The broad flow reaches an edge, and simply drops the necessary distance before resuming the course of the canal.

Originally, deliberate cataracts were constructed with large pools above and below the falls, and a reinforced lip for the cataract edge itself. Time and the force of tons of water has generally eroded the lip, forcing back the cataract edge in an uneven pattern. Debris below the falls makes the lower pool dangerously shallow and filled with treacherous rock fragments; erosion above the falls fills the upper pool with swift, shifting currents.

Keeping transportation in mind, the canal builders constructed bypasses around the cataracts. Small canals and a series of stepped locks were a common method of providing boat channels, but other popular methods included crane points and slipways.

Aqueducts: In some locations, one canal moves down the center of a valley while another canal must cross the valley at a right angle. In such situations, the canal builders produced massive aqueducts which bridged the valley and carried the canal across the gap while allowing the other canal to pass below.

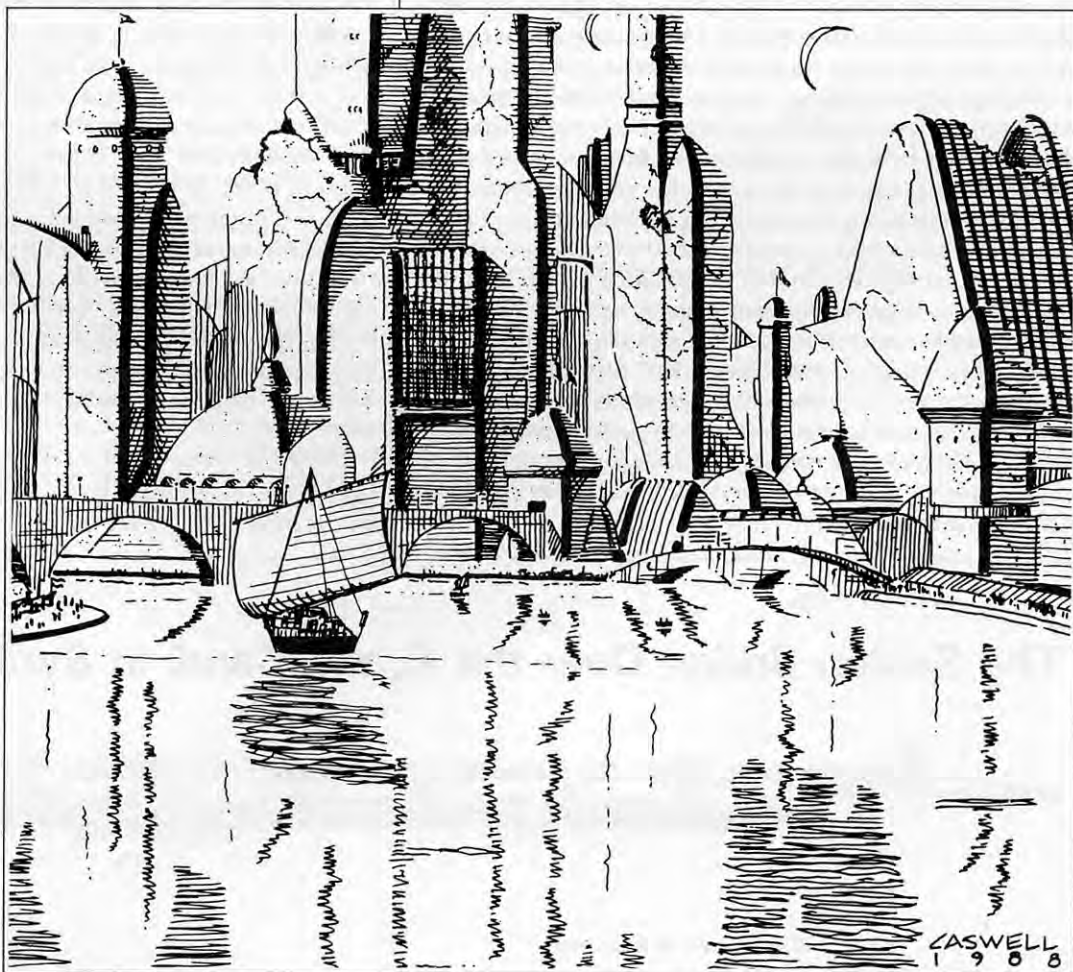
Probably the most spectacular of Martian aqueducts is the Lycus Valley Aqueduct in Arcadia. The Dead Canal

from Euxinus Lacus to Ascreaus Lacus flows through the Lycus Valley; at the same time, the Dead Canal from the icecap to Olympica crosses the valley at a right angle. To avoid creating an immense pumping station, and to avoid mingling the flows of the two canals, an immense aqueduct was built, stretching more than 40 miles, at times more than 1500 feet above the valley floor. The upper surface of the aqueduct is a dry channel more than 400 yards wide, once full of life-giving water, now only occasionally used as a caravan route through the desert Martian wastes.

Cascade Pools: When water flows down hill, it accelerates. The farther it flows, the faster its speed. There are sections of Martian canal where a long stretch of downhill slope would make the water flow unreasonably fast. In order to correct this, the slope is broken with a series of cascade pools: broad, flat pools that allow the water flow to be slowed to nothing before it enters the next section of sloped canal.

Crane Points: At certain points along the course of the canals, the designers found that boats and barges had to be transferred from one canal to another quickly and efficiently, and that for any number of reasons the normal system using locks would not work. In those situations, one of the options available was the crane rigged to physically lift the boat or barge out of one canal and into another.

The simplest crane system moves the boat in one swing. Cranes are often employed at cataracts to lift or lower the boats the several hundred feet required.



More complete crane systems employ several (as many as 10) cranes installed in a series; each in its turn lifts the boat and swings it closer to its destination. One such system in the Belgian Coprates shifts boats through eight pools cut into the sheer cliffs at the edge of the Ophir range. Each crane swings across a diameter of 220 yards and lifts a boat more than 500 feet. A boat travelling through this crane point travels more than a mile horizontally and about 4000 feet vertically.

Crossovers: When the flows of two canals meet, their waters may mingle or may be kept apart depending on which system best handles the needs for water. Crossovers allow most of the water in each canal to remain in that canal, while some surface water is exchanged in order to allow boats and barges to transfer from one canal to the other.

Slipways: Although water can drop vertically at a cataract, boats and barges need to move more gently. When the distance is not too great, gently sloped slipways are constructed to carry the vessels up or down.

Slipways may be either wet or dry. A dry slipway mounts the vessel on a roller chassis and drags it along a smooth stone-paved road from one point to another. A wet slipway allows a boat to float down a gently sloped channel, or to be pulled (by winches or beasts of burden) up the same channel.

Pumping Stations: Although the water of the canals generally flows under the force of gravity, there are many places where it must flow up and over mountain ranges or down into valleys and back out again. The canal builders constructed strategically placed pumping stations to force water up against the force of gravity. Many different methods were used, and some can still be seen along the banks of the Grand Canals.

One type of pumping station is powered by the volcanic heat which creates steam to drive water up a sheer rock shaft more than 2000 feet in height. Another uses massive carved stone water wheels at a branch in a canal; the majority of the canal water proceeds downhill, but its force is used to divert a fraction up and over a rock escarpment and out into a desert canal.

Other pumping stations are more difficult to fathom.

One simply draws water up a massive underground channel and spews it out in a fountain more than 10 miles away. Explorers have noted extreme magnetic disruptions in compasses in the region; animals in watertight barrels have safely traversed the length of the channel with no apparent ill effects. But no explanation is forthcoming for the mechanism that still moves massive amounts of water after 25,000 years of operation.

The Memnonia pumping station, now in disrepair, once forced masses of water up the Gorgonum Sinus and into the desert beyond. Under the collapsed roofs and beams of the station can still be seen the immense cylinders, pools, and rusting conduits that once carried water up the valley. Local legends say that the ruins are haunted by the ghosts of workers who died trying to keep the station operating even as parts continually broke and could not be replaced or repaired. When the station finally and permanently failed, it doomed the Grand Canal to Arsia Silva and Nodus Gordii to death and burial under the shifting sands of the desert.

The Aeolis pumping station, once filling canals that served Zephyria and Trivium Charontis, employed massive turbine pumps to force water up the mountain slopes. Their mysterious power source (which emits a deadly gas inside an immense chamber) has weakened over the millennia to the point that the turbines now turn only slowly, and without the force needed to move water up the long conduits leading over the mountains.

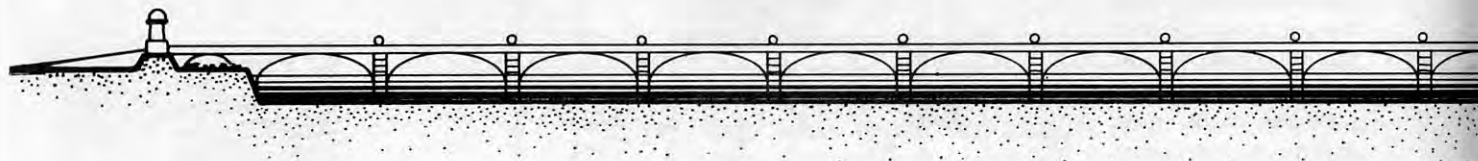
Other stations present equally mysterious mechanisms which no longer work: crumbled towers that once stood three miles in height; sealed tombs filled with corrosive liquids; pumps using long slender threads on mounts and pulleys; equipment that obviously used electric current, or magnetic current, or even etheric current, but in mysterious ways that cannot yet be understood.

Settling Pools: At regular intervals along every Grand Canal the banks of the main channel widen and the bottom deepens, creating a large settling pool. The bottom configuration is deliberately constructed to produce currents and eddies that will deposit debris, sand, and silt in the deeper areas where it will not obstruct the main channel.

Because the Low Flow season produces dry canal beds, the bottoms of the settling pools are exposed at least once every year. At these times, scavengers clear the dirt and debris from the pool floors as they search for salvage, precious metals that collect in the silt, and even food plants that grow in the lingering moisture of the soil. Conscientious city-states send out work-crews to clear the settling pools during Low Flow, aware that after several seasons of no maintenance, the settling pools will start to clog the main channel and eventually ruin the canal itself.

Cities: The cities of Mars are almost universally located on the canals. Canals provide trade and commerce, income, life-giving water, and political power.

The Seldon Bridge Over the Grand Canal in Syrtis Major



Water shown at flow level

Cities are classified by their relationship to canals. The number of canals that enter and leave a city provide a rough indication of its political and commercial power. A city with only two canal connections is obviously less important and less powerful than one at the junction of seven or eight canals.

Martian cities are more properly considered city-states. A city controls its own built-up area and the aquified banks of the canals leading to it. Its control ends at the edges of the aquified areas, and about halfway down the canal to the next city-state. A lot of battles have been fought over the centuries to establish just how far "halfway down the canal" really is.

Aberrations: Centuries of use, misuse, disuse, and abuse have taken their toll on the canals of Mars. When pumping stations broke down and could not be repaired, vast stretches of canal were doomed to a sandy death. In some areas, levee repairs were neglected; eventually, the canals spilled over their banks to create vast impassable swamps or broad marshes. When conflicts between city-states halted transportation and commerce down specific canals, maintenance and upkeep was also halted; channels silted up and banks crumbled down.

After thousands of years, many sections of the canal network no longer have the finish and quality they once had. Crumbled walls have been replaced with inferior brickwork. Levees have been washed away and never replaced. New bridges have been built, and their supports obstruct water flow in unpredictable ways. And sometimes the technology has simply not existed to replace or repair the 1000-year-old canals.[†]

[†]The French science-fiction writer Jules Verne visited several of the Martian canals in the spring of 1886 and has proposed his own version of how the canals were constructed.

"The grand canal blasters of the Martians best resembled a broad-beamed cargo ship suspended from a truss constructed of the Martian liftwood material. Strong cantilever girders above the hull suspend a large solar reflector which channels the rays of the sun into an orifice. That orifice, in turn, directs the solar light into an internal network of lenses and out the bottom of the hull, where it is directed toward the channel to be dug.

"The modified and intensified solar rays heat the Martian soil into a kind of lava, part of which then boils away, while the remainder forms a strong, foamed volcanic glass lining for the water course. As this lining cools, it fractures into a sponge-like material that allows some of the water to drain into the local water table.

"An examination of the Grand Canal through French Boreo Syrtis and of a section of the dry canal bed exposed by a winter sandstorm confirmed that the canal lining is a foamed volcanic glass. Decorative carvings in the lintels of the ruined temple at Cydonia picture just such an aerial vessel as I describe here as well."

STANDARD BOATS AND BARGES

Virtually all of the facilities of the Martian canals are built to handle boats and barges of certain standard sizes. Vessels which exceed the standard dimensions cannot pass through the lock, cannot be picked up by the cranes at crane points, and cannot pass beneath many bridges.

The maximum width for a canal boat is 55 feet; the maximum length is 220 feet. Maximum draft is theoretically 25 feet during Flow; in practice, most vessels are built with a flat-bottomed draft of 15 feet or less. When a vessel mounts masts (for sails), they must be collapsible since about one bridge in 10 is fixed and has a clearance of about 40 feet.

Martian canal vessels come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Typically, vessels are divided into boats (passenger carriers, utility and patrol craft) and barges (flat-bottomed freight carriers).

Boats: Boats serve a variety of functions on the Martian canals. Their configuration depends upon that specific function. Boats have some form of propulsion. Merchant ships have sails because they are cheap and easy to use; military ships may have oars and rowers, or they may use some contrivance to transfer oarsmen's efforts to paddlewheels or underwater screws. Private ships often depend on a combination of sail and muscle power for propulsion.

Steam power is relatively rare: The expense of coal or wood is simply too great to be able to justify installation in watercraft.

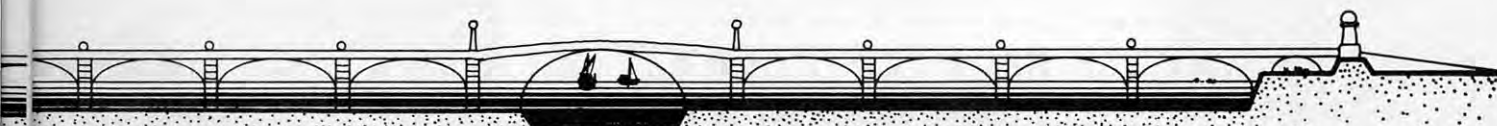
Barges: A barge is a flat-bottomed freight boat. Built without a propulsion system other than a sail rig, barges carry cargos up and down the canals. Where possible, barges are simply left to drift with the current; where necessary the sail rig is raised to move against a current or to shift position within the main channel. On the Petty Canals, as well as on some stretches of the Grand Canals, barges are towed by beasts of burden.

THE HANDIWORK OF THE CANAL BUILDERS

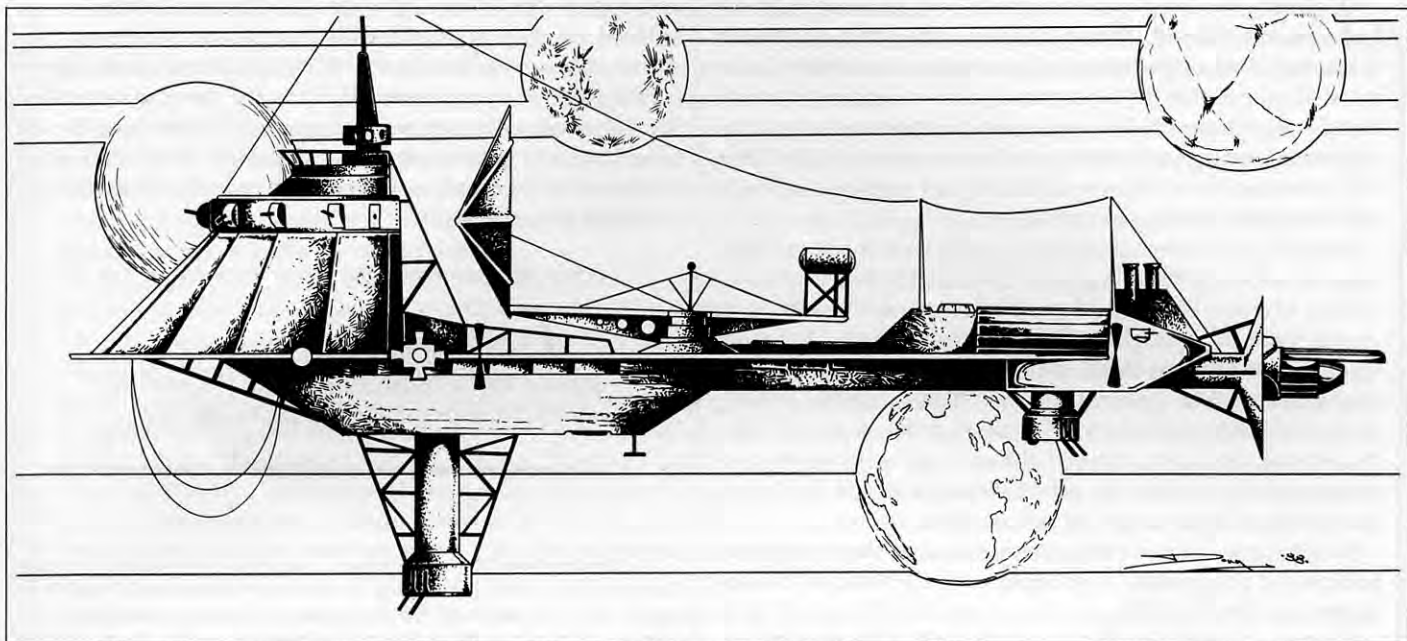
The canals of Mars are the greatest civil engineering project ever undertaken. No construction on Earth can even rival the canals' grandeur; no Earth construction project is visible from space the way the Martian canal network is. It is a testimony to the survival instinct of the Martians that they could undertake and complete their canal network; without it, Mars would today be a dead planet.

—Marc W. Miller

Scale in yards
0 50 100



The Ether



Ether is the substance that fills all space, including the volume also filled by ordinary matter. Ether is the medium through which a variety of forces are transmitted through space.

A vacuum insulates against heat or cold because there is no way for them to jump across the intervening space. Light and gravity can be felt despite the presence of a vacuum precisely because the Ether is present (and can transmit those energies even in a vacuum).

Without the Ether, gravity would be unable to maintain the mutual attraction of bodies at a distance, and the entire solar system would fly apart. Without the Ether, light could not travel through space, and we would not be able to see the stars.

THE HISTORY OF THE ETHER THEORY

Until about 1600, physical scientists' understanding of the world was rudimentary and clouded. They thought of light as small particles of energy spewed forth from a flame or a star; they had no conception of gravity at all. A few ancient philosophers wrote of an intangible substance that propeled the planets in their orbits and created the domes of the heavens, and even used the term Ether to describe that substance. But for the most part, the sophistication of science had not reached a point where experimenters could understand and experiment for accurate results.

Descartes' First Insights into the Ether:

In 1638, Rene Descartes proposed the idea of one all-pervasive Ether. He reasoned that light was not a particle, but a pressure or a wave that passed outward from a source. The sun shines on the earth, and for that warmth and light to pass from the sun to the earth, it must have a medium (the Ether) through which it is transmitted instantaneously. We see the sun in its brilliance because the energy of the sun presses so heavily upon the eye of the viewer.

In 1675, observations of the eclipses of Jupiter's moons demonstrated that light did not have an instantaneous velocity. Robert Hooke wrote in 1667 that if light was a vibrating motion of the Ether, rather than a direct pressure, it was possible to explain color as different rates of vibration. Although both of these comments refined Descartes' theory, it remained fundamentally sound.

Sir Isaac Newton (1672) addressed the entire Ether Theory and considered several alternative explanations, but was unconvinced by any of them. Among other things, he theorized that light consisted of particles which travelled through the Ether. His famous Inverse Square Law was phrased to explain some effects of the Ether, and his investigations into gravity produced the invention of calculus. While Newton himself never published a definitive study on gravity and the Ether, many of Newton's

followers were convinced that gravity, like light, was transmitted by the Ether.

The 18th Century: Intensive philosophical investigations into the nature of light and the Ether produced several detours on the road to truth. Thomas Melvill hypothesized that colors were determined by the velocity of light particles. When observations showed that the satellites of Jupiter did not change color as they wheeled in their orbits, the hypothesis was dropped.

Other experiments showed that the velocity of light appeared to be independent of its source. While this was understandable for wave phenomena, it is less comprehensible if light is composed of particles.

By the end of the 18th century, Newton's particle interpretation of light was disproven, and the understanding of light moving through the Ether as waves gained new ground.

The 19th Century: In 1800, Thomas Young explained light activity in terms of the wave theory of light, using thin soap bubble films. Colors on the thin films were related to the wave lengths of the light involved; the relationship proved that light had a wave length and thus had to be a wave phenomenon. By 1815, Augustin Fresnel described the mechanisms of light diffraction and interference using the wave theory of light. By 1816, Young and Fresnel had together produced an explanation of

light as a transverse wave in the Ether; it was the inevitable triumph of the wave theory of light over the ancient particle theory.

Originally, the Ether was thought to be a tenuous fluid, far less palpable than air. Young, however, knew that transverse waves required a rigidity that a fluid could not exhibit; he instead proposed that the Ether was a solid—a rigid solid which could transmit the transverse waves that were light, gravity, electricity, and magnetism. It soon became clear that the Ether was a remarkable substance unlike ordinary matter. It was rigid yet intangible; strong yet tenuous.

Theorists often concentrated on a single type of energy: light, magnetism, electricity, or gravity. Their writings did not make it clear whether they were hypothesizing one Ether for each energy type, or one grand Ether through which all energy flowed. In 1820, Hans Oersted discovered that an electric current could produce a magnetic field. In 1832, Faraday and Henry produced electricity from a changing magnetic force. The fact that electricity could produce light was rudimentary. The first steps were being taken to establish the facts about a single grand Ether which pervaded the universe.

In 1856, James Maxwell demonstrated that all electromagnetic and optical phenomena were explainable in terms of stresses in the one Ether.

Moreau's Etheric Investigations: In 1860, Etienne Moreau hypothesized that the Ether, like the matter and energy of the universe, was not evenly distributed. If it were instead affected by its interaction with matter, it might be distributed in vortices, thin patches, and even compacted clumps.

Moreau theorized that the interaction of matter, energy, and Ether indicated it was possible for each to be used to manipulate the other. Just as matter could be burned to release energy and energy expended to move matter, so could matter be used to grasp Ether and energy used to manipulate it.

THE PRACTICALITIES OF EXPLOITING THE ETHER

It fell to the practical science of Thomas Edison to explain and exploit the Ether. Enthralled by Moreau's theories, he entered into a collaboration with the man and undertook construction of a prototype device which could manipulate Ether.[†]

When his first prototype did not work, he communicated his dilemma to Moreau, who suggested that perhaps the atmosphere was interfering with the device. Tests with small models showed that it would operate properly at an altitude of 24,000 feet or higher.

***E**nthralled by Moreau's theories, he entered into a collaboration with the man and undertook construction of a prototype device...*

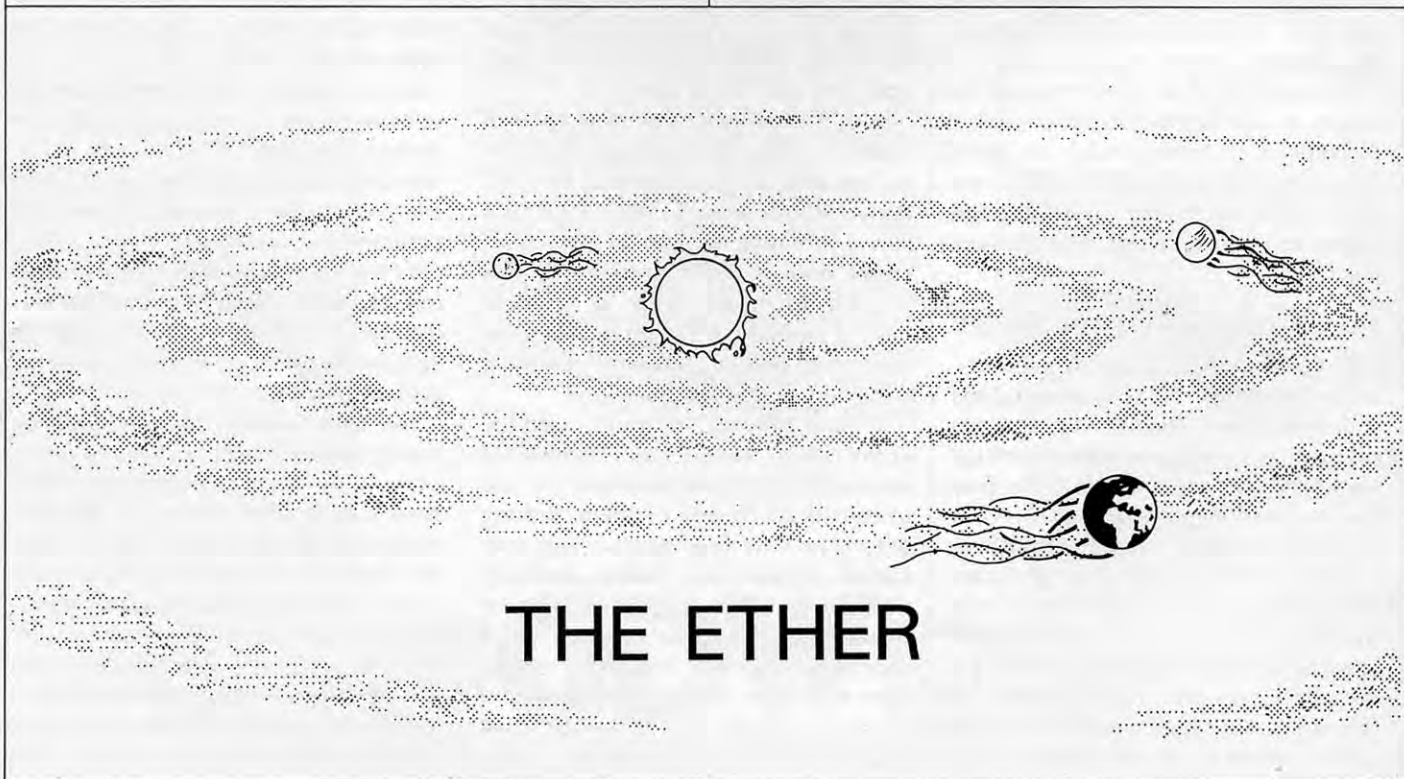
[†]In simple chemistry and physics, energy moves matter (through burning, exploding, expanding, or otherwise transmitting motion to matter as it is expended). Matter binds, then releases energy (for example, chemicals, coal, and wood hold energy within them, waiting to be released).

Edison created the "Movement Cycle" and "Release Cycle" diagrams explaining the influence of Ether on matter and energy.

Just as energy, by its existence, moves matter, so matter, by its existence, moves Ether, and Ether, by its existence, moves energy.

Similarly, just as matter, by its existence, binds and then releases energy, so energy, by its existence, binds and releases Ether, and Ether binds and releases matter.

Armed with this theoretical knowledge, Edison was able to create a prototype that could grasp the Ether and cling to it while propelling itself to great speeds.



THE ETHER

Edison's Movement Cycle explains the effects of matter, energy, and Ether on each other.

Energy induces movement in matter: Energy imposes heat and expansion which ultimately makes matter move. Much of technology is dedicated to channeling the movement which energy creates.

Matter induces movement in Ether: Its presence creates vortexes, stresses, and compactions which cause Ether to be unevenly distributed in the universe. The motions of the planets and the stars create the greatest disturbances in the Ether, but even small amounts of matter can contaminate its theoretical behavior.

Ether induces movement in energy: It was the investigation of how energy such as light moves through a vacuum which led to discovery of the Ether. Understanding the influence of Ether on energy helps to create an understanding of the universe.

Edison's Release Cycle explains the converse effects of matter, energy, and Ether on each other.

Matter (originally binds and then) releases energy: Chemistry and technology are dedicated to understanding how the process works in order to control energy.

Energy (originally binds and then) releases Ether: The basic forms of energy (electricity, magnetism, light, gravity) can be used to attach themselves to the Ether and to cling with great force until released.

Ether (originally binds and then) releases Matter.

It is the use of these cycles that allows the construction of an Ether Flyer. The Flyer itself is constructed of matter, and certain parts of it (magnetized structures, electric processors) bind and hold energy. The energy binds itself to the Ether. By rapidly turning the magnetic or electric structures on and off, the Ether can be grasped and released rapidly. If each point of grasp is advanced slightly, the net effect is a continual dragging of the material structure through the Ether.

Several different approaches have proven that construction of Ether Flyers is practical. One produces a spiral energy effect which propels the craft forward, much as a propeller moves a boat forward. The rotary approach electrifies immense metal wheels and sets them spinning; carefully placed electric contacts turn the energized regions on and off with precision and move the entire structure forward through the Ether.

An unusual application uses the Movement Cycle instead of the Release Cycle. A relatively small metal grid is pumped full of energy (magnetized, electrified, or even heated) and the Ether is allowed to act (move or press upon) the "sail." Such Ether-Clippers depend upon the local difference in speed between the Ether and the planets for their velocity; good pilots are essential for efficient courses and optimal speeds.

THE ETHERIC OCEAN

The theory and the reality of the Ether are as different as distilled water and oceans. Theorists worked to define what the Ether was and how it interacted with energy and matter; practical explorers discovered how to use it, manipulate it, and travel through it.

A simple analogy to help understand the Etheric ocean is to compare it with an earthly ocean. There are waves and turbulence in the Ether just as there are waves and turbulence in the ocean.

The Sun: The greatest disruption in the Ether is caused by the sun. As the largest concentration of matter in the solar system, the sun has the greatest effect on the Ether. This solar disruption would remain in the immediate neighborhood of the sun were it not for the solar rotation: As the sun spins on its axis, it forces its etheric disruption outward in an ever-widening spiral. Solar turbulence is relatively uncomplicated; it is only when this turbulence is further disturbed that it becomes a danger to explorers.

The Planets: As the planets move in their orbits around the sun, they cut across the lines of solar turbulence in the Ether. The result creates eddies and vortices invisible to the eye, but dangerous to any Etheric mechanism. In addition, the rotation of each planet itself creates additional disruptions to the Ether.

The planetary eddies and vortices follow in the wake of each planet and are carried outward with the solar turbulence.

Mercury has an influence on the Ether far greater than its matter would imply. The planet closely orbits the sun at high speed; its planetary disruptions are implanted in the Ether early and ride outward along with the solar turbulence. Moreover,

because Mercury orbits the sun once every three months, Mercuric turbulence spreads outward throughout the entire solar system on a constant, repeating basis.

The other planets contribute their own turbulence to the Ether. Each disturbance is carried outward along with the solar disruptions. Local storms are created as various planetary disturbances meet and build, and turbulence in the Ether becomes extremely complex.

Navigating Through The Ether: Etheric navigators must have both a general and a specific understanding of the Ether and its disturbances.

A general knowledge of the Ether tells the navigator what kind of disturbances to expect in which parts of the solar system. The navigator's tools are the orrery (a mechanical analogue of the solar system which shows specific planetary positions and relationships) and the astrolabe (which precisely measures star and planet positions). A properly trained navigator knows how to avoid the lee of planets (and the turbulence in their wake), can predict the convergence of planetary turbulences based upon a knowledge of their orbits, and understands the conditions that create vortices and eddies.

Navigators, however, also have a practical understanding of the Ether gained from long experience. They know that a certain kind of hull vibration signals the approach of a planet; another type of vibration warns of a nearby vortex or eddy; a particular feel to the Etheric mechanism indicates a region of tenuous Ether.

PRACTICAL ETHER OPERATIONS

Once Edison perfected the Ether Flyer prototype, mankind was ready to embark on this new type of ship and sail in the

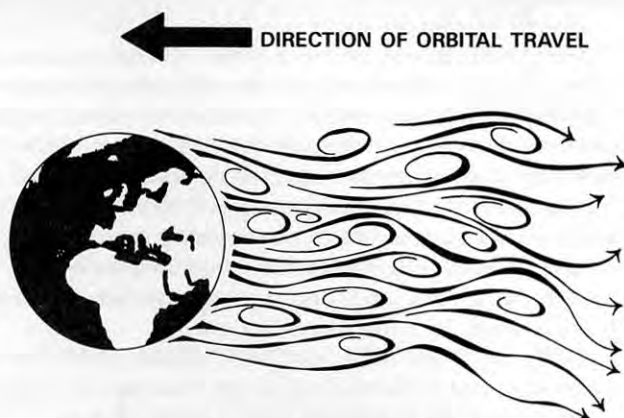
totally alien ocean of the Ether. Although the Ether has an analogue in the oceans of Earth, there are also profound differences.

The first explorations of space brought the full force of Victorian science to bear on unique problems heretofore never encountered in the history of Earth. They included:

- Computing planetary orbital positions.
- Sealing Ether Flyer hulls against vacuum.
- Protecting windows against meteor strikes.
- Providing a power source which could work without air.
- Developing methods of entering and leaving atmospheres.

The challenges that faced the ancient mariners were nothing compared to those which faced the Victorian astronauts. But they faced up to their challenges and met them squarely. Ether Flyers today range the entire solar system.

—Marc W. Miller



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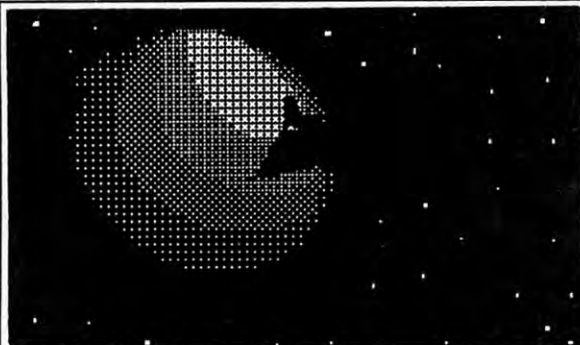


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A Smoking Flax

Sergeant Dender was not at all pleased. Half of his platoon was held up in the companionway, waiting while Private Montrose struggled to get his gear through the exit. Normally, the sergeant would have merely stayed where he was and shouted at Montrose until the boy got motivated enough to extricate himself, but today he had no time. The *Retaal* was on the horizon, and Dender's marines had to get into the launch quickly—the *Liege*, one of

Belgium's newest sky galleons, would catch up to the *Retaal* rapidly, and the marines had to be ready. To make matters worse, the lieutenant looked to be on the verge of intervening himself.

Dender hustled down the companionway. Marines flattened against the wall to give him room; none of them wanted to draw his attention to themselves. Montrose didn't see him coming. Jaw clenched to keep from exploding, the sergeant grabbed the stock of the private's slung rifle, pulled it back to disengage the bayonet from the doorjamb, planted a boot in the boy's posterior, and shoved him through into the launch. Montrose landed across the turncrank with a clatter, then righted himself and slid along the port bench to the launch's bow.

"Now move it, you motherless screwups!" Dender's anger found release with the breaking of the logjam. Marines hurried through the doorway and found their places in the launch. Dender waited for the lieutenant to position himself at the tiller, then dogged the door shut and dropped into the seat reserved for him in the port stern quarter.

In the cramped quarters, the lieutenant's gaze met Dender's, as if to say, that boy will never amount to anything.

"He'll be fine, sir," Dender said, but he doubted whether he really believed it himself.



Sitting in the launch tunnel, sweating, the sergeant wondered if any of them would "be fine." Half of the platoon consisted of green replacements for men lost in earlier conflicts, and none of them had ever before been involved in the use of a steam launch. In theory, the steam piston behind them would propel the boat from inside the hull of the *Liege* and out into the atmosphere. From there, his men would turn the crank that ran the launch's propeller, keeping the vessel moving until it reached its target. After that, the mission should proceed as a normal boarding action.

But Dender had heard stories of the system's trial runs, in which launches had cleared the mother ship only to tip and spill their contents out into the open air. The thought of falling all of that distance to his death did nothing for the sergeant's nerves.

"Stand by to launch!" The command echoed down the launch tube. Dender grabbed a handhold and tensed himself. "Launch!" Acceleration tipped him toward the stern; the boat rushed down the dark tube, then launched into the sunny Martian sky. The stale air of the launch tunnel was replaced by the chill winds of Mars.

The lieutenant gave Dender a nod. "Alright you misbegotten whelps, row!" the sergeant shouted. Marines on both sides grabbed the crank shaft and began to turn it; the launch picked up speed.

The lieutenant kept the tiller steady, and the *Retaal* seemed to rush toward them.

The lieutenant gave another nod. "Prepare grapnels!" Dender commanded. Montrose and his opposite on the starboard side stood and prepared to cast. "Toss!" Montrose's grapnel caught; the other missed. Montrose and the marine to his right rapidly reeled in the line until the launch was secure against the *Retaal*'s side. A Martian deckhand ap-

peared at the rail with an axe, and for a moment Dender thought that the line was going to be cut, but the lieutenant fired his pistol and the deckhand fell backward, dead or wounded.

The lieutenant gave a loud shout, and the marines went over the *Retaal*'s rail. A squad of Martians with muskets came running across deck to repel the boarders. Shots began to fly, and in the air, powder and smoke mingled with the cries of the wounded. Dender counted three Belgian marines downed by musket fire, to eight Martian marines lost to fire from the Belgians' arms. Then the fight was reduced to blades and cudgels.

Sergeant Dender took up a position guarding the lieutenant's back. Within moments, blades were clashing all around them as Martians and Belgians battled to the death, but Dender's attention was centered on two Martians who assaulted him, trying to work their way through him to the lieutenant. The pair worked well together. As one attacked, the other would wait and then attack as the first recovered. Dender's cutlass rang as he parried stroke after stroke, never able to make an attack of his own. The Martians split the locations of their attacks as well—one would make a low thrust, the next would swing high. Dender's parries were broad and fatiguing, as a consequence.

Under the continual strain, Dender could feel himself slowing down. His

eyes stung from sweat, and he was breathing hard. He promised himself that if he ever got out of this battle alive, he would retire from the military. The muscles in his sword arm burned with fatigue, and his wrist felt bruised from the ceaseless pounding on his blade.

The Martian to the sergeant's left made a wicked swipe at his head. Dender blocked it, barely, but saw that he would never recover in time to block the other Martian's thrust at his legs. Frantic, Dender cut desperately at the first Martian and saw his cutlass bite into that attacker's neck. With a look of surprise, the Martian fell backward.

But Dender felt the second Martian's blade drive deep into his right thigh, rasping across the bone. The edges of his vision blackened as he fell to the deck, gasping with pain. As he watched, helpless, his attacker raised his sword for a final, vicious stroke. Sergeant Dender knew that he was about to die.

Suddenly, the Martian jerked upright, then fell. Private Montrose stood over him with a bloody blade. He swung his cutlass twice to finish the job, then stooped by the sergeant and began to tear his blouse in strips to bind the wound in Dender's thigh.

"Good work, Montrose," Sergeant Dender gasped, somewhat abashed at having doubted the boy earlier.

"You're gonna be alright, Sergeant," Montrose responded. "We beat 'em—beat 'em good."

Dender gazed around the deck. The fighting was largely finished. The lieutenant was assigning marines to the lines and controls of the ship. Two pairs of Belgian marines were searching among the bodies on the deck to identify the wounded. Over the rail, Dender could see the *Liege* approaching. He felt weak as relief suddenly flooded through him. Maybe, just maybe, he thought, my decision to retire was premature.

HISTORY

Late in 1887, as the Belgians tightened their control of the Coprates Valley on Mars, Tabelbala, the last of the Itasi princes, decided that it was better to flee the valley, and be free to direct a rebellion from a neighboring nation, than to remain and be captured and executed, a fate that would end his royal line.

Outfitting his personal barge, the *Retaal*, for the journey, and preparing a pair of warships to guard it, Tabelbala prepared to leave his homeland.

A Martian turncoat told the Belgians of the prince's plans. With all due speed, they sent a trio of warships to prevent his escape.

SETUP

Map: Use either map. The city is not present and all terrain is considered to be ground level.

Ships: The Belgians have the *Leopold*, the *Duc de Brabant*, and the *Liege*. The Martians have the *Retaal* and two *Swift-Air* screw galleys.

Special Rules: The *Liege* has two steam-launched marine assault boats. These boats may be launched during any turn when she could fire her weapons. The steam catapults are angled about 20 degrees off a forward facing; thus, when the assault boats are launched, they enter the hexes on either side

of the hex directly in front of the *Liege*. Both the assault boats may be launched at the same time, or they may be launched one at a time in consecutive fire phases. On the turn the assault boats are launched they move four hexes; the next turn the marines must begin the power to the screws for the assault boats to continue movement. Any time an assault boat enters the same hex as another ship, it will grapple on any die roll other than a six. All fire directed at an assault boat suffers a -1 die roll modifier in addition to other modifiers. A hit on an assault boat by a weapon with a damage value greater than 1 destroys the boat. (The assault boats are not represented by any ships; use a flying Martian stand to represent them.)

The Prince may not be on the *Retaal*. Whenever the Belgian marines board the *Retaal*, two dice are rolled. On a dice roll of 10 or 11, the Prince is on one of the escort ships; on a dice roll of 12 the Prince did not even make the journey.

Victory: The Belgians win by capturing Prince Itasi; the Belgians may also win by destroying all the Martian ships. The Martians win by avoiding the Belgian victory conditions and destroying at least one Belgian ship.

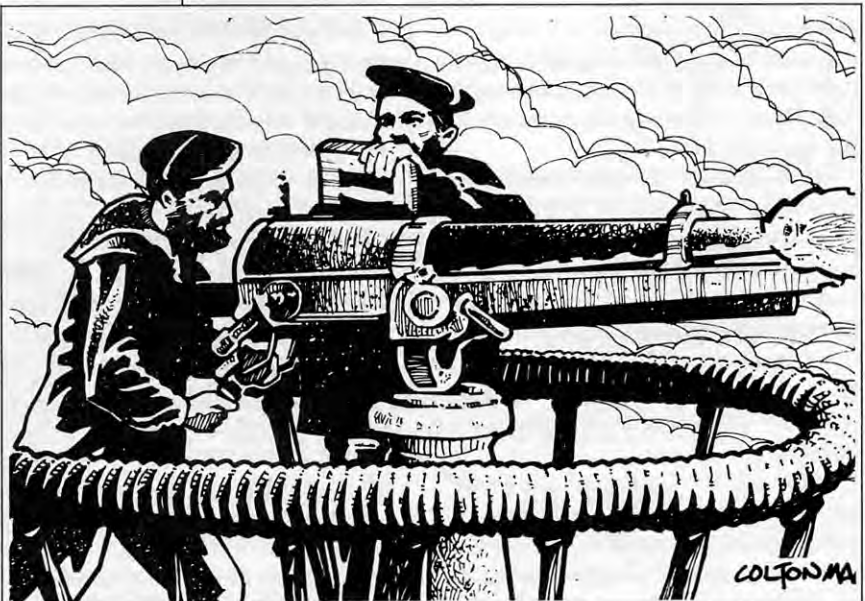
MARTIAN SHIPS

The following is a description of Martian ships.

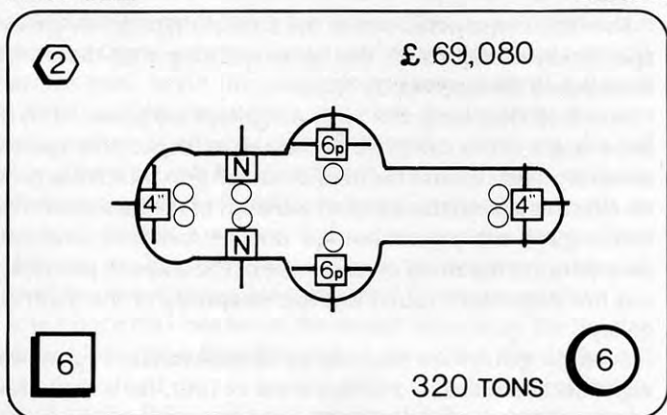
The *Retaal*

Named after the Prince who commissioned her, the *Retaal* is the Royal vessel of the Itasi family and has served the Itasi for several generations. Because the *Retaal* is a ceremonial and diplomatic vessel, she was left unarmed, but she carries 12 of the Royal Guard whenever any of the Royal family is on board. The *Retaal* is a large vessel, nearly 200 feet and fully rigged in the Martian tradition. An ornate vessel, as befits a Royal family, the *Retaal* has been meticulously cared for, and the carvings and inlaid stone and metal work make the vessel priceless.

The crew of the *Retaal* numbers a full complement of topmen and deckhands (12) and an officer staff of four. All the crewmembers are hand-picked, with military experience and devotion to the Royal family being two of the highest criteria. When the *Retaal* puts to the sky, she is accompanied by escorts.



Gunboat



4
3
2
1

Deck

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Maneuver

Hull Hits

Marines

VH						
H						
M						
L						
VL						

Bridge

C	H	T	S
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6
5
4
3

Deck


P						
---	--	--	--	--	--	--

Maneuver

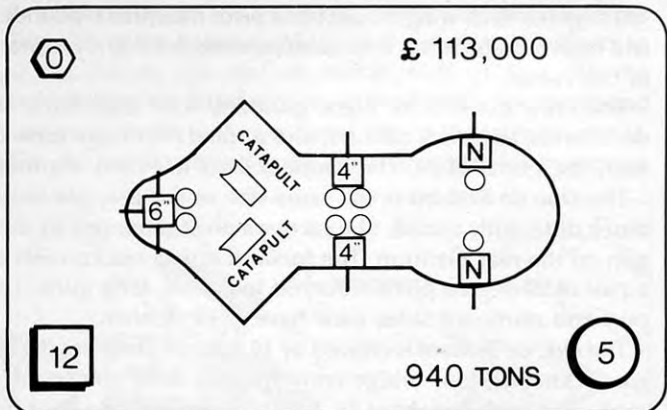
Hull Hits

Marines

VH					
H					
M					
L					
VL					



Marine Launch



Bridge C H T S

6
5
4
3
2
1

Deck

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Maneuver

Hull Hits

Marines

VH						
H						
M						
L						
VL						



Bridge C H T S O

5
4
3
2
1

Deck

P	P	P								
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Maneuver

Hull Hits

Marines

[illegible]

0	0			

SPACE

1889



GDW

THE CONQUEST OF SPACE

IT WAS the inventive genius of Thomas Edison that first harnessed the power of the ether, and made space the new frontier for the nations of Earth. In March of 1868, in Boston, Thomas A. Edison attended a lecture by Professor B. Etienne Moreau of the Sorbonne, on the subject of the luminiferous ether. Edison's many questions and pointed insights of a practical nature prompted Moreau to invite the younger man to talk with him, and so they sat in the lobby of Moreau's hotel for hours, engrossed in technical discussion.

As a result of this discussion, Edison came up with a notion of an Ether Flyer, a device which could "sail at speeds heretofore undreamed of through the lumeniferous ether, and reach any point on the globe in a matter of hours." Edison built a model immediately, and tested it. It did not move, and the young inventor was devastated. He wrote of his failure to Moreau, who considered the problem, and concluded that air was the culprit. Matter embedded in the ether causes drag, he reasoned, and the interaction of the ether and the air was too much for the prototype engine to overcome.

Tests, with small models in an evacuated chamber, showed that air was indeed the problem, and that if the machine could be lifted to a height of 24,000 feet or more, the atmosphere was thin enough for the engine to overcome its drag. Edison constructed a model and applied for a patent in October of 1868.

Skeptical patent officials demanded a demonstration, and Edison decided to use a hydrogen balloon to lift his invention into the air, and to fit his invention with a clockwork piloting mechanism and 250 pounds of magnesium powder, rigged to explode on impact with the moon, his target. The flash of the magnesium's detonation would serve as proof of the machine's arrival.

On 27 November, 1868, before a com-

mittee of witnesses and an astronomer (who was to observe the machine with his telescope) Edison launched his greatest invention. The astronomer soon reported the appearance of a trail at a height of 30 miles above the surface of the Earth. The trail got fainter, and the astronomer eventually lost it. Edison anxiously awaited the detonation of the magnesium, spelling the astronomer at the telescope.

Early the next morning, in the chill Maryland dawn, a bright flash appeared in the Moon's *Mare Tranquillitatus*, remaining visible for several minutes, and witnessed by Edison, his friends, the astronomer, and the representatives of the patent office. Edison was ecstatic.

The patent for the Edison Ether Flyer was granted on 3 December, 1868, and Edison announced the formation of a company to build a larger flyer, capable of carrying passengers. The announcement was met with laughter in most scientific circles, and was the subject of several bitterly satirical cartoons in *Punch*. Edison finally managed to gather together a number of backers for an electrifying venture...a trip to Mars.

THE FIRST VISIT TO MARS

MARS WAS chosen as a destination for Edison's expedition because it was the closest suitable world. Earth's Moon was eliminated because it had no atmosphere to support the safe landing of the flyer (or so it was believed then).

A gigantic hydrogen balloon was constructed to Edison's specifications, capable of carrying the ether flyer, two passengers, and supplies for the trip. The balloon would carry the flyer high enough to enable the ether propeller to take hold, and would insure a safe landing at the destination. Power was provided by electrical storage batteries. To refresh the air, Edison took along numerous green plants.

Edison would go, of course, accompanied

A CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE EXPLORATION OF SPACE

1868

FIRST WORKING Ether Flyer mechanism demonstrated.

1870

EDISON MARTIAN Expedition pilots a primitive Ether Flyer to Mars, and returns.

1872

FIRST BRITISH foothold on Mars with the establishment of the Permanent British Quarter in Parhoon.

1873

EDISON LOSES patent suit against Armstrong Ether Flyer Company. Both firms compete vigorously in design and construction of spacecraft.

1874

ARMSTRONG EXPEDITION to Venus fails to return.

Belgians, French establish enclaves on Mars.

1875

COLLINGSWOOD EXPEDITION to Venus fails to return.

1877

LONDON TIMES Venus Rescue Expedition fails to return.

1878

GERMAN ETHER Dirigible lands on Venus, and discovers fate of the first three expeditions.

1880

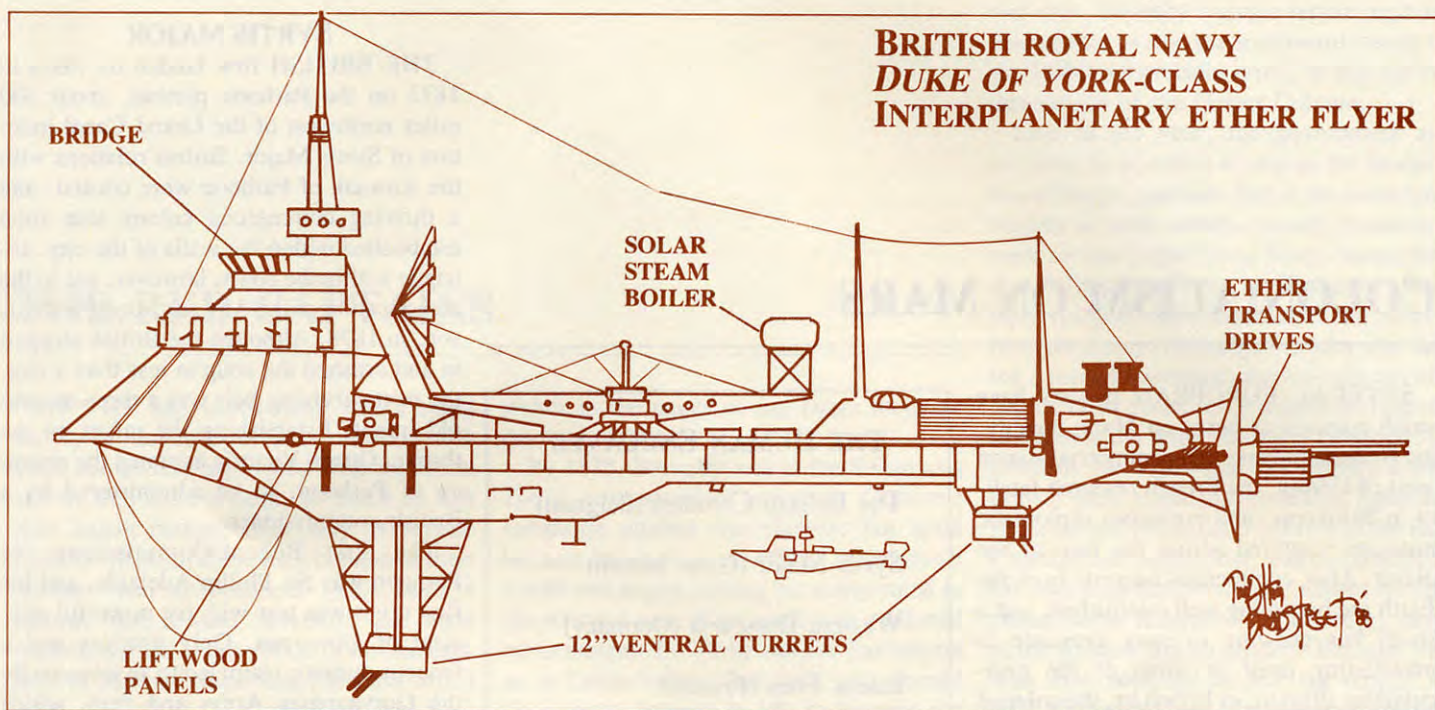
GERMANS ESTABLISH colony on Venus.

1885

EDISON ETHER FLYER patent expires. The Golden Age of space exploration begins.

1889

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS uses Aerial transports to fly in aid after Johnstown flood.



by Jack Armstrong, a Scottish explorer and soldier-of-fortune with academic degrees in chemistry and geology. Armstrong was selected by the expedition's financial backers.

The expedition departed on 6 January, 1870, and arrived on Mars on 9 March. The balloon was damaged during the landing, and the expedition would have been stranded forever were it not for the serendipitous fact that Mars was inhabited.

Edison and Armstrong landed just outside the city now known as Syrtis Major, and were taken prisoner by the local potentate, Amraamtaba IX. Armstrong soon learned the language, and Edison impressed the Martian ruler with his tremendous technological knowledge.[†] The pair were soon freed, and Edison was provided with the materials necessary to repair his balloon, and to generate the hydrogen needed to fill it. Within months the repaired flyer was ready to carry Edison, Armstrong, and a curious Martian back to Earth. The return trip was without incident, and the expedition landed safely outside of Cincinnati, Ohio on the seventh of August, 1870.

The Earth was electrified. Edison and Armstrong received fame and fortune. Within a year, dozens of companies were manufacturing *Edison Flyers*, and flyers of several nationalities were soon making regular trips to Mars.

[†]As a result of Edison's visit, Martians to this day think half of all humans are deaf.

VENUS

ALTHOUGH EXPEDITIONS were sent to Venus as early as 1873 (using British-made Armstrong Flyers), the first one to return was the German-backed *Heidelberg* expedition of 1878. The Venusian magnetic field, it was discovered, was of an unusual intensity and flux; it radically accelerates liftwood decay. Within days of landing, the first three expeditions found their flyers would not leave the ground. Germany, unable to obtain large quantities of liftwood, was forced to make use of dirigibles as the lifting means for their Ether Flyers. Ger-

many has dominated the exploration of Venus since that time.

Venus is a world of perpetual overcast and heavy rainfall. The dense jungles of the lowlands produce many plants, for which there is great demand on Earth by dye-makers, drug companies, and florists (the Cytherian Orchid is especially valued for its beauty and fragrance). The lowlands are also home to varieties of giant lizards, called dinosaurs, and to the savage lizardmen. Humans find the lowlands unbearable, and stick to the few highland plateaus, where life is more bearable, and the sun can occasionally be glimpsed through the overcast.

A SCIENTIFIC DISCUSSION OF THE LUMINIFEROUS ETHER

PRIOR TO the 19th century, the corpuscular theory of light was generally accepted. Certain theoretical problems prompted important scientists (among them Benjamin Franklin) to advance the wave theory of light, summarized as: "Light is in the ether the same as sound is in the air."

The Luminiferous (light-bearing) Ether was essential to the wave theory of light. Ether was light's medium, like water for waves and air for sound. By 1868, Professor Moreau was perhaps the world's leading expert on the ether, and he summarized the theory in the introduction to his book *Promethean Promise*:

"The Luminiferous Ether is an infinitely hard, infinitely elastic underlayment to the physical universe. It is by virtue of the Ether that light, gravity, and magnetism can travel through the universe, all three being forms of energy that express themselves as waves in the medium."

Edison's practical inventive nature took these theoretical considerations of the nature of light, and produced a practical device which used them. His Ether Flyer worked by creating an electric propeller (the Ether Propeller) which creates waves in the ether and pulls the flyer along behind them. The interaction of the propeller with the ether produces a faint glowing trail behind the flyer, not unlike that of a comet.

COLONIALISM ON MARS

SEVERAL EUROPEAN powers have small outposts or bases on Mars: notably, the German military and commercial station west of Umbra, the French research facility in Nilokeras, and numerous diplomatic missions scattered across the face of the planet. Also, commercial interests from the Earth are becoming well established, and a small but growing military presence is manifesting itself in some of the principalities allied to, or bribed by, the colonial powers on Earth. Only two significant tracts of territory are held by European states on Mars, however: the Belgian Coprates and the Crown Colony of Syrtis Major.

THE BELGIAN COPRATES

THE BELGIANS first sent an expedition to Mars in 1876 and followed it with several more in short order. The early expeditions were ostensibly exploratory in nature, but were heavily protected by Belgian soldiers. The purpose of these expeditions was to study and explore the Great Coprates Rift Valley, and if the inhabitants of the valley were suspicious of the "true intentions" of the Belgians, subsequent events do little to contradict them. By 1884 there were frequent skirmishes between the Belgians and "Coprates"[†] up and down the length of the valley.

The Belgians vigorously protested the practice of American arms merchants selling the most modern rifles to the Coprates, a complaint that had little impact on American public opinion, and none whatsoever on the arms trade. In any event, the American arms merchants could point with

THE HUMAN ENCLAVES

The Belgian Coprates (Belgium)

Syrtis Major (Great Britain)

Western Dioscuria (Germany)

Idaeus Fons (France)

Hecates Lacus (Russia)

Thymiamata (United States of America)

Euxinius Lacus (Japan)

some moral justification to the fact that, insofar as modern arms might drive the Belgians from the valley, many would consider that a good thing. Although news reports were scarce from the Coprates, those which made their way out indicated that Belgian colonial rule there was even more brutal and bloody than in the Congo on Earth, if that was possible.

By 1889 the Belgians had completed the conquest (for it was nothing less) of the Great Coprates Rift Valley, and an uneasy peace had settled there. The flood of refugees into Tithonius, Ophir, and Aurorae Sinus, and their frequent forays back into the valley to raid Belgian gumme plantations, threatens to spread the violence. The Belgians, in return, have begun to undertake reprisal raids and punitive expeditions into neighboring territories. All of this fans the fires of antihuman prejudice throughout Mars. The atrocities committed by the Belgians are used as further evidence by the Worm Priests, Ground Cleansers, and other fanatical groups of Martians, of the need to drive the red devils off the face of Mars forever.

SYRTIS MAJOR

THE BRITISH first landed on Mars in 1872 on the Parhoon plateau, about 500 miles northwest of the Grand Canal junction of Syrtis Major. British relations with the Anwaak of Parhoon were cordial, and a thriving commercial colony was soon established within the walls of the city. Intrigue within the court, however, led to the assassination of the Anwaak, along with his son, in 1878. Although the British stepped in and crushed the coup in less than a day, the next surviving heir was a three-month-old infant. Establishing the infant on the throne, Queen Victoria assumed the regency of Parhoon, to be administered by a British commissioner.

The first Regent-Commissioner to Parhoon was Sir Phillip Adelaide, and his first crisis was war with the powerful city-state of Gorovaan. Only grudges and a tenuous dynastic claim led to an invasion by the Gorvaangian Army and fleet, which gave the British and Parhoonese a common foe to fight together. The Gorvaangian War was a complete success for the British, witnessed the combat baptism of the Parhoon Rifles,[‡] ended in the annexation of Gorovaan to Parhoon, and cemented very strong ties between the British and Parhoonese.

In 1880 war again broke out, (The Second War of the Parhoon Succession) and this time saw British regulars in the field since Britain was formally at war with Syrtis Major and its client states. The conclusion of the fighting saw Syrtis Major, Haatt, and Avenel incorporated as the Crown Colony of Syrtis Major. Parhoon and Gorovaan continued to be ruled by the Commissioner-Regent, who was also the Governor General of the colony. By 1882 both Moeris Lacus and Meepsoor were treaty dependencies of the colony. The "punishment" of Shastapsh in 1884, followed by an overland campaign in 1887, brought that city-state reluctantly under British rule. In a very short time the British had carved out a colonial empire of considerable dimensions. In contrast to the Belgians, the British have maintained fairly good relations with their Martian subjects, particularly the Parhoonese and Meepsooris. The Martian canal princes to the south fear them, however, and engage in endless intrigues to end their tenure on Mars.

[†]The collective term "Coprates" has been applied to the inhabitants of the valley by the Belgians, although there are virtually no ethnic, linguistic, or cultural similarities between the inhabitants of the Upper and Lower Coprates Valley, the approximate dividing line being the shattered lowlands of Melas Lacus.

[‡]Now the First Battalion, Queen Victoria's Own Martian Rifles (The Parhoons).

THE RED CAPTAINS

BY THE late 1870s there was a small supply of human ex-officers on Mars who were completely captivated with its exotic culture and environment, so much so that they began making their way as private citizens. Most of these men combined their military and aeronautical skills with a natural bent toward adventure and soon became a small brotherhood of human captains of Martian ships. The Martians called them the "Red Captains," because to a golden-skinned Martian a European's complexion is ruddy to the point of being red. They are accepted by the piratical Cloud Captains of the Shistomik Mountains as equals, albeit grudgingly, and are hated and feared by the High Martians of the Astusapes and further west.

The British captains are the most numerous of the Red Captains, and their outward independence does little to mask their basic loyalty to the crown. In many respects they occupy a place similar to that held by the Elizabethan Sea Hawks, and in a fairly short time they have largely displaced gunfighters as the most popular subject for American dime novels. The most famous of the Red Captains, and the one who has come to symbolize their essential panache, is Burnaby.

BURNABY

FREDERICK GUSTAVUS BURNABY was born to well-to-do parents on March 3, 1842. He attended all the best schools (Bedford Grammar School and Harrow Public School), and at the age of 16 became a cornet in the third regiment of the Household Cavalry. His interests were many, but mainly they focused on travel, particularly travel by air. At the age of 22 he made his first balloon ascent, and would go on to make a total of 19 balloon excursions. The first trip to Mars in 1870 electrified him with excitement and, already an officer of the British Aeronautical Society, he became a frequent

writer in the pages of the *Times* on aeronautical matters.

By 1875, Burnaby was in the Sudan as a *Times* correspondent covering Gordon's campaign against the slavers, but soon became involved as an officer in Gordon's forces and began turning his active mind to the potential uses of aeronautics in a colonial environment. In '78 he ran for Parliament as a Conservative, but lost, and earned Gladstone's hatred. In '82 he became the first man to cross the English Channel in a steam-powered airship, which he had designed and built at his own expense. In '84, when the crisis in Egypt broke out, he requested permission to form an aerial squadron for operations against the mutineers, but was turned down. He went out on his own, however, and although his aerial steam launch did not see action, Burnaby himself was in the thick of things on several occasions. (As Burnaby was, by now, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Horse Guards, this constituted absence without leave, but no disciplinary action was ever taken.)

In the following year, with Gordon surrounded at Khartoum and Wollsley gathering an army to march to his relief, Burnaby again offered his services, and Wollsley gladly accepted. Burnaby's two steam launches (he had had a second built for the campaign) carried dispatches back and forth for months, harassed the dervish columns, and scouted ahead of the Desert Column. As the dervishes became used to the aerial vessels, however, they began devising means of bringing them under fire, and eventually the *Penelope* was badly damaged and crashed in the Nile. The *Vivian*, Burnaby's original boat, rescued the crew and later carried Gordon out to confer with Wollsley. Wollsley refused to allow Gordon to return to Khartoum, and Gordon still blames Wollsley for the fall of the city and its subsequent massacre. Although Gordon

was safe, Burnaby's single remaining boat was unable to stop the southward march of the Mahdi's victorious army, or prevent the destruction of the Desert Column.

Late in the year, the government announced its intention to step up the production of aerial gunboats, but at the same time transfer all such vessels currently in government service to the Royal Navy. Seeing this as a deliberate affront by Gladstone, Burnaby resigned his commission and retired from the Army. Actually, Burnaby was facing a forced retirement anyway due to continuing heart problems. Freed of his responsibilities to the army, Burnaby emigrated to Mars in the hopes that the slightly lower gravity there would aid his health. Upon arrival, he was immediately drawn to the Red Captains and before long was commanding his own ship (the *Penelope*, named for the vessel lost at Khartoum). Idolized by most of the younger British officers, Burnaby was also soon accepted in Martian society as well. His facility with language soon enabled him to add Oenotrian, Low and High Syrtan, and Umbran to his existing linguistic catalog of French, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Turkish and Arabic. Furthermore, his unusual height (six feet, four inches) and massive 46-inch chest suggested a physical similarity to Martians that became the source of numerous crude, but good-natured jokes. Although he has only been on Mars for four years, he has come to symbolize everything good about the Red Captains, and has become something of an elder statesman for them.

THE LEGENDARY FIVE

THE FIVE highest-scoring Red Captains as of January 1, 1889:

Frederick Gustavus Burnaby—Steam Ram *Penelope*:

27 prizes, 43,200 tons.

Alonzo Quinton Freeremchant—Steam Gunboat *Baron Lortmore*:

21 prizes, 34,900 tons.

Frederick Armand LeBeg—Screw Ram *Gloire*:

17 prizes, 21,400 tons.

Michael Paget-Smith—Gun Kite *Lismore*:

15 prizes, 16,000 tons.

Arturo Diego della Mora—Screw Ram *Gato*:

17 prizes, 12,200 tons.

MARS: THE RED PLANET

LONG AGO, the seas of Mars (which once covered perhaps 40 percent of the world's surface) dried up. Over millions of years, some of the seas' water was locked into the oxides of the rust-red Martian soil; much of the rest was trapped into the polar ice-cap cycle. The planet became a desert.

The drying of Mars spelled the end for most mammalian life forms, and with their extinction came the next step in Martian evolution: flyers. Flyers could range far and wide in search of water and in search of the prey that water would support. Evolution and natural selection favored the emergence of a particular gland, in some animals, that negated the effects of gravity. These particular animals could float in the air and control their flight with wings—flaps of skin that control the orientation and strength of their lifting gland. At the same time, some Mar-

tian plants developed lifting effects of their own, primarily as a means of spreading their seeds.

THE CLIMATIC SPASM

ABOUT 35,000 years ago, a momentary spasm (in geological terms) in the Martian climate melted enough of the polar ice-caps to fill the ancient seabeds. As the seas refilled, the proto-Martians were either driven from their habitats on the seabeds, or were attracted to the sea shores because of the plentiful water. In either case, these gregarious beings found the spark that gave intelligence, and over several thousand years established first agricultural settlements, and later trade empires all along the shores of the newborn seas. As the Martians settled into the routine of agriculture, they lost their ability to fly (whether from evolutionary processes or from a dietary deficiency is unclear).

The Brifanoon—the Age of Water—lasted about 10,000 years. Empires rose and fell. Science reached incredible heights and made everyday life one of ease and luxury. Art naturally embellished architecture and equipment. Martian technology tamed the deserts beyond the flooded seabeds: It dug canals that carried life-giving water in a network that crisscrossed the planet's surface.

Ultimately, the climatic spasm that produced the Brifanoon (and with it the rise of intelligence on Mars) subsided, and with it the Age of Water ended. Over the next 10,000 years, the seas again dried up. Every year, the shoreline moved farther out. To stem this receding tide, Martian technology was called upon to create more of the canals that had tamed the Martian deserts. Every year, more canals were dug to carry water from the dwindling seas to the existing croplands. Eventually, it became clear that a coordinated effort was necessary, and a massive project was launched to channel water from the polar icecaps to the sea-



PRINCE JINMA OF PARHOON

beds.

When the naBrifanoon—the Age of Drying—ended, the Martian civilizations had moved from their shore territories to the bottoms of the dry seabeds. Immense Grand Canals stretched from pole to pole and from seabed to seabed, connecting individual city-states that arose at the junctures of the canals.

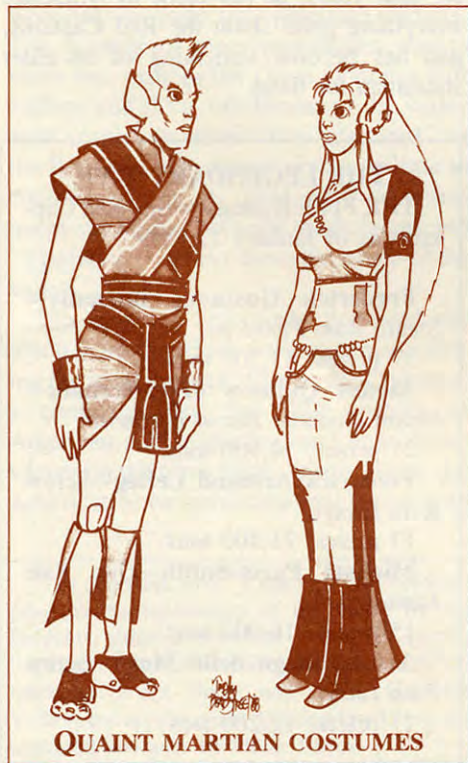
In the Martian deserts, the Grand Canals served as aquifers for land up to five miles to either side; in the seabeds, the quality of the ancient seabottom soil allowed the canals to aquify up to 50 miles to each side. The seabeds bloomed.

Yet life became harder than it had been. More work was necessary to make the seabeds bloom. Making the deserts bloom became a nearly impossible task. Populations gradually withdrew from the frontiers, and as they did, the Grand Canals of the deserts fell into disrepair. Scattered city-states squabbled over water rights, and eventually some of the seabed canals silted up and were abandoned.

By the end of the Age of Drying, Mars was a network of failing seabed canals, abandoned desert canals, and isolated city-states content to farm their own small holdings and to ignore the rest of the world.

SELDON'S EMPIRE

ABOUT 5000 years ago, Mars produced a great military leader, the equivalent of



QUAINT MARTIAN COSTUMES

Earth's Alexander the Great. Seldon II rose to power in the small mountain kingdom of Gaaryan (originally, it was the island kingdom of Gaaryan). Seldon II, already equipped with a kingdom by virtue of inheritance, raised and equipped a navy and sailed forth to clean and win the canals of Mars for the greater glory of Gaaryan. He confronted each city-state along his route of conquest, and from each he demanded oaths of allegiance and obedience. When he received them, he incorporated them into his growing empire; when they were not forthcoming, he levelled the city. A few such object lessons produced more signs of obedience than resistance.

Seldon II also provided a service by his conquest. Accompanying his warfleets were massive engineer barges that dredged silt from the canals. His constructors repaired broken locks, patched fallen levees, and cleared tangled settling pools. Where they could, they rebuilt pumping stations; where they couldn't rebuild, they built anew, although sometimes with cruder technology or makeshift devices. But by whatever means he used, Seldon II rebuilt and reopened a third of Mars' seabed canals.

Seldon travelled a third of the way around Mars in his conquests. His world empire controlled more than any emperor had ever ruled in history. The city leaders who made the oaths of allegiance to him became the Canal Princes of Mars; virtually all Martian rulers today trace their power to those original oaths made 5000 years ago.

Seldon himself died at the height of his power in his temporary capital in what is now Syrtis Major. His son, Seldon III, succeeded him. The succession of Seldons lasted nearly 3000 years. The last of the emperors was Seldon LXIX.

But 3000 years is a long time for one government to rule. During that time, the influence of Seldon's Empire waxed and waned. In the end, the only consideration was whether the Canal Princes' tribute arrived on time...and often it didn't. The squabbles and arguments over tribute and taxes and water rights and canal maintenance caused more than one revolt among the Canal Princes. Finally, nearly 2000 years ago, the Princes unleashed their city-states' weaponry in a century long war that pitted warfleet against warfleet, army against army, and sky galleon against sky galleon. City-states were destroyed, canals were ruined, croplands were destroyed. Mars was reduced to many isolated city-

states connected by neglected canals and occasional cloudship voyages. It remained that way for nearly 2000 years...until the coming of the Earthmen.

Earthmen brought with them a vitality that Mars had not seen for millennia. Their technology, in many ways more primitive than that of the ancient Martians, was still more advanced than much of Mars' in the present day. The Earthmen arrived on a world that was content to fight small wars between small city-states; Earthmen were happy to participate for their own ends.

MARTIANS

THERE ARE three types of Martians: the civilized Canal Martians, the rugged Hill Martians, and the savage High Martians.

Canal Martians represent 35,000 years of civilization. They are consummate farmers, accomplished builders, skilled artisans, and clever diplomats. Their heritage reaches back farther than any Earth culture, and they are proud of it. Yet the Canal Martians are also a stagnant, slow-paced race. They know that their culture has forgotten more than any Earth culture has ever discovered, and they seem content with this knowledge. And as they stand content with their lot, the Earthmen are slowly taking over their world.

Hill Martians live on the edges of civilization. They are the frontiersmen of Mars, living in regions beyond the rule of the Canal Princes. The nomadic desert traders are Hill Martians, as are the Worm Hunters of the Mountains, and the rugged highland farmers.

High Martians are the least affected by civilization; they live in remote kraags and mountain tops, venturing out from time to time to capture slaves or loot passing caravans. High Martians are like intelligent apes when compared to Canal Martians, but

with a difference: They can fly! High Martians (so called for their altitude rather than their accomplishments) never lost their lifting gland and its ability to carry them through the skies of Mars.

LIFTWOOD

THE MARTIANS have long used liftwood. The earliest civilized Martians built simple rafts of liftwood to carry heavy loads or to travel deep into the trackless Martian wastes. Just as they built ships to sail the seas of Mars, they built cloudships to fly its skies.

But liftwood is both expensive and rare. It grows only in small groves on remote kraags...the same kraags inhabited by the savage High Martians. The result is constant conflict between the savages of the kraags and the shipbuilders of the canals.

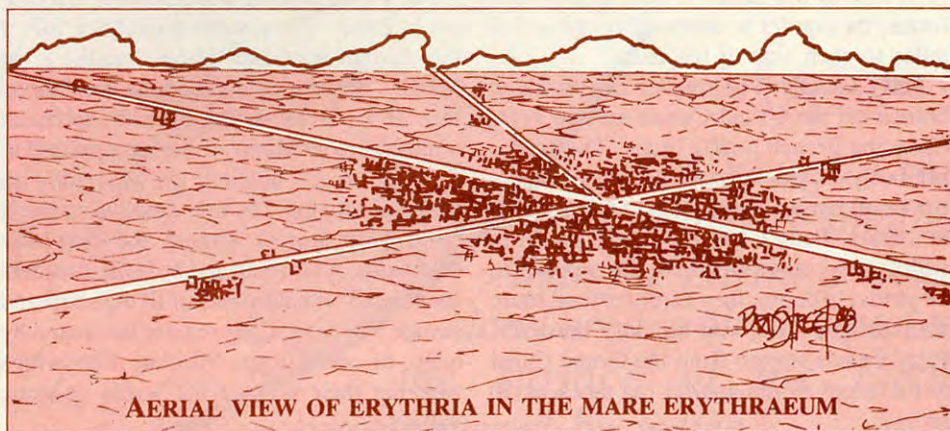
There has never been enough liftwood to meet all of Mars' needs. Expeditions to harvest logs from the kraag groves must be large and well-armed. They are vulnerable to attack at any time and from any quarter by the flying High Martians.

Once upon a time, some explorers thought that all transportation should be by cloudship, but the practical matter is that there is not enough liftwood to meet the demand. Cloudships are expensive and suitable only to fast, high demand travel. On Mars, ordinary travel is handled by the canal ships.

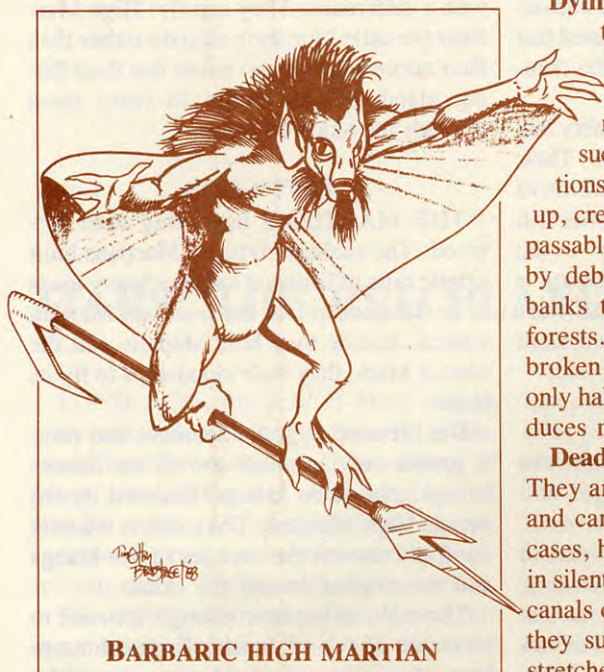
THE CANALS OF MARS

VERY EARLY in the rise of civilization, the Martians learned to dig canals for irrigation and transportation. Originally, they carried water and ships from the seas deep into the interior of Mars. Later, that canal digging proved invaluable in slowing the collapse of Mars during the naBrifanoon.

The canals of Mars are not what we see from Earth. Instead, we see the vegetation



AERIAL VIEW OF ERYTHRIA IN THE MARE ERYTHRAEUM



BARBARIC HIGH MARTIAN

swaths that the canals support and irrigate. The maria (seabeds) with their more fertile soil and extensive canal networks, appear dark because of the fields of agriculture they irrigate. The prominent canals of the deserts are highlighted by their narrower swaths of vegetation.

Grand Canals: Large Grand Canals are the major water carriers of Mars. Grand canals are between 1000 and 2000 yards wide, and run as deep as 100 feet. In some places, they widen into small lakes or water storage pools; in others, they narrow down to as little as 100 yards as they cut through rock faces or traverse small valleys on Martian-built aqueducts.

Grand Canals serve as aquifers on Mars. Some of the water they carry soaks into the ground and creates a water table that supports the croplands. In the ancient seabeds, this aquifer can reach as far as 50 miles to each side of the canal; in less fertile landforms, the aquifer is restricted to about five miles to each side of the canal.

Petty Canals: The smaller canals which branch off the Grand Canals are the Petty (from the French *petit*) Canals. They serve primarily as transportation links; farmers run small barges along them to carry goods to market. Petty Canals are truly small: in width, they range from 50 yards down to 10 yards; in depth, they rarely extend more than 10 feet. They can be long, however. Petty Canals stretch from the Grand Canal to the edges of the aquifer (as much as 50 miles).

Dying Canals: Age has taken its toll on the canals of Mars. Constant maintenance is necessary to keep them clear of silt and debris and to repair or replace mechanical devices such as locks, cranes, and pumping stations. In some places, the canal has silted up, creating a broad, shallow mudbank impassable by boat. Some canals are clogged by debris. Others have overflowed their banks to create vast marshes or swamp-forests. Where pumping stations have broken down, the canals are full of water only half the year (when the nearer pole produces meltwater to fill them).

Dead Canals: Some canals are truly dead. They are filled in with silt, dust, and sand, and carry no visible water. Even in these cases, however, the canal bed carries water in silent, underground channels. These dead canals can be recognized by the vegetation they support above ground: long straight stretches of green life in the arid deserts of Mars.

The dead canals are the caravan routes of Mars. Merchants use them as highways in the desert...paths to the isolated city-states of the Martian wastelands that still serve as a source of spice, liftwood, and precious gems.

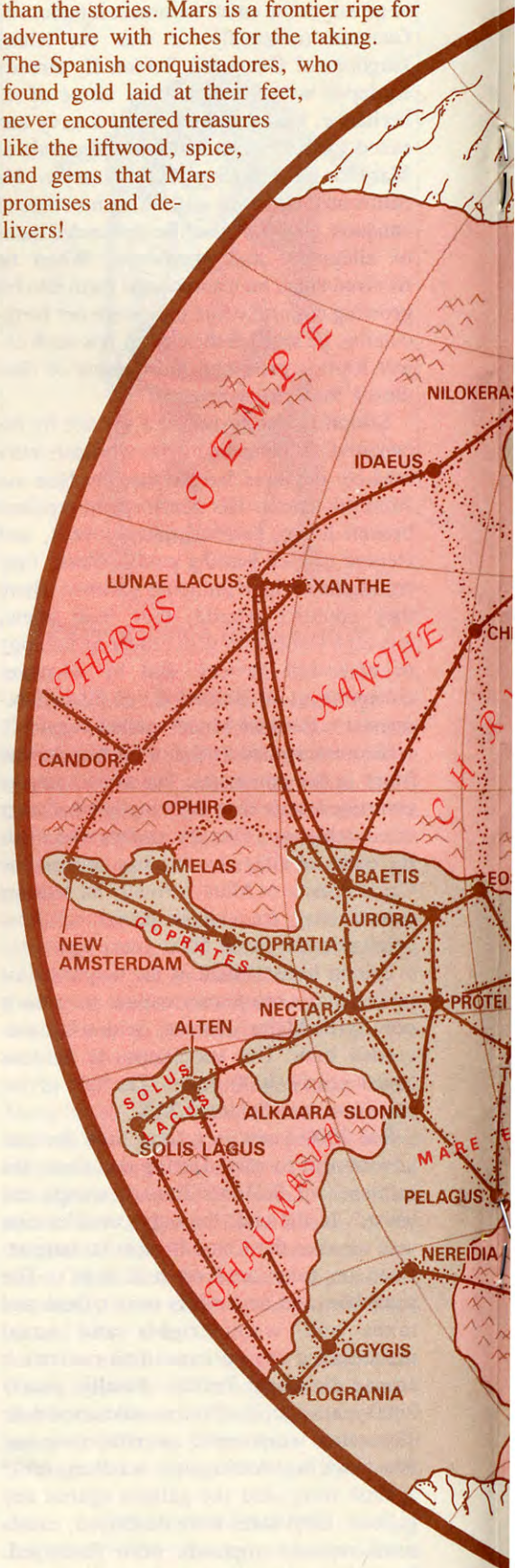
THE MARTIAN FRONTIER

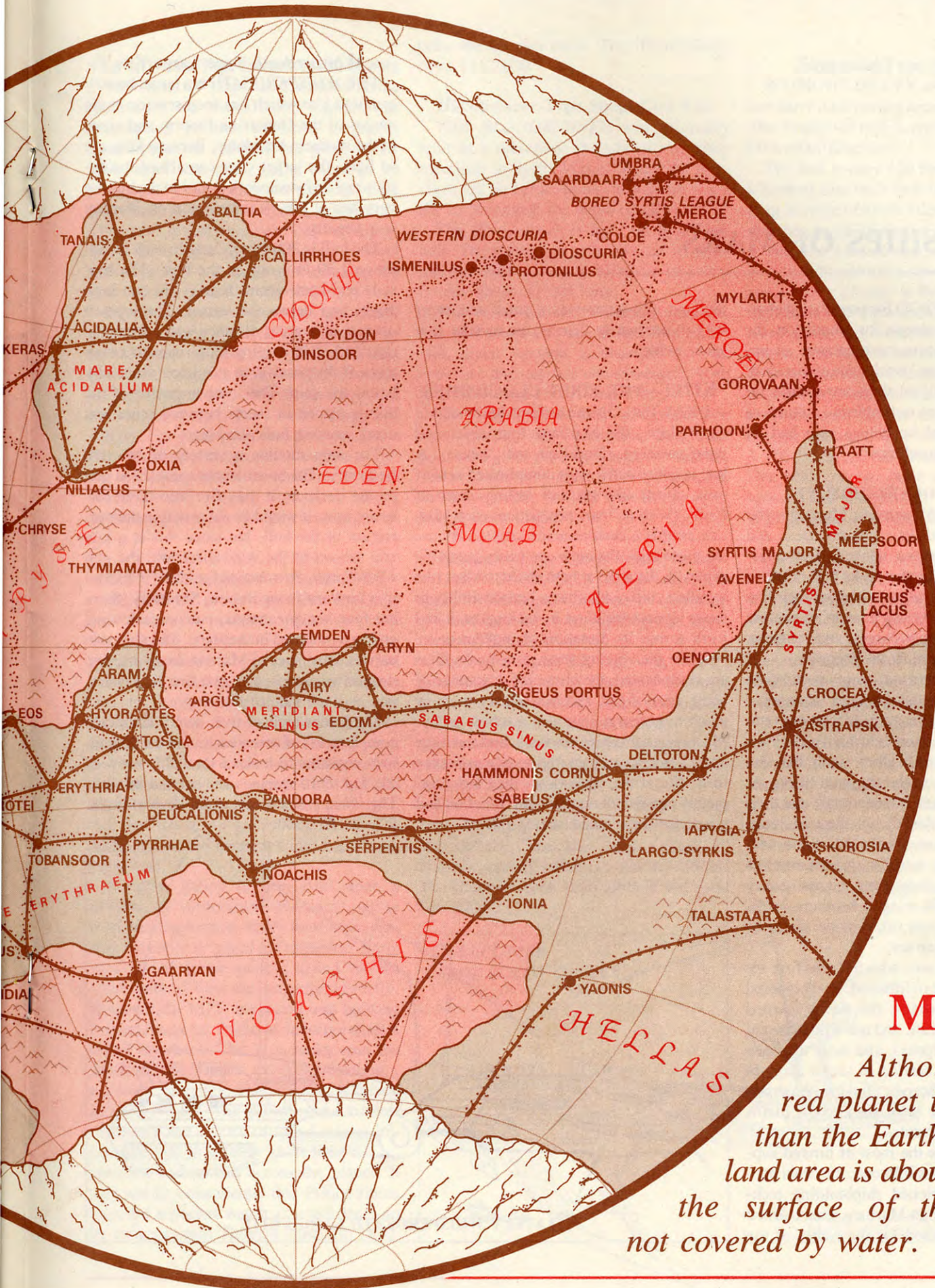
THE PLANET Mars is much smaller than the Earth. But much of the Earth is covered with the oceans; Mars is nearly all dry land. And the land area of Mars is about equal to the land area of all of the Earth. Much of that Martian land area is true frontier.

Much of Mars remains unknown and unexplored, even to the Martians. Earthmen, bringing their scientific curiosity and their search for knowledge and wealth, have mounted numerous expeditions to explore the vast deserts of the red planet.

Mars holds a great fascination for the people of Earth. The London papers are full of the chronicles of expeditions into the great Martian deserts: of visits to the great stone face of Cydonia, or the intricate subarean tunnels (below Mars' surface as opposed to Earth's, as is implied in *subterranean*) beneath Iapygia. Penny dreadful writers build pulp stories around the now dry dockyards of Gaaryan and hold their readers spellbound with accounts of flying ships and savage Martians. Children are fascinated by tales of monstrous Martian Sandwings weaving their way on the winds of stone valleys.

And the reality of Mars is even greater than the stories. Mars is a frontier ripe for adventure with riches for the taking. The Spanish conquistadores, who found gold laid at their feet, never encountered treasures like the liftwood, spice, and gems that Mars promises and delivers!





MARS

Although the red planet is smaller than the Earth, its total land area is about equal to the surface of the Earth not covered by water.

CLOUDSHIPS OF MARS

WITH LIFTWOOD for power, and enormous sails or air screws for propulsion, the Martian sky galleons have become an important part of Mars' worldwide civilization. But these magnificent ships are a fairly recent addition to the rich Martian culture—a culture originated by beings who had no need for flying machines.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

THE EARLIEST sentient Martians who developed primitive communities and civilizations were the winged High Martians, living amidst the rocks and crags of their mountain homelands. Neither their low population nor bickering tendencies exerted any great civilizing pressure, and centuries passed without significant progress.

When environmental and population pressures finally did produce changes—many High Martians were forced out onto the plains. Away from their native environment, these plainsdwellers soon lost the ability to synthesize the essential lifting ingredients from their surroundings, and their wings atrophied. And though these Martians were the ancestors of the Martians who would build their world's greatest empires and civilizations, they were originally easy prey for their still-winged brothers in the hills. High Martians often made slaves of their lowland relatives.

It was these slaves who had the first inklings of the value of liftwood. Long ignored by the High Martians, the slaves learned how to harvest, craft, and use wild liftwood for their own purposes, and more than one lowland Martian carried its secret away in daring midnight escapes, clinging desperately to liftwood life rafts, back to the plains beneath the mountains.

Forced to make the most of limited supplies of the precious liftwood, the canal people rapidly developed shipbuilding techniques, and the High Martians soon learned that trading liftwood for the riches of the

lowland city-states was a safer and surer way to prosperity than trying to take it at spear point.

KITES—THE FIRST CLOUDSHIPS

DRAWING ON the technology of sailing canal ships, the Martians first developed wind-powered cloudships, or "kites." A kite is constructed with complicated sets of sails, much like the tall sailing ships of Earth. (With no mass production, each Martian craft is a custom-made vessel.) By using these sails, the crew can easily guide the ship with the wind at high speeds. Also, like a sailing ship, a kite has a limited ability to move against the wind by tacking back and forth across its direction of movement.

While the rigging arrangements on kites are complicated, they have the advantage of being fairly light, and thus kites can carry much more cargo than can a screw galley. Most merchant ships are kites, and the large gun kites can carry an impressive ordnance load. But at the same time, they are completely dependent on the wind direction and speed for their maneuvering power.

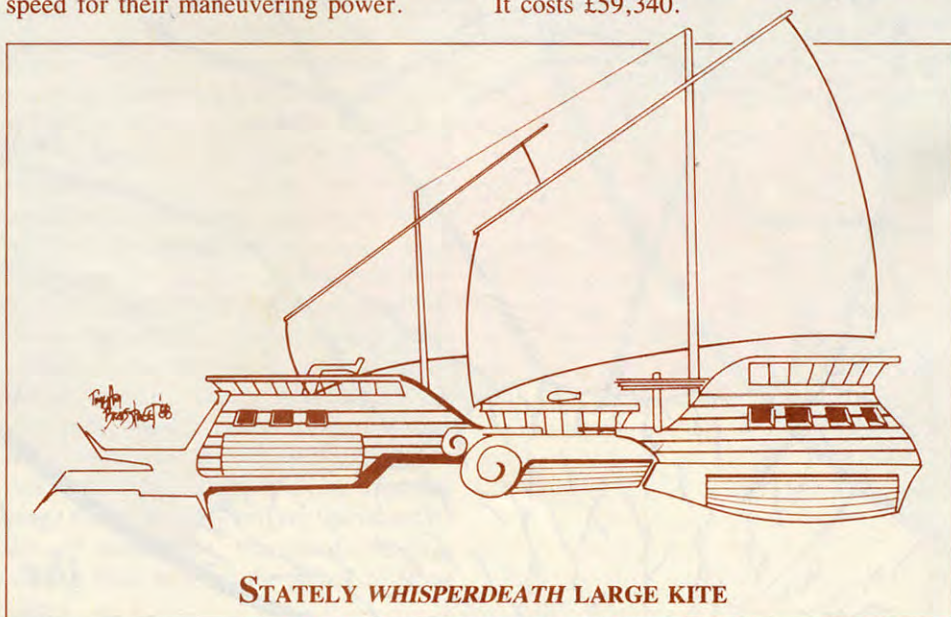
Whisperdeath-Type Large Kite

THE *WHISPERDEATH* is a large, heavily armored kite which has seen service in the navies of the Oenotrian Empire and some of the southern kingdoms. Because kites are so light, the larger ones can afford the extra weight of stonework armor in the hull—a very heavy luxury uncommon on Martian war vessels.

The hull is 200 feet in length, with an additional 30-foot ram in the bow. The top-sails and keel extend nearly 100 feet both above and below the vessel. The topmen operate at a great distance away from the ship and often employ long ropes to swing them from position to position, especially below the ship. The stone armoring of the hull is placed in sheets between inner and outer wooden hull planking.

The ship mounts a variety of Martian weaponry. The bow mounts a single rod gun on the deck, so it may fire into three different arcs. It would be safer within the protection of the hull, but since this is a kite and subject to the wind direction, the gun would often be rendered useless if locked in a forward firing mount. Similarly, there are four heavy cannons, one on each wing and two mounted in the stern. The ship also carries some special Martian weapons: two drogue torpedoes, and two fire dispensers, one on each side of the ship.

The bridge crew of five, deck and topmen complements of seven each, and the 10 gunners combine to make a total ship crew of 29. Up to 10 marines are carried as well. The *Whisperdeath* can attain High altitude. It costs £59,340.



STATELY WHISPERDEATH LARGE KITE

Warm Winds-Type Large Merchant Kite

TYPICAL OF large merchant kites on the red planet, the *Warm Winds* Carrier was constructed in the southern kingdoms sometime in the 1850s. It has plied the air lanes since that time, being captured by pirates and rival merchants time and time again until its point of origin is in question. The ship's registry has been falsified many, many times. The kite is presently pressed into passenger and cargo service along the great canals around Syrtis Major.

By the standards of gunboats and cloudships, the *Warm Winds* is enormous, measuring almost 600 feet in length and 100 feet in width. Its rigging rises over 500 feet into the air. Designed to carry 30 passengers, it can also carry up to 2000 tons of cargo and still fly. For game purposes, the ship always has 1000 tons of cargo and is capable of flying at Medium height, as stated on its status sheet. Twenty rigging crewmen, twenty deckhands, plus six bridge crewmen com-

prise the 46-man crew. The *Warm Winds* costs £112,600.

Bloodrunner-Type Small Gun Kite

THE *BLOODRUNNER* was originally built as a present to the son of a wealthy merchant in Syrtis Major. When the merchant fell on harder times, he sold his son's toy to Shastapsh for some quick cash.

The *Bloodrunner* is built on a 100-ton hull. The masts and sails take up 10 tons, and one man can easily run them (the ship is only about 50 feet long).

This vessel carries two heavy cannons, one at the bow and one at the stern of the kite. Each weapon is manned by two crewmen and can fire into three arcs: both broadsides and either fore or aft.

The bridge crew of four—combined with one topman, one deckhand, and four gunners—gives the ship a total crew of 10. The ship can only attain High altitude, but can move swiftly with the wind during combat. It costs £7600.

Swiftwood-Type Small Kite

WITHOUT HEAVY armor, a small kite can carry a surprising amount of weaponry. The *Swiftwood* type is typical of kites in the Oenotrian Empire.

The hull is only 120 feet in length, with a hooked ram built onto the bow. The rigging is made of block sails extending above the ship some 50 feet.

The kite mounts one rogue gun on the bow, a light gun and a sweep on either side, and a power grapnel in the stern. The common tactic with this vessel is to fire with forward guns and broadside until past the target, then launch the power grapnel and drop sails to board with the 20-marine contingent carried on this vessel. If this strategy does not seem likely to succeed, the captain has the option to ram instead.

The *Swiftwood* has a total crew of 20, with five bridge crew, three deckhands, three topmen, and nine gunners. It can attain Very High altitude and costs £20,140.

**SCREW GALLEYS—
THE TRIUMPH OF MECHANICS**

MEANS OF propulsion other than sails had been in the planning stages for years. For instance, rowers below decks pulling collapsible wind scoops through the air, had been considered and even tested by Martian inventors eager to rise above the mercy of the wind, but such experiments ultimately proved impractical at best and disastrous at the worst. It was under the guidance of an enlightened warrior prince of Parhoon named Jinma, an inventor in his own right, that the first screw galley was tested. The battle against the Martian winds had finally been won.

A screw galley is dependent upon a number of turncranks—Martians put to work turning a crank shaft—most often running the entire length of the cloudship. Early versions of screw galleys relied on the crankshaft to turn the propeller directly. However, in 1871, a version was built by Prince Jinma of Parhoon incorporating a coiled flywheel. The turncranks spin the flywheel, which stores the energy necessary to power the galley. The propeller is driven by the flywheel. The improvement in crew efficiency and control of speed was so impressive that in a fairly short time the innovation had spread across the planet. It may not be coincidental that Prince Jinma received a pocket watch as a gift from an Earthman named Thomas Edison in 1870.

Hullcutter-Type Large Screw Galley

THE *HULLCUTTER* design sacrifices speed for additional firepower—a commodity found necessary when dealing with large, armored British vessels.

The hull is nearly 200 feet long, with 21 turncranks below deck. The ram is mounted to the bow and ends a solid wooden keel.

The *Hullcutter* is armed with a lob gun, two forward-mounted rogue cannons, one rear-mounted rod gun, and two side-mounted heavy cannons.

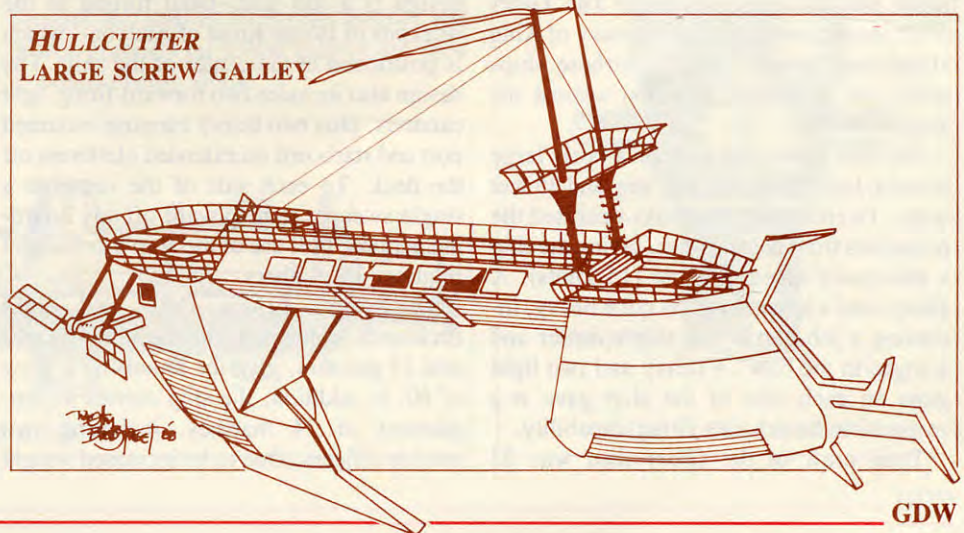
The crew totals 50, with seven bridge crew, seven deckhands, 21 turncranks, and 15 gunners. The ship also carries 10 marines, one of which is a marine officer. The ship can reach High altitude and costs £46,800.

Clearsight-Type Small Screw Galley

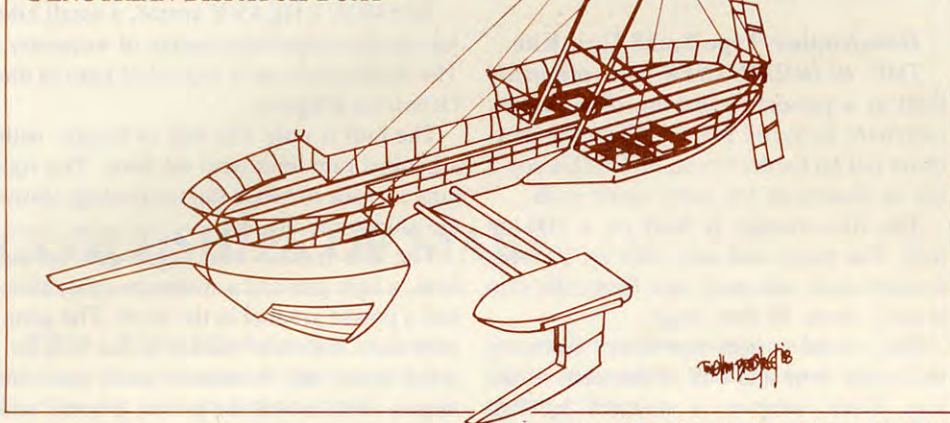
THE *CLEARLIGHT* design incorporates a large number of turncranks to give it a remarkable speed for a screw galley. Of course, the design sacrifices heavy armament to make room for the additional men needed to run the cranks and to accommodate the weight of the cranks themselves.

The hull is less than 100 feet long, with the characteristic connected large bow and stern sections. Twelve massive turncranks churning constantly below deck give the ship a speed of 25 knots. The four light guns mounted on the deck each face into a different arc of fire to cover all approaches. The crew totals 26 men. A *Clearsight*-type vessel can reach High altitude and costs £12,800.

**HULLCUTTER
LARGE SCREW GALLEY**



OENOTRIAN DISPATCH BOAT

**Small Bird-Type Small Screw Galley**

THE *SMALL BIRD* is built on a small, 140-ton wooden hull. The ship is powered by six turncranks, but because the ship is so small, these are located on the upper deck instead of below (as they would be on a larger screw galley). The turncranks give the vessel a top speed of three (15 knots).

The design is built around a single large rogue gun, mounted in the bow of the ship. In addition to the main weapon, two sweepers are mounted, one on either side of the ship, to take care of antipersonnel needs. The crew totals 17. The ship can reach Very High altitude and has a value of £13,000.

Glory Sled-Type Screw Galley

THE HIGH MARTIAN LORDS of the various kraags have recognized the firepower and maneuverability of their British opponents. In response to that threat, they have made several attempts to construct heavier screw galleys to better oppose the British ships.

The *Glory Sled* design is typical of these more heavily armed galleys. The *Glory Sleds* were constructed for the navy of King Hattabranx himself, but both these ships were lost in their first action against the British in 1887.

The *Glory Sled* was built on a fairly large wooden hull, about 170 feet long and 35 feet wide. Twenty-one turncranks operated the propellers from below decks, giving the ship a maximum speed of three (15 knots). A *Glory Sled's* armament was quite heavy, including a lob gun at the ship's center and a rogue in the bow. A heavy and two light guns on each side of the ship gave it a respectable broadsides firing capability.

Total crew of the *Glory Sled* was 53

sailors and 12 marines. It could only reach High altitude and was appraised at £44,840 by the Admiralty Prize Commission.

Fenian Ram Screw Galley

THE *FENIAN RAM* was originally commissioned by a Martian in the employ of an Irish separatist. Construction of the ship was begun in exchange for 20 bars of gold, a small fraction of its value. When nearly completed, the Irish revolutionaries made their move, seized the ship, and made good their escape under cover of darkness. The *Fenian Ram* has been harrying British activities on Mars for some time, and is crewed by Irishmen and Martian mercenaries, hiding out somewhere in the Meroe Badlands.

The *Fenian Ram* is a large screw galley, measuring almost 250 feet in length and about 45 feet in width. As its name suggests, its structure is built around a solid keel and a bow-mounted metal and wood ram which is designed to puncture either a wooden or metal hull. Thirty-two turncranks work in the hold of the ship.

The *Ram* is heavily armed. Central to its design is a lob gun—hand forged in the workpits of House Ktree of Alclyon—which is positioned in the center of the ship. The design also includes two forward-firing light cannons, plus two heavy cannons mounted port and starboard on extended platforms off the deck. To each side of the vessel is a single sweeper to help ward off any boarding actions. Full use of the ship's armament requires 13 gunners.

The seven bridge crew and eight deckhands, combined with the 32 turncranks and 13 gunners, give the cloudship a crew of 60. In addition, the ship carries a complement of 24 marines, including two marine officers. Due to its increased weight

the *Ram* can only attain an altitude of High, but has a top speed of four (20 knots). The *Fenian Ram* carries no special weapons.

The *Fenian Ram* is a one-of-a-kind vessel. Had it ever been purchased, it would have cost £51,600.

Sky Runner-Type Screw Galley

THE FIRST *Sky Runner*-type ship was constructed as a gift from a Princess of Umbra to her lover, a general in the armies of Syrtis Major. Its original designer, a slave himself, was in turn sold off to the shipyards of Alclyon, where a group of similar ships were commissioned over the next several years. The *Sky Runner* is still possessed by General Smyrtra, but its sister ships have been traded and sold all over the red planet.

The *Sky Runner* is built on a wooden hull which measures 150 feet long and averages 30 feet in width. The *Sky Runner* has no ram in the bow—instead, it sports a carved bust of the Princess of Umbra.

The ship is armed with one rogue gun which can fire forward and to both broadsides. There is an extended gun platform on each side of the hull which houses a heavy cannon that can fire forward, astern, and into its respective broadside.

The *Sky Runner* has a crew complement of 32. The ship can attain altitude up to Very High and has a top speed of four (20 knots). It is valued at £25,600.

Endtime-Type Screw Galley

PERSONALLY COMMISSIONED by the Warlord of Shastapsh, the *Endtime* series of ships had at one time four members. The *Endtime* and *Forever* are both still in operation. The *Eternal Night* was lost in an aerial battle with pirates over the Nepenthes-Thoth Steppes. The *Eternity* crash-landed after a severe trim accident over that same stretch of land—only five of its crew made the dangerous trek alive.

The *Endtime* is built on a wooden hull measuring approximately 120 feet in length and 30 feet in width. It has 15 turncranks working in the hull to keep it moving and five deckhands to tend the ship in motion.

One lob gun is mounted in the center of the vessel, and a single rod gun fires from the bow. Two heavy guns are mounted on either side of the ship.

The *Endtime* has a total crew of 35. The ship also carries 10 marines, of which one is an officer. The ship can attain High altitude and a speed of three (15 knots). It costs £31,500.

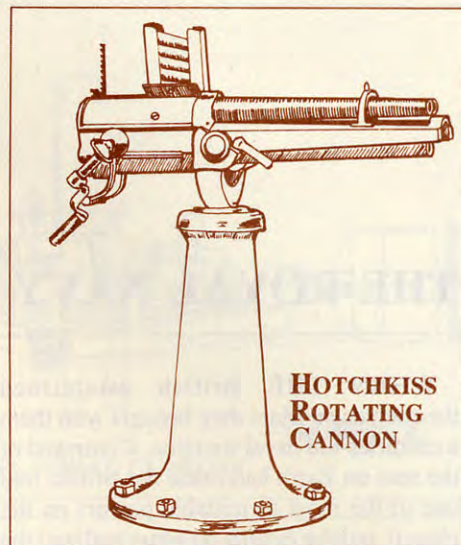
BRITISH NAVAL ORDNANCE

THE BASIC ARMAMENT on the ships of the Royal Navy on Mars is the breech-loading gun. These weapons come in a variety of sizes, but principles are the same for all of them. An exploding projectile is fired through a rifled barrel; when the projectile hits another object, it explodes. The size of guns on British sky ships ranges from the one-pounder to eight-inch weapons. The eight-inch gun seems to be the upper limit for skyships that are anything more than floating gun batteries.

The Nordenfelt, Maxim, and Gardner guns are all rapid-firing weapons designed to affect the crews of opposing vessels. The Nordenfelt is the only one in use on Royal Naval vessels at present, but improvements in the other two weapons could change that in the near future. The Nordenfelt has five barrels each, fed from an individual ammunition hopper. The barrels may be adjusted to fire either individually or in a volley. When firing individually it gives the weapon a fairly high rate of fire. The Nordenfelt can continue to fire even if an individual barrel jams.

Drogue Torpedoes and tether mines are similar weapons. The tether mines are housed in liftwood buoys and left to float above a ship. (They are also floated above cities and shore batteries to provide defense against attack from the air.) Most ship-borne tether mines have a 20- to 40-pound charge which is detonated by a fulminate contact detonator. Drogue Torpedoes are hung over the side of a ship in order to attack target below the ship. British Drogues are usually made of iron and carry a 60-pound explosive charge with a contact detonator. Both of these weapons were Martian ideas, but the British have improved upon them considerably.

The Hale Rocket is 36 inches long and four inches in diameter. It is a brass tube fitted with nozzles at the bottom and filled with a solid propellant which, as it burns, discharges through the nozzles to propel the rocket. The nozzles are arranged so as to cause the rocket to spin as it flies, thus giving it a measure of stability. The Hale Rocket, standard on British ships, carries an eight-pound warhead with a contact detonator. Due to the inherent inaccuracy of these weapons, they are always fired in salvos.



HOTCHKISS
ROTATING
CANNON

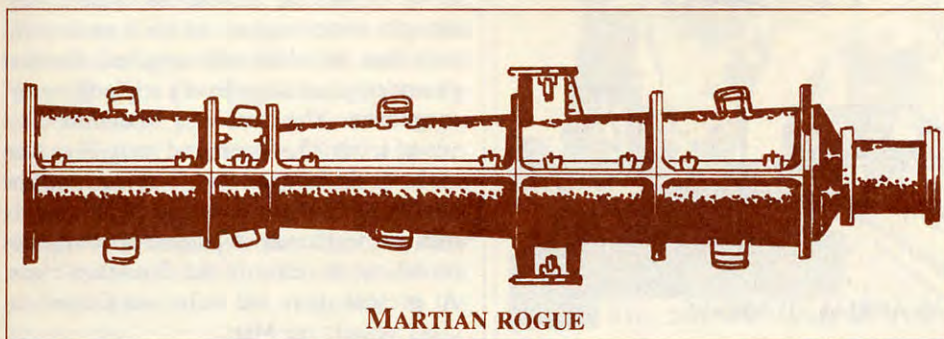
The Smutts Aerial Torpedo is a wrought iron cylinder, five feet long and eight inches in diameter. It carries a 250-pound explosive warhead which is detonated by a timed fuze. The torpedo is fitted with liftwood vanes, and is adjusted for neutral buoyancy before it is launched. This allows the torpedo to maintain a relatively straight course until such time as the fuze explodes the torpedo.

MARTIAN WEAPONRY

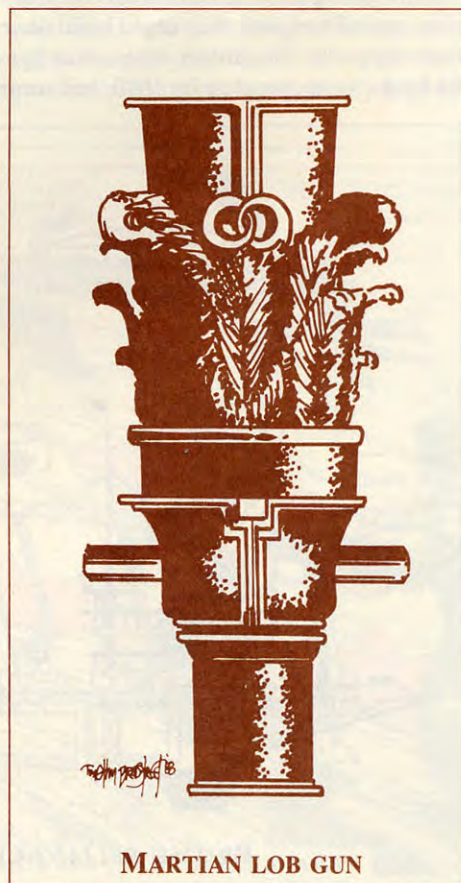
ALL MARTIAN cannons, including lob, rod, and rogue guns, are muzzleloading, black powder weapons at least 100 years behind the technology of British guns, but every Martian weapon is uniquely fashioned. Light and heavy guns are merely basic cannon. A rod gun is rifled and fires an iron rod designed for penetration. The rogue gun is the most powerful Martian direct-fire cannon. The lob gun is a huge rock-throwing mortar, but only one can be mounted on a single ship; if mounted anywhere but the ship's center, firing it would cause the ship to tip over. Sweepers are smaller, swivel-mounted grapeshot firing guns designed to clear the enemy's decks.

SPECIALTY WEAPONS

MARTIAN FIRE is similar to Greek fire and consists of burning oil that can be poured onto targets directly below the firing vessel. Accuracy is low, but the effects of a hit can be devastating. Tether mines are explosive charges with liftwood to carry them (buoying them up) and lines to guide them toward their targets or anchor them in place. Their main function is to prevent ships from passing overhead to drop liquid fire, but they have a limited attack capability as well. Tether mines are also often deployed as part of the defenses of a city or fortress. Drogue torpedoes are swung beneath the ship to hit targets below, and power grapnels on screw galleys are used to board enemy ships.



MARTIAN ROGUE



MARTIAN LOB GUN

THE ROYAL NAVY

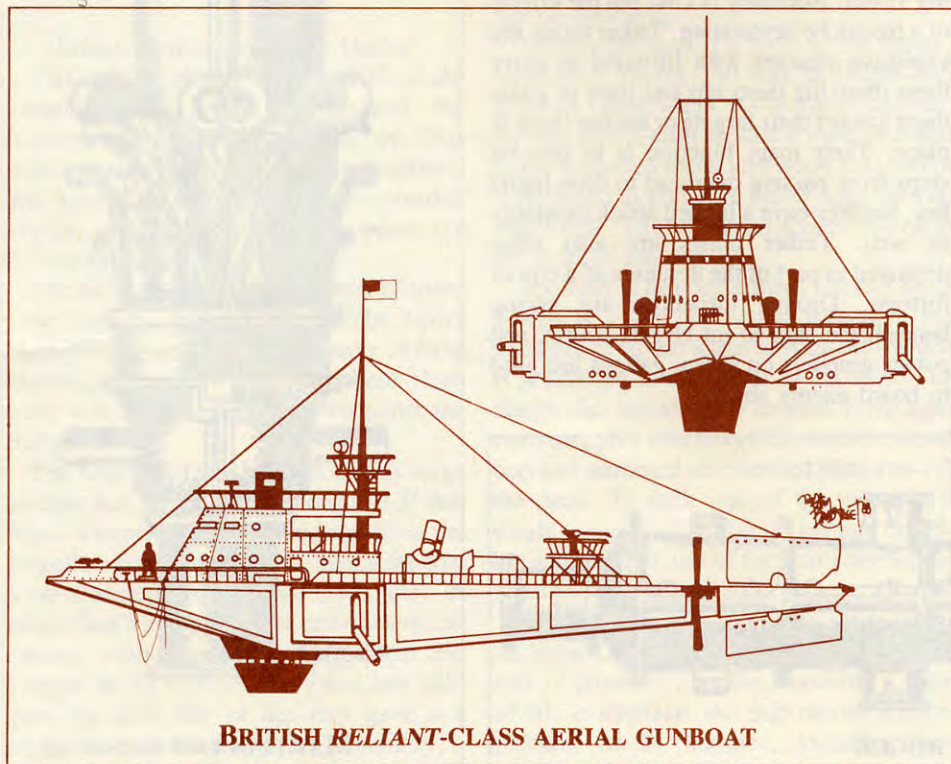
WHEN THE British established themselves on Mars they brought with them a centuries-old naval tradition. Command of the seas on Earth had made the British into one of the most formidable powers on the planet, and the British on Mars realized the vital role that naval power would play in protecting and expanding their influence on the Red planet. It made no difference that the navies on Mars sailed the air, rather than the seas. Accordingly, the British quickly embarked on a program designed to install them as the preeminent naval power on Mars. The ancient Martian shipyards at Parhoon, which were the first to construct screw galleys, were brought under British control giving them limited naval construction capabilities until they could build their own shipyards. The British shipyards at Syrtis Major were complete by 1880, and were

unique in their ability to construct armored, steam-powered vessels. In 1881, with great fanfare, the first two ships were launched from the Syrtis Major shipyards—a pair of *Aphid*-class aerial gunboats.

The *Reliant*-class gunboat (only one of this class has been constructed) is the largest example of the gunboat. It is 220 feet long and 80 feet wide. Although the *Reliant* is not heavily armored it is virtually bristling with weapons. Four fixed mount Nordenfelts fire to each broadside. Two six-pounder guns are mounted on the foredeck firing forward and to the respective broadside. Both the starboard and port sides boast pivot mounted six-inch guns, while the stern tower has a pivot-mounted, four-inch long gun. Eight Hale rocket batteries are mounted in pairs slightly to the stern-side center of the ship. As might be expected, all this ar-

mament reduces the heights at which the ship can sail, as well as the speed. The ship is propelled by steam-driven twin screws, and maneuver and trim are supplied by large stern rudders and a keel stabilizer as is standard on all gunboats. The *Reliant* has a bridge crew of six officers and men, an engine crew of six, 16 gunners, and a deck crew of 11 men, including three petty officers. The *Reliant* also has provision for 12 marines, bringing the total normal crew establishment to 51 officers and men. The *Reliant*-class gunboat represented a deadend in gunboat construction. Gunboats were originally designed to rely on speed and maneuver in order to accomplish their goals; the heavily armed *Reliant* was not in keeping with that concept and the class was abandoned in favor of the *Dauntless*-class gunboats.

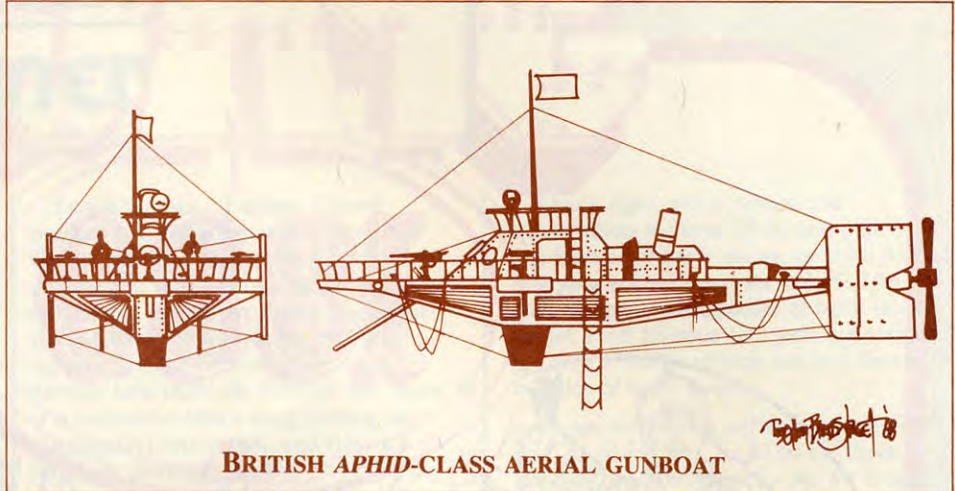
Construction on the *Dauntless*-class gunboats first started in 1884. These ships represented a return to the idea that gunboats should be high-flying and fast, but they also retained the marine complement, extremely useful in boarding maneuvers, which has proved quite valuable on the *Reliant*. Measuring 160 feet in length and 50 feet across, the *Dauntless* class also continues the custom of only lightly armoring gunboats. The firepower for these ships is provided by two four-inch long-barrel guns, two three-pounders and two Nordenfelts. A four-inch gun is mounted in the hull at the bow of the ship; while this provides protection for the gun and the crew, it limits the gun's field of fire to 90 degrees. The second four-incher is pivot-mounted on a stern tower for more flexibility in arc of fire. Two wing positions on either side of the ship boast the pivot-mounted three-inchers. The two Nordenfelts are fixed-mounted, one on each side of the ship. Trim and maneuver equipment is about the same as the *Aphid*-class; large stern rudders and a stabilizing keel. The first two *Dauntless*-class ships were twin screw, steam-powered vessels. However with the introduction of the forced-draught steam engine, which is more compact than the older style engines, the next *Dauntless*-class ships have a triple-screw arrangement. The crew of a *Dauntless*-class vessel totals 33 officers and men. Five men make up the bridge crew, four men man the engine room, 8 men are gunners, and six men are deckhands. A platoon of 10 marines round out the crew of the *Dauntless*-class. At present there are only two *Dauntless*-class vessels on Mars.



BRITISH *RELIANT*-CLASS AERIAL GUNBOAT

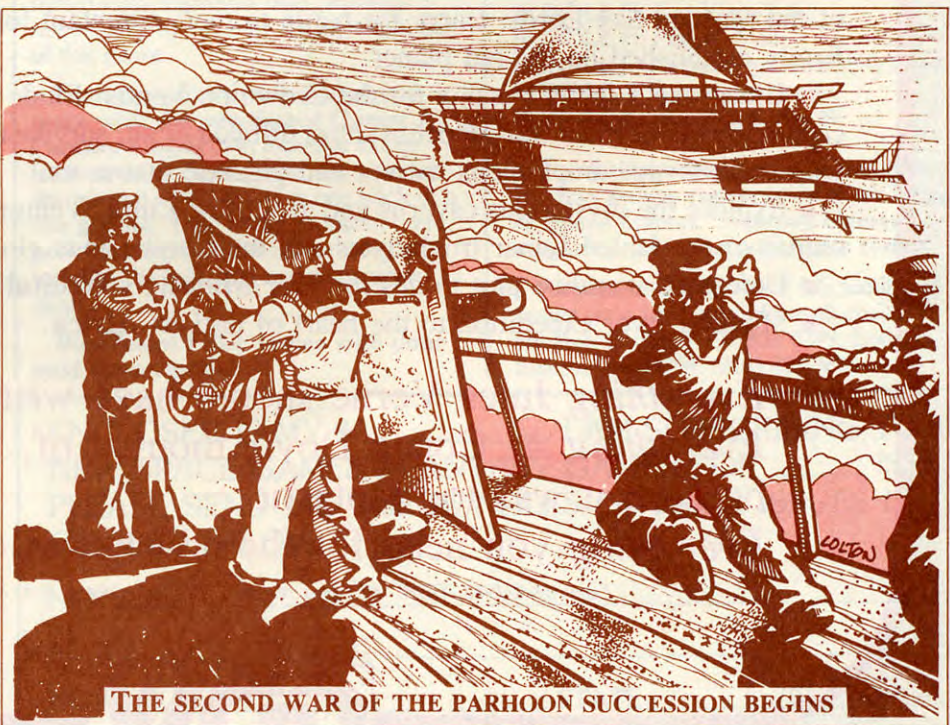
The *Aphid*-class gunboats were the first armored vessels ever to sail the skies of Mars. These ships are only 90 feet long and 30 feet wide and very lightly armored; the *Aphid*-class being purposely kept small in order to provide a high-flying, fast-pursuit gunboat. Armament on *Aphid*-class gunboats consists of a four-inch short gun pivot-mounted on the foredeck. This mounting allows the gun a broad, 180-degree field of fire. One-pound pieces are pivot-mounted on each wing mount position, and there is a fixed-mount Nordenfelt on both the starboard and port sides. The *Aphid*-class is a driven by twin screws powered by a steam engine. A dynamo, also powered by the steam engine, supplies a limited amount of electricity which is mainly used for running lights and signaling equipment on board the ship. Trim and maneuver is provided by large rear rudders and a keel stabilizing fin. The normal crew establishment is 15 men. At present there are four *Aphid*-class gunboats in service in the British Royal Navy on Mars.

The *Thunderer*-class monitors began construction in 1884. Basically a floating battery used to engage enemy vessels at long range, only one *Thunderer*-class ship has been completed thus far. *Thunderer*-class ships boast an eight-inch gun mounted in a revolving armored turret at the bow of the ship, and a six-inch gun in a revolving, armored turret at the stern of the ship. Four Nordenfelts are fixed, two to each side, as antipersonnel weapons. Two batteries of Hale rockets round out armaments of *Thunderer* class. The *Thunderer* class usually goes into action with *Aphid*- or *Dauntless*-class gunboats. The combination of small, highly maneuverable ships, and a long range, powerfully armed vessel has proved a potent partnership. The crew of the *Thunderer*-class ships is composed of eight engineers, four bridge crew, 10 deckhands, nine gunners, two officers, and three petty officers. Twelve marines are also on board, but mainly to prevent boarding, as the favorite motion tactic has been to try and overwhelm large British ships and board them. The first *Thunderer*-class ship was being completed just as the forced draught steam engine became available, and this modern power plant was installed in the vessel. The steam engine drives twin screws and powers the gun turrets. Currently only one *Thunderer*-class ship has been built but at least two more are expected to be constructed.



BRITISH APHID-CLASS AERIAL GUNBOAT

The *Triumph*-class cruisers are to be the most modern and formidable ships in the Royal Navy on Mars. Decently armored and packed with firepower, these vessels are equipped with the latest technology. Measuring 325 feet in length and 80 feet in width, the *Triumph*-class is the largest armored ship on Mars. The armament includes one six-inch gun on a bow-mounted pivot, a four-inch, long-barrel gun pivot-mounted on each wing position, a five-inch, fixed-mounted gun firing to the stern, and a Smutts discharger. Other weapons on the *Triumph*-class ships include tether mines, drogue torpedoes, four Hale rocket batteries and four Nordenfelts for close self-defense. A modern, forced-draught, steam engine powers the large twin screws, and drives a dynamo supplying a limited amount of electricity. The ship carries four bridge crew, 10 engineers, 12 deckhands, 15 gunners, two ship officers, and four petty officers. Ten marines are part of the ship's complement also, and most often employed in a self-defense role. The *Triumph*-class cruisers are designed to operate independently, but will often be used in conjunction with gunboats. While only one has been completed, several more are being considered and two have already begun construction.



THE SECOND WAR OF THE PARHOON SUCCESSION BEGINS

SPACE

1889



● Drift stately canals on diplomatic missions to the Martian lowland potentates, or escort caravans through the desert domains of the steppe nomads. Fight the winged warriors and the cloud ships of the Martian Sky Lords. Carry the battle to their mountain fortresses. The British Empire is firmly established on the red planet.

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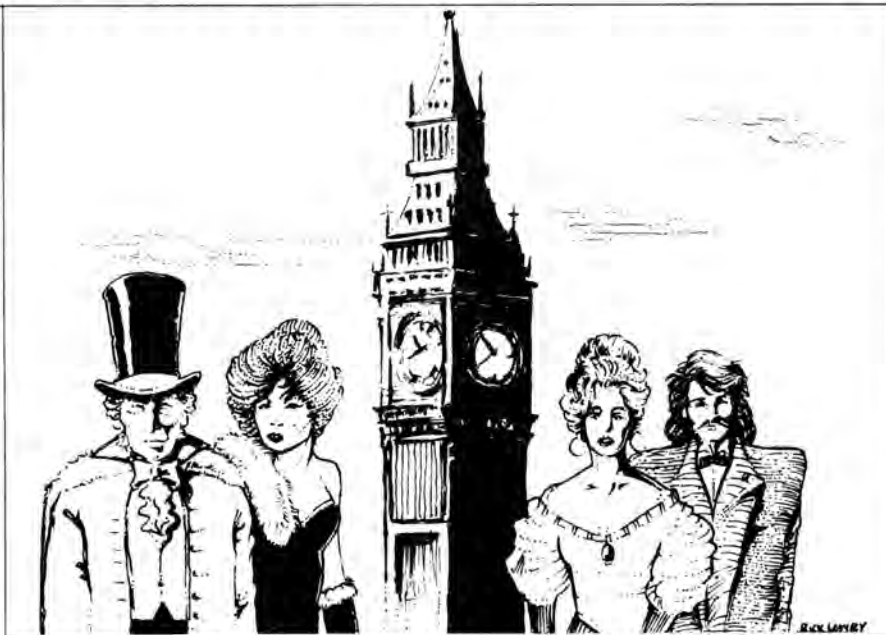
Victorian Times & Society

POLITICS

Great Britain was a constitutional monarchy, the first of its kind. And over the centuries, from the Magna Carta through the Glorious Revolution of 1688 to the period of major electoral reforms from 1832 onward, the power of the Crown had been stripped away; it was now a ceremonial, almost ritual symbol of British nationhood. The queen, much beloved by her subjects, reigned but did not rule. Government was in the hands of Parliament, the two houses of Lords and Commons, and specifically the Prime Minister and his cabinet.

By 1886 there was universal male suffrage in Britain, but the extension of voting rights had as yet made little difference in the traditional pattern of government. A tight ruling clique of eminent, often aristocratic families, who had controlled British politics for centuries, remained in power; Lord Salisbury's cabinet was overwhelmingly patrician.

A two-party system was in force. The Whigs had become Liberals, and their Tory opponents were now Conservatives. Both were dominated by established, landowning families, and both were feeling the push from below, from ambitious middle-class politicians and from working-class voters. The Liberals were more prone to "progressive" instincts—a tendency which, as we look at the world of 1889, had brought division and eclipse. Two issues had brought this about. Firstly, the age-old Irish question had split the party into "Home Rulers," who favored limited self-government for Ireland, and the "Unionists," who did not. The "Grand Old Man" of the Liberals, William Ewart Gladstone, had worked to preserve unity, but the failure of his Home Rule Bill (1886) broke the party and swept Salisbury's Conservatives into power.



The second issue was the New Imperialism, the aggressive expansion of British influence in Africa, in Asia and, most importantly, on Mars. Gladstone had railed against the expense, questioned the moral reasoning, and thundered against the motives. It did no good. The Liberal-Unionists, led by Joseph Chamberlain, trooped over to join the Tories in support of "Union, Empire and Mars" (as Chamberlain was to put it in his "Selly Oak" speech of 1890), and the rump of the Liberals fell into disorder as Gladstone finally retired, at 82, in 1891.

All of which rather put the ball in the Conservative court. The Tories had taken on the confident, assertive spirit of Imperialism under the far-sighted Disraeli (1804-81), finding in it a cause which brought the new working-class vote together with the ancient landholding elite. Lord Randolph Churchill made Martian expansion a plank of his "Tory Democracy" platform, advocating investment and settlement in the mooted "White Man's Country" of the Meepsoor highlands. More aggressive still was Chamberlain, who as early as 1882 had looked forward to standing in the Commons Lobby with the Honourable Member for Parhoon West. All this came as something of a surprise to Salisbury, a traditional Tory who believed that Britain ought to be ruled by gentlemen bred for the purpose; a half-century in politics

had shown Lord Salisbury the fleeting nature of Imperial glory, and he considered "this Martian Adventure" a red herring in Britain's efforts to preserve a waning global hegemony. He was by nature a power-broker, a maker of deals, and he is alleged to have mortified his cabinet in 1888 by advocating that Britain barter Syrtis Lapis, Heligoland, and Ceylon for the whole of the Kai-

ser's sphere of influence in Africa.

Outside these two parties, governing alternately, were others of a different stamp. The Irish Nationalists, led by Parnell, had seats in the Commons. George Bernard Shaw founded the Fabian Society, a group of Socialist moderates, while William Morris—the Renaissance Man of Victorian Britain—advocated a Utopian society. Karl Marx developed his theories in London and was buried in Highgate cemetery (1883), while the exiled Russian Anarchist, Prince Kropotkin, advocated the politics of the bomb from his home in Hammersmith.

The statesmen might devise policy and issue orders, but administration—the act of *doing*—was in the hands of career civil servants. Bureaucracy had grown immensely during the Victorian era in response to the increasing sense that government could be a force for improvement. The civil servants with Imperial responsibilities—the men at the Foreign, Colonial, and India Offices—were most smitten with a sense of dedicated destiny, which Kipling would dub "the White Man's Burden." They were idealistic and highly principled—more scrupulous than the trader or settler on the Imperial Frontiers—the products of public schools and universities, selected by examination. Fierce (if friendly) rivalry existed between the departments for control of the most prestigious

territories and the budgets that went with them. The Foreign Office was in charge of relations with sovereign powers, from France and Russia to the Martian treaty dependencies, whose independence was no more than nominal. This was to bring friction with the Colonial Office, who had taken control of Syrtis Lapis on the establishment of the Crown Colony in 1881. The legality of Britain converting a Regency-Protectorate into a full-fledged colony, indeed, seemed doubtful to many in the Foreign Office and was to create a crisis as the young Anwaak grew to manhood. That the upstart Colonial Office, which Cecil Rhodes had denounced as being run "by missionaries, philanthropists and Jews," should administer important new lands concerned not only the smart set at the Foreign Office, but also the powerful India Office. In 1878 the Viceroy of India, Lord Lytton, took time off from the business of invading Afghanistan to suggest that the vast experience, huge treasury, and powerfully armed might of British India made her the obvious choice to govern the Martian Regency, as it had so many of the Princely States of the subcontinent. A series of biting editorials in *The Times*, and a famous Punch cartoon showing a winged elephant transporting the Viceroy from Calcutta to the Red Planet for the hot season ended the idea, although Indian troops were to serve in the Gorovaangian War as instructors to the Parhoon Rifles; the father of the famous Martian writer, Gurchan Xyypt Singh, was one of these men.

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN

Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914) was perhaps the most significant politician of his age, and certainly its most characteristic. The son of a shopkeeper, Chamberlain became a manufacturer of screws, retiring at 38 to become Lord Mayor of Birmingham. His success in slum clearance led to his election to Parliament (1876) and an increasing standing in Liberal circles. Still the Radical, he saw himself as the successor to Gladstone, but the "Grand Old Man" showed no signs of stepping down, and Chamberlain's imagination was fired by the commercial possibilities opened by the Martian possessions; he began to "think Imperially." On his split with Gladstone in 1886, Chamberlain caused a sensation by accepting Salisbury's offer of the Colonial Office while still a member of the Liberal party; his popularity in the Midlands ensured re-election, and in 1895, he formally "crossed the House" to the Tories. Unlike the cool aristocrats of the Salisbury cabinet, "Pushful Joe" was sharp, aggressive, and a player to public opinion. Faultlessly dressed, monocled, with a fresh orchid in his buttonhole, his smooth manners did not cover his ambitions, and his devious maneuvers as Colonial Secretary—the Avenel Incident (1887), the Jameson Raid (1896) and the events leading up to the Second Boer War—caused disquiet in government circles. Chamberlain saw the new acquisitions in Africa and on Mars as a vast slum in need of "improvement," and his love of orchids meant that his trips to Syrtis Major (1886, 1894) were as much in search of new species for his conservatory outside Birmingham as they were for state visits. He left the Colonial Office in 1903, and was struck down by paralysis—possibly caused by chemical secretions of the Oenotrian Black Palm in Earth's atmosphere—three years later.

ADMINISTRATORS

The men who ran the Empire "on the spot" were products

of a narrow caste, and most spent their entire careers running Britain's overseas possessions, working their way through postings in Sarawak or Swaziland in the hope of a plum job, a governorship in a pleasant land with a decent climate and properly organized sporting activities. Mostly young men of the upper middle class, educated at the public schools and older universities, they were generally Anglican in faith and Conservative in politics, and well imbued with the games-playing cult of "Muscular Christianity." The Foreign and Indian Offices selected candidates by examinations of notorious difficulty, to be followed by a year's study in law and languages before being placed in postings abroad. The less prestigious and pompous Colonial Office chose its men by personal recommendations and informal interviews, on the grounds that, in the strange and backward territories that fell to its lot, "character" and robust good health were rather more necessary than brains or knowledge. Once posted in Upper Burma or deepest Gorovaan, the young District Commissioner (or whatever his local title) would be judge, policeman, tax collector, census taker, architect, civil engineer, and a hundred other duties. As far as possible, he would try to follow local laws, omitting only those repugnant to Anglo-Saxon tastes, and invent local theories and procedures as seemed appropriate to the moment. Some stations were more comfortable than others—Ceylon and Syrtis Major were renowned as "good billets"—while others offered only mud huts and mosquitoes, the closest European company being the French or German official in his own thatched hovel across the ill-defined border. Not surprisingly, some administrators grew slack, taking to imported gin and local mistresses—especially in tropical Africa, where the "Old Coasters" had an unenviable reputation—but most showed a dedication, energy, and resource that far outweighed their lack of useful training or empathy with their often misunderstood charges.

THE PRESS

The advance of literacy during the Victorian era, particularly after the Education Act of 1870, fueled a growth in readership for cheap, popular literature of all kinds. The older, highly respectable press exemplified by *The Times* was joined by a vigorously Imperialist group of London dailies—*The Standard*, *The Morning Post*, and, especially, by "the embodiment and mouthpiece of the Imperial idea," *The Daily Mail*. Weekly pictorial magazines—*The Illustrated London News*, *The Graphic*, *The Black and White Budget*—portrayed the growth of the empire as both a divinely inspired mission and a jolly lark in the (often rather distant) countryside. Journalists became celebrities, especially the intrepid war correspondents. Archibald Forbes rode through enemy territory alone to be first with the news of the defeat of the Zulus at Ulundi in 1879, and would alternately predict trouble in the Balkans or the Belgian Coprates, "in the spring, mark my words." Bennet Burleigh rallied a broken square at Tamai in the Sudan; his "Desert Warfare," "Conquest of the Red Planet," and "Khartoum Campaign" were enormously successful. Melton Prior's impression of the "Last Stand at the Shastapsh Residency" hung above the mantelpiece in many a suburban parlour. G.W. Steevens, "the High Priest of Imperialism," never regained his health after a dose of Parhoon thorn fever, and died of typhoid at Ladysmith in 1900. It was the work of these correspondents, whose purple

prose made the myth of the Empire so real for the man in the street, to create a popular enthusiasm for Imperial adventurism.

VICTORIAN SOCIETY

British society in the 19th century was divided, quite sharply, into classes which determined the lives and expectations of its members. Movement between classes was not easy; it was difficult to gain acceptance when attempting to rise, and it was a shameful degradation to fall.

There was no real "system" at all in this class system; there were differences between the city people—who, for the first time, became the majority in Victoria's reign—and the country dwellers, and between the different regions. Wealth had little to do with class per se—certainly less than manners—but an improvement in personal fortune might well be the spur to acquire the behavior and attitude of a higher status, an effort which might succeed or fail according to the whims of fate and the competence of one's teacher or etiquette.

In descending order, as a Victorian observer might see them, the class hierarchy ran as follows:

The Royal Family: The royal family was then fairly large. Besides the queen herself, there were royal personages in key positions in society; the Prince of Wales was the leader of the London "fast set" of bon viveurs, while the queen's cousin, the Duke of Cambridge, was commander-in-chief of the army from just after the Crimean War until 1896. Nevertheless, many of the older noble families of England preferred to regard the Royals as upstart Germans of questionable breeding and manners.

The Aristocracy: The elite of British society in terms of wealth, prestige, and power. Political reform was beginning to undercut the traditional domination of government by the titled and privileged, while the decline in farm prices would slowly devalue the country estates upon which noble fortunes depended. If decline was in the wind, however, it was not obvious. The aristocrats were, in many ways, the least "Victorian" element of society. They came to enjoy the conveniences of the modern world, but their outlook remained Georgian, Rococo perhaps, in a time of grave and somber virtues. The nobles did not really care about "progress"; they were perfectly satisfied with the way things had always been: hunting, balls, and winters in France, and afternoon drives, and dinner at the Carlton or the Turf club. These were the pursuits of a leisured class, a class whose wealth, based in rolling acres of prime farmland, allowed them to live where and how they chose.

As rulers, they had little regard for trade or industry; their education consisted largely of Greek and Latin, with an increasing emphasis on games as the century wore on, for a gentleman needed little knowledge of mathematics or science. In turn there were few careers he could enter after his years at Eton, Harrow or Winchester, perhaps followed by a spell at Oxford or Cambridge. The eldest son would take over the family title and estate; the younger brothers would enter the more fashionable regiments of the army, or the Church, or enter politics. By the last quarter of the 19th century, it might be possible to go into law, or the more prestigious parts of the civil service. The real aristocracy—as opposed to the county squires of Berkshire and Kent—consisted only of some two hundred families, and those born to rule usually knew one another from childhood. A man was expected to be a leader,



but could comfortably be a "cad"—one of Lord Salisbury's sons is alleged to have died a drunk in Australia. Women were luxuriously cloistered, bargained away in marriages every bit as arranged as those of India; their educations limited to music, art, and conduct befitting a lady. The nobility was not ready for the 20th century, which was to bring almost total eclipse; indeed, its only concessions to the 19th were a slight tightening of the lax morality and raucous good living it had enjoyed since 1066 or thereabouts. Nevertheless, although young Lord Algier might appear something of a fool in his monocle and paisley cravat, he was certainly a fine horseman, probably an excellent shot, and knew very well indeed that he had been born to run things.

The Gentry: The poor relations of the aristocracy. They were not dukes or earls, though some might carry minor peerages or baronetcies, often of very ancient lineage indeed. These people would seldom admit inferiority to anyone, least of all a "Johnny-come-lately" whose title was granted by Charles XI, or any of that nouveau kind. In education and attitudes, they were much like the higher nobility, but with lesser expectations, assumptions, and of course, bank accounts. These were people who went hunting and shooting in their own shires rather than in Argyllshire or Central India, and whose traditional offices of government were those ancient county appointments—magistrates and sheriffs rather than ambassadors and ministers. Likewise, their career paths were the same, restricted avenues—estate management, the church, the armed and diplomatic services, and perhaps law; "trade" was, of course, almost taboo. In retrospect, the country gentry seem as anachronistic and pleasure-bent as their superiors, rather more stuffy and reactionary, yet more attractive; they had strong ties to the land, carried traditional responsibilities seriously, were stable and honest, and retained tremendous respect in their communities—far greater than any self-made man could ever expect. The country gentleman could be expected to be a model Englishman, courteous and dutiful, whether at home at the Manor or serving as a District Commissioner in Uganda or Avenel.

Below the "quality" of the shires was a group which has received little recognition as a class, but which would contribute its sons to the service of the Empire in large numbers. These were the country doctors, parsons, lawyers, and the better-off type of landholding or tenant farmer. Their traditional role was as supporters of the gentry and the old, rural-based order. Many would gravitate to the army and navy or the civil services of India or Syrtis Major, where they would enjoy a frugal prosperity and a sense of useful position.

The Urban Middle Classes: The Victorians par excellence. It was the values and virtues of the rising bourgeoisie—self-help, duty, competition, piety, thrift—that came to define the era. In their prosperous respectability, the tradesmen, lawyers, manufacturers, parsons, and clerks came to dominate the tone, and many of the institutions, of British life. It was a middle-class empire, and Victoria, in her attitudes and pronouncements, was a middle-class queen. The rise of the Victorian middle class was a consequence of a burgeoning economy, fueled by Britain's industrial and commercial dominance in world affairs. The traditional elites might scorn "trade" and "money-grubbing" business, but their social inferiors emphatically did not, and they rose dramatically in

wealth, prestige, and influence as a result. Austere and prudish in their Methodist and Congregationalist forms of Christianity, judgmental and moralistic in their attitudes, dedicated to "progress," to Free Trade and to "improvement," the middle class dominated the town councils, charities, the Temperance Movement. The middle-class man tended to look down on the workers, so clearly morally inferior in their drunkenness, poverty, and savage amusements, and when he had contact with the poor, it was often with the plan of educating and improving them in his own likeness. The upper classes were another matter. The bourgeois world had scant regard for the idleness, frivolity, and scandalous morals of the nobility, but the urge for "gentility" was strong; if, as a Scots engineer or Lancashire mill-owner, he was a little rough for "Society," he would send his sons to the right schools to learn Latin and become a barrister or broker, and he would hope to marry his daughters to young aristocrats of ancient pedigree and empty pockets.

The middle class was not adventurous in spirit. Caution, planning, thrift, and profit were the watchwords. The daring frontiersman riding with the Rhodesia column or venturing into the Meroe Badlands was more likely to be an impoverished aristocrat or a grim-jawed millwright. The middle class provided traders, the professional men, the engineers, the senior clerks. These were respectable pioneers, concerned about steam turbines, liftwood prices, the appalling moral turpitude of the Canal Martians, and the rarity of a decent cup of tea. With wives, housemaids, and rosy-cheeked children, they epitomized Victorian civilization on Mars.

The Working Classes: In the cities, these fell into several categories, though this was only dimly understood by those better placed in society. At the top were the craftsmen, the "artisans," who, with careful budgeting, good health, and 12-hour shifts, could attain modest prosperity and adopt some of the comforts and values of the middle class. Often deeply religious, committed to self-help less through the entrepreneurial spirit than through trade unions and cooperative enterprises, this group might oppose the bourgeoisie as workers against employers, but shared with them a fear of the teeming masses of the poor. Literacy was high amongst the artisans; they were believers in the Empire, but also supported reform in the shape of a practical, populist socialism, which was to grow into the Labour Party and the Liberal radicalism of David Lloyd George.

These were not, usually, empire builders in the sense of administrators and soldiers. Their contribution would be later, as settlers, engine drivers, and skilled workmen, hired to oversee the efforts of local labourers.

Below this comfortable working class came the poor. They made up the largest group of urban Britons but were unrecognized in any form other than a narrow and unfair stereotype. The myth saw the poor as immoral, drunken, shiftless. In truth, since they were overcrowded in tiny, dark, cold rooms, and grossly underpaid for their labor, they had every reason to be angry, prone to fight outside pubs and riot in Trafalgar Square—that was the opinion of reform-minded observers. The harsh life of bad food, "cruel habitations," work seldom steady and back-breaking in effort, meant the city poor were stunted and malnourished; army statistics showed a serious decline in the size and health of recruits from 1800 to 1900, as the slums replaced the country villages as prime

sources for young men. The London of Sherlock Holmes and Jack the Ripper—both at the height of their careers at this time—is one where the dim alleys of Whitechapel and the Dickensian scenes of workhouses and grim streets of “back-to-back” houses, without water or drainage, loom large. Yet amongst those who lived the life of the streets—the thieves and prostitutes who dominated the stereotype—were millions of honest working people deprived of the opportunity to change their situations, who would always be day-laborers and never skilled craftsmen. Their needs were not policemen to control them or charity workers to teach them thrift and temperance, but a decent place to live, a reasonable wage, and some chance for advancement. Many of them were to emigrate for that chance—to New Zealand, or Canada, or as politicians now suggested, the cool dry uplands of the Red Planet.

The Rural Laborers: These were the poorest of all. The green fields might not run rife with pickpockets and beggars, but there was little hope for the comfortable life of an established town artisan; many countrymen made their way to the towns in the hope that, since employers liked the “thick-set, red-faced men of enormous strength” from the shires, they might find success. Many, however, fell into the amorphous mass of the poor and dislocated. At home in the country, life was hard and unpredictable, and often brief. With a pig in the cottage yard and a vegetable garden, the laborer’s family would not starve—though, as the tragic tale of the 1840s testified, the devastating poverty of Ireland could not guarantee any kind of support. At best, prospects were slender—domestic service for daughters, the fields for sons, and even when he had the chance of going to school, the country lad was likely to be pulled out for harvest time. Pay was bad, especially in the marginal areas—the heaths and moorlands of the north, the thin-soiled glens of the Scottish highlands—especially, in Ireland. The Irish tenant had fewer rights to his land than even the English cottager, and was despised for his Catholicism and “ignorance.” He was probably the poorest, most badly treated, and angriest inhabitant of the “Scepter’d Isles” which comprised Victorian Britain.

The urge to escape rural poverty was strong, and country-born people could be found at the ends of the Earth and beyond, as soldiers and sailors, domestics, stockmen, horse-handlers, blacksmiths and, indeed, any position that honest labor and a strong back could take on. If he was unsophisticated, gullible, a “yokel,” he was exactly the man an empire-building gentleman would want at his side, and at his back, during a difficult moment.

THE ROYAL NAVY

Britain had a proud seafaring tradition extending back over the centuries, commonly traced to Alfred of Wessex a thousand years in the past. British dominion of the seas had been challenged, without success, by France in a long series of wars ending in 1815, and would be challenged by Germany in time. At the time of the Diamond Jubilee in 1897, that superiority was at its greatest extent. The “Two Power Standard,” the doctrine according to which the fleet would be maintained at a strength “at least equal to the naval strength of any other two countries,” had been officially adopted in 1889, but that ratio was far exceeded in practice. The 330 vessels, including 53 ironclad battleships, were manned by 92,000 sailors. The com-

bined fleets of the next five naval powers barely surpassed this total, and the greatest of those, the 95 ships of the French Navy, was so patently overmatched that, when war loomed over the Fashoda incident of 1898, the men of the Third Republic backed down in humiliation. Other nations might worship columns of marching men, but Britons knew that the Royal Navy was the “Senior Service.”

Yet it was a navy that had not been to war since the Crimean. Minor Imperial policing operations, fighting Arab slavers or “punishing” recalcitrant African villages, did not offer employment to more than a small portion of the fleet. Despite a comprehensive demolition of the defenses of Alexandria in 1882, which gave gunnery practice to Admiral Seymour’s eight battleships and 11 gunboats, the navy’s proud show of polished brass and scrubbed wood masked serious doubts as to what the future might hold. Technology was changing at a rate previously unthinkable. Ship design was in a state of flux as designers and tacticians pondered the type of armour and weapons that would triumph in a future war. The ponderous weight of the ironclad vessel had brought the ancient ram back into fashion; the sinking of the Italian flagship at Lissa in 1866 by ramming led to a blind alley of tactical thought. Others saw that heavy steel artillery was the response to heavy steel plate, while the enthusiasts of torpedoes, mines, and submarines filled the naval journals with their work. Every few years, from the French *Gloire* (1858) and HMS *Warrior* (1859) through the mastless *Devastation* (1871), the *Inflexible* (1876) and the *Royal Sovereign* (1891) to the legendary *Dreadnought* of 1905, changes appeared which made all previous models obsolete. For the power with the most ships, this was not comforting news. Thus, it was British engineers and shipbuilders who were at the forefront of the naval revolution, both on the oceans of Earth and above the plains of Mars. The rules had changed; in 1875 the *Iron Duke* rammed the *Vanguard* while following closely in heavy fog, and the captain of the *Vanguard* was cashiered for saving his crew rather than attempting to save the ship by using hand pumps—the mechanical pumps had been disabled in the collision—and stuffing the breach with sails. The officers of the sailing navy might not understand how steam and steel had made everything different, but they knew it had.

There were, indeed, two kinds of officers. On the bridge and upper decks served the executive officers, the “fighting” officers. These were the devotees of Nelson and tradition, often wealthy, always “smart,” and prone to look down on their engineer colleagues with a haughty mixture of disdain and fear. These officers valued the show and swagger of outmoded sailing drills, seeing promotion in speedy shifting of top gallant sails—an approach roundly condemned as irrelevant by Captain C.C. Penrose at a lecture in 1887 when he concluded, “We are not ready for war, and thus we invite attack.” Below decks, below the burnished guns, billowing pennants and shining black-and-yellow paint work, worked the “greasers,” the “fats,” the engineer officers, seen as “emphatically cads...neither fitted by manners, education, nor savoir faire to be given commissions as officers in HM Navy.” It was these officers, often promoted from the “lower deck,” and spending their careers “black in the face and with their clothes wet with oil and water,” who pushed the navy towards the 20th century.

For the ordinary sailor, life was hard. It was not, however, nearly so bad as in Nelson’s time, when the press gang, the

cat, and the joys of scurvy had enlivened the life of the seaman. The new battleships, at least, were spacious in comparison with the wooden hulls, and there was good companionship in sharing a rum ration and playing a game of "Swing the Monkey."

The men who commanded this navy were iron-willed and often eccentric. The ability to make one's subordinates quake in their seaboots was widely regarded as the key to success. One captain asked to be brought a bucket, because the second in command made him sick! Colourful characters abounded. Captain Algernon Heneage insisted on calling all his chief engineers by the same name, dressed his hair with two eggs each morning, and always removed his coat before praying, since it would be unthinkable for a British officer in uniform to sink to his knees. He lived to be 81, opposing the reforms of Admiral "Jacky" Fisher all the way. The commander of the Channel squadron, known as "Old 'Ard 'Art," recorded in his diary for June 6, 1884: "Docked ship. Received the V.C." Perhaps the best expression of the mind of a Royal Naval officer in the face of difficulties was the comment of William Packenham to his Turkish interpreter, when surrounded by an angry mob of Asiatic brigands; "Tell these ugly bastards that I am not going to tolerate any more of their bestial habits."

It was not a modern navy. Gunnery practice was rare, since the explosions tended to chip the paint work, and until Sir Percy Scott's inventions to improve both accuracy and speed were adopted in 1903, shooting was far below par, as indeed it was in all other navies. The pageantry of the sailing navy was yet to be displaced by the grey-painted efficiency of Fisher's reformed fleets. Yet it had spirit; "naval brigades," often a few bare hundred strong, took pride of place in the dryland campaigns of Victoria's "Little Wars," and in the Commons, the usual response to mischief in the Gambia, or Mogadishu, or East South Omdibumbum remained the same: "Send a gunboat!"

ROGUES, ROTTERS AND NE'ER-DO-WELLS: THE SCOUNDRELS OF EMPIRE

"They bribed, they lied, they swindled. They lived at the best hotels and drank champagne at eleven o'clock in the morning. When not involved in some sordid financial intrigue, they spent their time making open and indecent love to the maids behind the bars set up at almost every corner." This description, by the jaundiced Mr. Vere Stent, is of the transient collection of British scavengers, shysters, and petty criminals who found their way to any part of the Empire, or beyond it, where an easy living might be made; here it was Johannesburg in the Transvaal gold belt, there it might be Ballarat, or the Klondyke, or the rough ruby diggings of Moeris Lacus. These were adventurers of another kind, to whom Victoria's Empire meant only a chance to play by their own rules and flout the laws of others, especially the Imperial proconsuls and their tiresome kind. Some were from the lowest classes—escaped convicts, children of transportees, thieves and tricksters from London, Glasgow, and Dublin. Others were aristocrats, disappointments to their families, like Lord Avonmore, or "Have-one-more," whose well appointed entourage conspicuously failed to reach the Yukon in time to make a fortune, or indeed at all. The low-born vagabond might be hustled, at government expense, out of Singapore or Syrtis Major before he could bring down the tone of things; he might be hired as an estate manager or overseer,

abusing the native peoples at will. The public school "bounder" might parlay his breeding and charm into position and property. The astonishingly lax morals and brutal conduct towards indigenous peoples shown by numbers of British settlers was explained away as "tropic frenzy," a behavioral disorder brought on by a strenuous living in a hot climate. In fact, it was more a matter of bad character, bad whiskey, and a belief that a fox, provided that he be a British fox of proper ancestry, could be trusted in charge of a henhouse.

GOING NATIVE

Going Native was a phenomenon that the Victorian world regarded as eccentric, scandalous, and worst of all, un-British. In the 18th century, Englishmen abroad had been expected to conform to local styles, and an officer or administrator would set up a home with Hindu wives, adopt Indian clothing, and embed himself in the native culture. This was no longer tolerable. An Englishman was expected to dress and conduct himself as an Englishman at all times—in Bangalore or Syrtis Major as much as in Kew Gardens. Yet there remained some individuals, relishing their independence and reveling in their flouting of convention, who "went native" with a vengeance.

Wilfred Scaven Blunt: (1840-1922) Served for eleven years in the diplomatic service, but left to marry the granddaughter of the poet Byron and travel with her through North Africa and the Middle East. Blunt was enraptured by the Arab world, founding a stud farm in Sussex with brood mares given to him by an Emir. He bought an estate, "Sheikh Obeid," which he referred to as "my house in the desert," although it was actually in the suburbs of Cairo. His studied adoption of Bedouin ways, vocal anti-Imperialist agitation, and bad poetry made him something of a celebrity in British-occupied Egypt; if he was a poseur and a madman, he was good company, and his attempts to provoke the Consul-General, Lord Cromer, were always interesting. Blunt's amorous career led to a separation from his wife; she remained at Sheikh Obeid while he retired to Sussex with a "niece."

Franklin Jeroboam Peel: (1858-1965) A research geologist in the service of the Royal Moeris Lacus company, who took off into the wilderness of the Astusapes in 1884. The High Martians believed that Peel, with his pale complexion and unusual physique, was part Martian, and they welcomed him into their society. Peel adapted to the highland culture, transcribing their war-chants for the Spanish guitar, drinking the potent Yfgraag liqueurs in legendary quantities, and occasionally coming down from his mountain to deliver the drafts of his influential treatises on the geomorphology of the Astusapian uplands (Vol 1, 1893; vol. 2, 1898) and his neglected "Offal Recipes of the Martian."

Charles de Russet: Few went as far as Charles de Russet. The son of a British contractor resident in Simla, he gave up his faith and family to become a disciple of Fakir of Jakko; silent, saffron-robed, draped in a leopard-skin headdress, and surrounded by apes, de Russet spent two years alone at the Temple of Hanuman the "Monkey God." As late as the 1920s, he was still living in the jungles below Simla, having forgotten most of his native language.

REMARKABLE WOMEN

The traditional picture of Victorian womanhood presents us

with an image of frailty, timidity, and of an oppressed group rigidly corseted into a sternly respectable second place to the male. There were, however, women unwilling to bow to convention, and many more whose outward genteel graces concealed a spirit of strength, vision, and adventure.

Mary Kingsley: (1862-1900) A classic Victorian spinster who, at 30, went from caring for her elderly parents to paddling alone down the crocodile-infested rivers of West Africa. Two best-selling books showed her knowledge and authority, revealing a compassion and understanding for the African peoples, and opposing the extension of British Crown rule. Miss Kingsley died to enteric fever in South Africa, while tending Boer prisoners of war.

Beatrice Potter Webb: (1858-1943) Born into a class which "habitually gave orders," the daughter of a prosperous businessman, and was briefly courted by the rising politician, Joseph Chamberlain. Instead, drawn towards radical social reform through association with the Trades Union and Cooperative movements, Miss Potter married the Fabian socialist Sidney Webb in 1892, spending their honeymoon tracing Union records in Glasgow; together they became influential proponents of reform, founding the London School of Economics and *The New Statesman* magazine. In a stream of books and articles, the Webbs laid out their plans for a better world, Beatrice often referring to Britain's expansion into the solar system as "humbug" and "sheer tommyrot designed to divert the interest of the proletariat from its legitimate concerns."

Lizzie Hessel: (1870-1899) She began, in 1896, a 4000-mile journey up the Amazon by steamer, canoe, and mule. Thirteen months later, after being stranded amongst primitive Amerindian tribes, she reached the rubber plantation managed by her brother. Her letters home reveal a fascinating mixture of Victorian gentility and indomitable adventure. Sadly, Lizzie Hessel died of fever in Bolivia, at age 29.

Annie Besant: (1847-1933) She lived a most scandalous life, at least by the standards of her time. Raised in a devoutly Christian home, she married a clergyman at 17; at 23 she left him to become a militant atheist, advocate of birth control, Fabian socialist and, in 1893, a convert to Madame Blavatsky's doctrine of "theosophy," a mystical blend of Eastern religions. The mesmerizing and mysterious Madame Blavatsky passed over into the spirit world in 1895, entrusting her mission to Mrs. Besant, who immediately sailed for India and announced that she had, in a previous life, been a Brahmin. She founded the first college for Hindus, at Benares (1898), split the Theosophic Society by proclaiming her adopted son the Messiah (which claim he later denied), and, in 1916, initiated the Home Rule for India League. Interned briefly, she lost the leadership of the Independence movement to Gandhi, but continued to vocally decry British rule in India.

Frances "Fanny" Duberly: (1830-1903) The wife of a captain in the 8th Hussars. Vivacious and witty, she became the toast of the British army in the Crimea; indeed, she was the only officer's wife to stay there, riding Lord Cardigan's horse and being present—as an observer—at the Charge of the Light Brigade. In 1857 Mrs. Duberly accompanied the regiment to India and marched 1800 miles with the Rajputana column. She wrote to her sister, "There is plenty of fighting to be done, they say. I hear ladies are forbidden to go further than Deesa, in

which case, I shall stain my face and hands and adopt the Hindu caftan and turban—I ain't going to stay behind." At Gwalior she rode with the Hussars in a charge against the mutineers. The remainder of her life was quiet; in 1896 she complained to a nephew, "I cannot stand dullness for long."

Elizabeth "Nellie Bly" Cochrane: By the age of 22, she was already an ace reporter for the *New York World*, and had a reputation for courage and determination. She had written an expose of New York's Blackwell Island insane asylum by successfully pretending madness. In 1889 she set out to beat the fictional record set by Jules Verne's novel *Around the World in Eighty Days*, and without resorting to liftwood fliers completed the journey in 72 adventure-filled days.

*E*thel...led the Gurkhas through
the steaming jungles and up the
3000-foot mountain climb....

Ethel St. Clair Grimmond: In 1891, she was the beautiful wife of the British political agent to the remote protectorate of Manipur. In March, the leaders of a revolt seized the senior British political and military officials, including Ethel's husband Frank, and murdered them. The surviving junior British officers proved incapable of exercising decisive leadership, so Ethel, "dressed in white silk blouse, black patent leather shoes, and a long blue skirt," led the small column of Gurkhas through the steaming jungles and up the 3000-foot mountain climb to safety. The officers with the column were later cashiered while Ethel, hailed by the *Illustrated London News* as "the heroine of Manipur," was awarded the order of the Royal Red Cross and granted a pension for life.

—Howard Whitehouse



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CHALLENGE

GDW's Magazine of Futuristic Gaming



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For Space: 1889™ —

Darkness Falls from the Air

by Marcus Rowland

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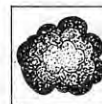
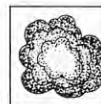


Darkness Falls From the Air

The magic of liftwood has done much to change the face of battle on Mars and now on Earth. Once superior position has been gained, the denizens of the air can use gravity to deliver some of their firepower.

By Marcus L. Rowland

With many military factions active on Mars, it is not surprising that there is a continual struggle to develop new weapons and equipment. The Martians have seen the superiority of Earth's technology, and they know that they must use their ingenuity to overcome it; the colonists, on the other hand, know that they are heavily outnumbered and must seize every advantage to ensure that the natives are never able to defeat them.



SMOKE SCREENS

Availability: All sides

Equipment

Any steam-driven ship can be equipped to make smoke for £20 per ton of engine weight. The equipment adds negligible weight to the ship. Smoke generation requires the engine to run at less than full efficiency; reduce maximum movement by 1 while making smoke. For example, an *Aphid*-class aerial gunboat (hull size 2, 20-ton engine, speed 6) costs £400 to equip with smoke screens and is reduced from 6 to 5 movement whenever it makes smoke. This decrease is cumulative with other movement changes, such as the loss of speed when a drogue torpedo is used.

All craft can be equipped with chemical smoke generators, pyrotechnic devices costing £30 per turn of use, again of negligible weight. Smoke generators can also be fitted into tether mines or drogue torpedoes, replacing the normal explosive. Mines produce smoke for two turns, torpedoes for three turns; there is no change in cost.

To date, other smoke generators have not been tried; rockets and aerial torpedoes are too expensive to be used as smoke layers, and artillery shells move

too quickly to leave a useful smoke trail.

Steamships making smoke from their engines need no additional crew. Chemical smoke generators need one crewmember to light fuses; however, this job can be performed by a marine or any other crew.

Game Use

Any shot whose line-of-sight passes through a hex containing smoke is at -1 to hit; successive smoke clouds can reduce the chance of a hit, to a maximum of -3 to hit. Smoke is only present at the altitude at which it is made.

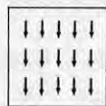
If a ship is making smoke, place a smoke marker for each hex it moves through during the appropriate movement phase. Smoke is only present at the altitude at which it was made.

Smoke drifts with the wind, so move all smoke markers one hex in the direction of the wind at the start of each turn.

If smoke is added to an existing cloud (e.g., by a ship drifting with the wind and making smoke), treat the smoke cloud as having been made on the last phase the source was in the cloud. There is an additional -1 modifier for a "dense" cloud if the source stays in the same hex for the entire turn or any longer period.

Smoke persists for two turns, so remove markers in the appropriate movement phase two turns after smoke is made.

Note: If you use these smoke rules, you may find it useful to assume that burning ships, etc. produce smoke screens too.



SPIKE DROPPER

Availability: All sides

Equipment

Invented by the Martians, and soon copied by colonists, this is essentially a hopper full of short metal spikes or darts. It weighs five tons, including magazine. No crew is required; the controls are on the bridge. Once a hopper is discharged, it is expended and can't be reloaded during combat. No ship may have more spike droppers than its hull size number, due to limitations on deck space. Spike droppers cost £450 in all yards.

Game Use

A ship deploying this weapon simply flies over the target and drops the spikes *during its movement phase*. The spikes are spread over such a large area that some are likely to hit crew on the target; a die is rolled to see how many crew hits occur; no other damage occurs. This roll is modified by subtracting the difference in altitude between the upper and lower ship. For example, the roll for a ship at VH altitude dropping spikes on a ship at altitude M is $1D6 - 2$. There is always a modifier of at least -1 . Any result of 0 or less means that none of the spikes hit crew.

If spike droppers are fitted, count them as guns for hit location rolls.



HOMING PIGEONS

Availability: British colonists only

Equipment

Although the colonists are slowly spreading a network of telegraph and heliograph installations, units more than a few

miles beyond the last outposts are usually out of contact with their bases. Fortunately, some of the early British colonists realized that this might be a problem and imported a number of homing pigeons and eggs. The adult birds were confused by Martian conditions, and some were quickly lost, but the eggs hatched birds which were soon able to navigate on Mars. Now many ships carry a few cages of birds, ready to be released with messages. Useful messages might include notification of a capture or victory, the site of a crash landing, etc.

No other colonizing powers are known to have succeeded in acclimatizing birds to Mars; however, it is probable that a population of feral pigeons will build up, with other colonies or the Martians capturing them for messenger use. There does not appear to be any native animal with a similar homing ability.

Each cage costs £5, with negligible weight and holds four birds (cost £1 per bird). Because of the hazards of this communication method, it is usual to release at least two birds with any given message. A ship can carry several cages; the signalman takes responsibility for the birds.

Any ship carrying pigeons must maintain a ground base, equipped with a pigeon roost and at least one attendant to look after the birds and pass on messages (cost £20 per month). The Royal Navy has its own pigeon lofts at Syrtis Major, and this is the destination for any bird released from a Navy ship, unless arrangements have been made to use birds from a loft in another colonized area. All other ships must make their own arrangements, or pay £5 per month to use the Navy coops, accepting that the Navy will see all messages.

Game Use

Pigeons can only carry small loads; the practical limit is a message of 50 words on lightweight paper. Military messages will usually be coded for security.

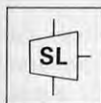
If birds carry pre-written and pre-attached messages, they should be prepared before the game starts—with no more than one prepared message per bird. The player using the birds announces the intention to release them at the start of the turn; they are released after all other actions at the end of the player's movement phase. A typical pre-written message might be an SOS, with the location of the ship just before combat began.

If birds are to carry freshly written messages, the player using them should announce the intention at the start of a turn; the signalman can write 10 words per turn. It takes a full turn to put the message onto a bird, which can be released at the end of the player's movement phase in the following turn. Extra birds with the same message don't require any extra writing time (the signalman uses carbon paper), but do need an extra turn for capsule attachment.

Any bridge hit affecting the signalman will kill all pigeons.

When pigeons are released, they immediately descend (or ascend) to Low altitude; if the terrain doesn't permit this, they fly at the lowest possible altitude. Small arms fire may be used to stop them before they leave the battle area. Birds stay together and are represented by a single counter.

Each individual bird successfully leaving the battle gets home on a 4, 5, or 6. Rather than flying in a straight line, the birds follow prominent terrain features (usually canals, sometimes mountain ridges and cliffs) which lead toward their goal. They won't fly directly into the wind. Each bird flies over $1 + (1D6/2)$ strategic hexes per day (round fractions down).



SEARCHLIGHTS

Availability: All colonial powers. Usable on steam vessels only.

Equipment

Searchlights are a new invention, a modification of the arc light for naval use. A ship can mount a number of searchlights no larger than its engine size; searchlights can be mounted wherever a gun can be mounted, with the same field of "fire." Each searchlight—plus its associated generating equipment, crewmen, etc.—weighs six tons and costs £150. Searchlights cannot be armored.

Game Use

Sky Galleons of Mars does not include rules for visibility. All of the information in the section which follows is to be considered optional!

Battles fought in the early morning or late evening are often hampered by dim light. Cloud and smoke may also affect visibility. Conditions of poor visibility should be agreed upon before combat begins. Under these conditions, it is suggested that rolls to hit should be reduced to 4, 5, and 6 at close range, 6 only at long range.

Ships mounting searchlights may use them to illuminate a target under conditions of poor visibility and may use the normal rolls to hit of 3, 4, 5, and 6 at close range, 5 and 6 at long range. Only one target may be illuminated by each searchlight. Searchlights may also be used for signaling but require the attention of a signalman.

If searchlights are fitted, count them as guns for hit location rolls. A fire/boiler hit disables searchlights.



BOARDING LINES

Availability: All

Equipment

Sometimes a ship needs to place a boarding party without grappling or land a ground party without landing the ship. Climbing lines are pre-measured and pre-coiled lines fitted to

anchor points on deck. Each line is fitted with a sliding hand grip and ends in a large knot. Each line costs £2 (negligible weight) and allows a drop of one level (e.g. High to Medium). The maximum number of lines is equivalent to five times the hull size of the ship. Marines slide down the rope onto the target or can hang at the end of the rope to be lowered onto the target.

For obvious reasons this method is most frequently used against ships that lack Hale rockets and other upward-pointing defenses. Typically it is reserved for night actions; for example, a ship might cut all power and silently drift over the target, dropping Marines for a surprise assault.

Game Use

All normal rules for boarding actions must be used so that a large ship dropping a boarding party onto a smaller vessel can only drop a number of boarders equal to five times the smaller ship's hull size. To recover boarding parties by this method, a crewman must be standing by each rope on the upper ship's deck, ready to haul the boarders back up.



CORPSE

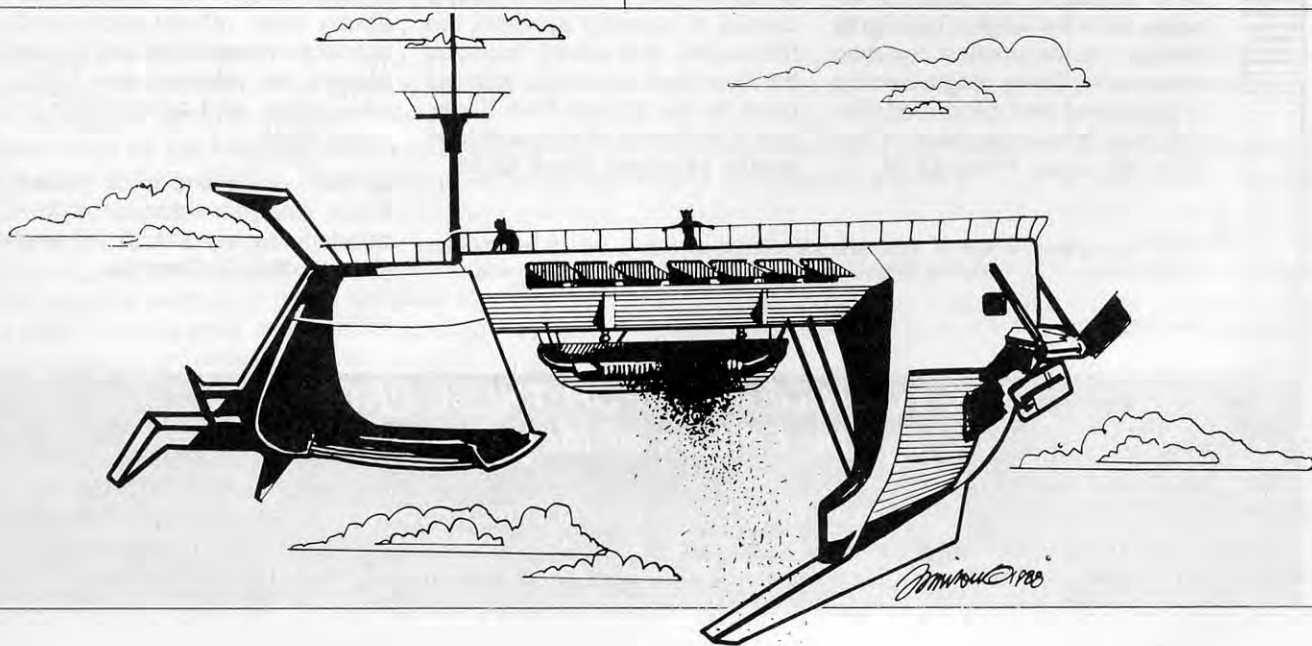
Availability: Universal. In practice, used by High Martians only.

Equipment

The High Martians don't have any scruples about burial of their victims. If a slave or prisoner is killed, or a boarding party is repelled with casualties, the High Martians will dump the bodies over the side. If they happen to be about to fly over an enemy ship, they will attempt to dump the corpses onto the ship to demoralize the enemy.

Game Use

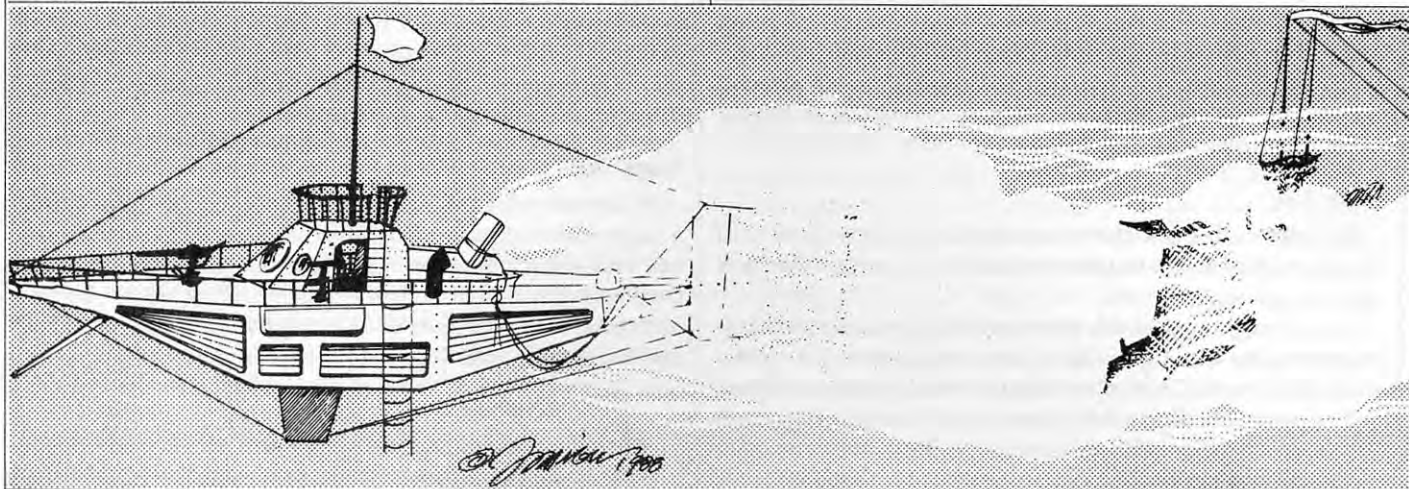
Corpses are dropped in the moving player's firing phase, on a target vertically below the ship. Roll 1D6; if the number rolled is less than the number of corpses dropped, that many corpses hit the target ship. Roll for hit location, ignoring anything other than crew hits. If crewmembers are hit they will be incapacitated for the duration of the combat but not killed.



If corpses hit the target, there is a -1 To Hit modifier for the crew of the target ship in the remainder of the turn and in a number of following turns equal to the number of corpses hitting the target ship. For example, a Martian ship drops three corpses onto another ship; the captain rolls a 2, so two corpses hit the target ship. The crew of the target will be demoralized for the remainder of the turn and for the follow-

ing two turns, firing at -1 To Hit in those turns.

Corpses which are dropped on ground targets (e.g., gun emplacements) have a demoralizing effect only in the ground hex located immediately under the ship; for example, if there were gun emplacements in two adjoining hexes, the target gun crew would be at -1 To Hit, but the adjoining gun would be unaffected.



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For Space: 1889

From Above and Below

by Kevin Stein



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From Above and Below



By Kevin Stein

Recent expansion of Earth's ruling powers onto the red, dusty plains of Mars has created more and more tension concerning colonization, possible warfare, and, most important of all, economics. There is a call for exported supplies to ship to Mars and a wealth of never-before-available import goods to send back to Earth.

The need for fresh merchandise on both worlds is the key to the resurrection of one of Earth's oldest professions—pirating. A single man with a well trained crew could wreak havoc on the supply lines of every nation covering the face of the Red Planet. Mars is still, for the most part, unexplored, giving pirates plenty of opportunity to attack convoys full of trade goods waiting to be sent back to Earth. The standard tactic is to perform quick smash-and-grab raids, then hastily retreat into one of Mars' many unmapped mountain ranges until the time comes to strike again. Many pirates have become wealthy from the riches of others.

The seven nations on Mars (not including the Martians) naturally don't like having their supply air-trains stolen. Escorts are sent if the merchant vessels travel through unfriendly, or at least neutral, territories. However, most of these ships do not have protection when

moving in friendly zones.

Unfortunately, some pirates are daring enough to attack inside a nation's borders, especially inside the British territories. In order to gain back some of their supplies (as well as a good deal of their self-respect), the British enclave at Syrtis Major decided to do something about one of the pirates who had been raiding shipments for some time: Andre Guoi.

Andre was an extremely bright and intelligent Frenchman working for an unknown power back on Earth. He had the reputation of always being honorable, fair in a fight, and a ladies' man. The officers in the British Navy thought him a scoundrel and a thief. One man in particular, Commander Montgomery Lake, held a personal grudge, believing that Guoi was responsible for the death of his fiancée (this was never confirmed).

The British government gave Lake command of three *Vengeance*-class aerial gunboats, a vessel new to the British Navy. His mission: to find Guoi and destroy his fleet. Andre, however, had no intention of falling prey to Colonel Lake. He set up a line of defense before the British arrived, calling in debts owed to him by friends on Earth and other pirates in the area.

Three days later, Lake found Guoi's base.

The Map: Use the highland map for this scenario. Each dark brown terrain outline indicates an elevation boundary. The highest point on the map is at High altitude. The fortress is ignored (Guoi has his base *inside* the mountain, not on top of it).

Ships: The British player controls one *Vengeance*-class aerial gunboat. Colonel Lake's ship has a Crack crew.

The French player controls two *Pirouette*-class steam galleys. Guoi's ship has a Crack crew; the other ship has a Trained crew.

The statistics which pertain to these ships can be found on the ship status sheets.

Setup: The British enter at medium altitude from one edge of the map, determined by the French player. The French set up at the opposite edge.

Special Rules: Guoi has littered the area around his base with 30 tether mines. All of the mines start out at Low altitude, and they may be raised one altitude level per turn.

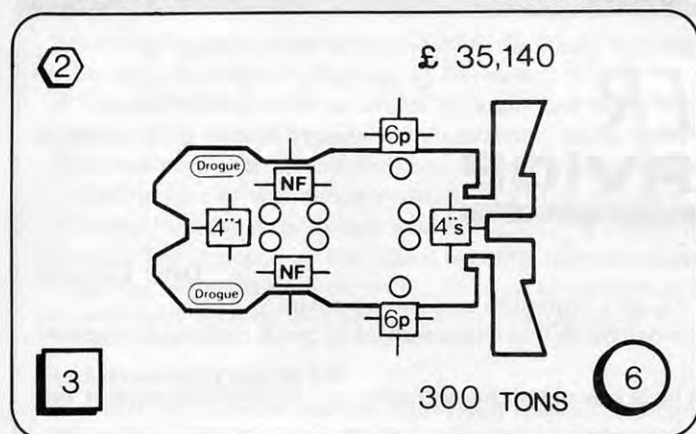
The mines are to be placed on the board before play begins. Mines may not be placed any less than three hexes apart.

Victory: The British win if they can destroy or capture both the French ships. The French win if they can destroy or capture Lake's ship.

See the diagrams on the next page. ♫

PIROUETTE

Aerial Gunboat



Bridge CHTSOO

Deck

Maneuver

Hull Hits

H			
M			
L			
VL			

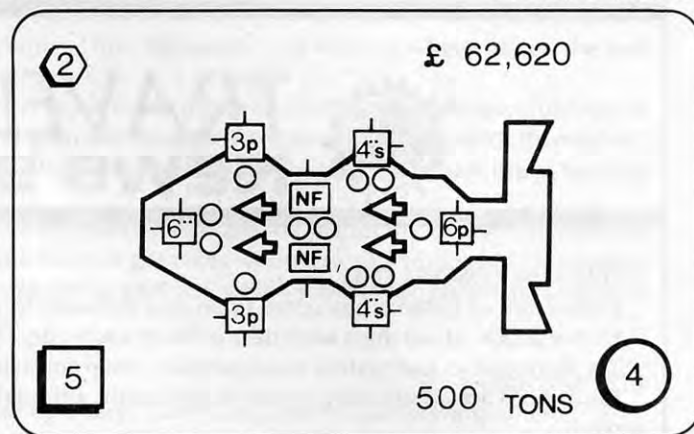
Marines

Screw

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VENGEANCE

Aerial Gunboat



Bridge CHTSOO

Deck

Maneuver

Hull Hits

H			
M			
L			
VL			

Marines

Screw

4
3
2
1

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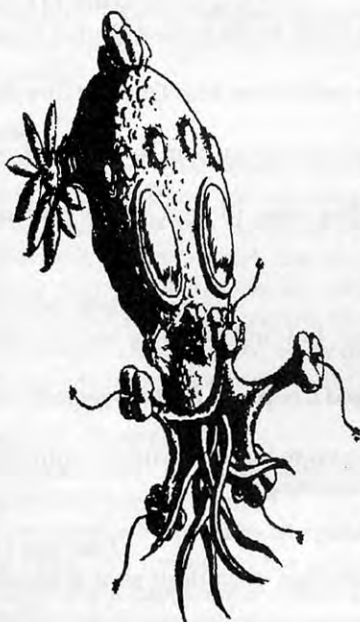
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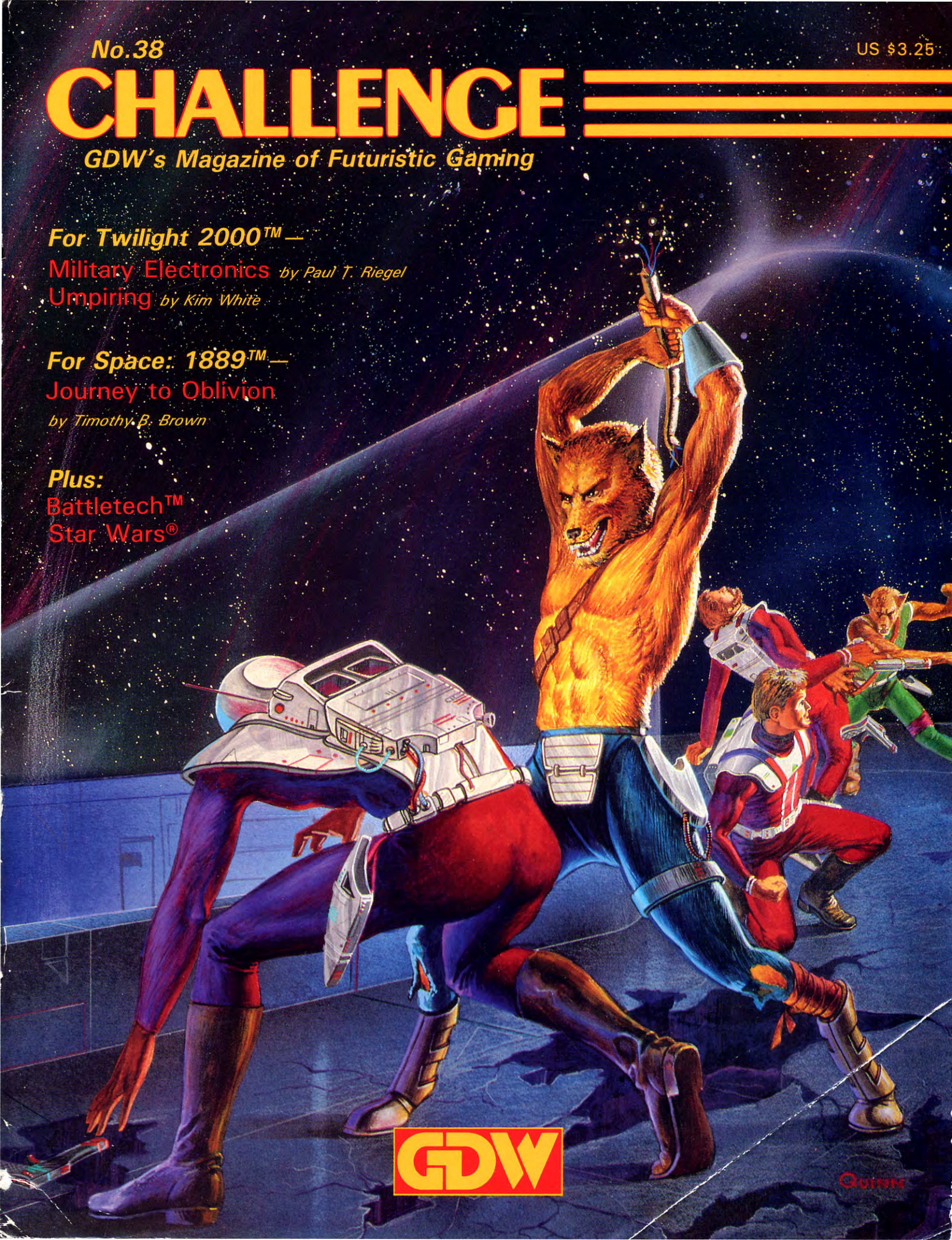
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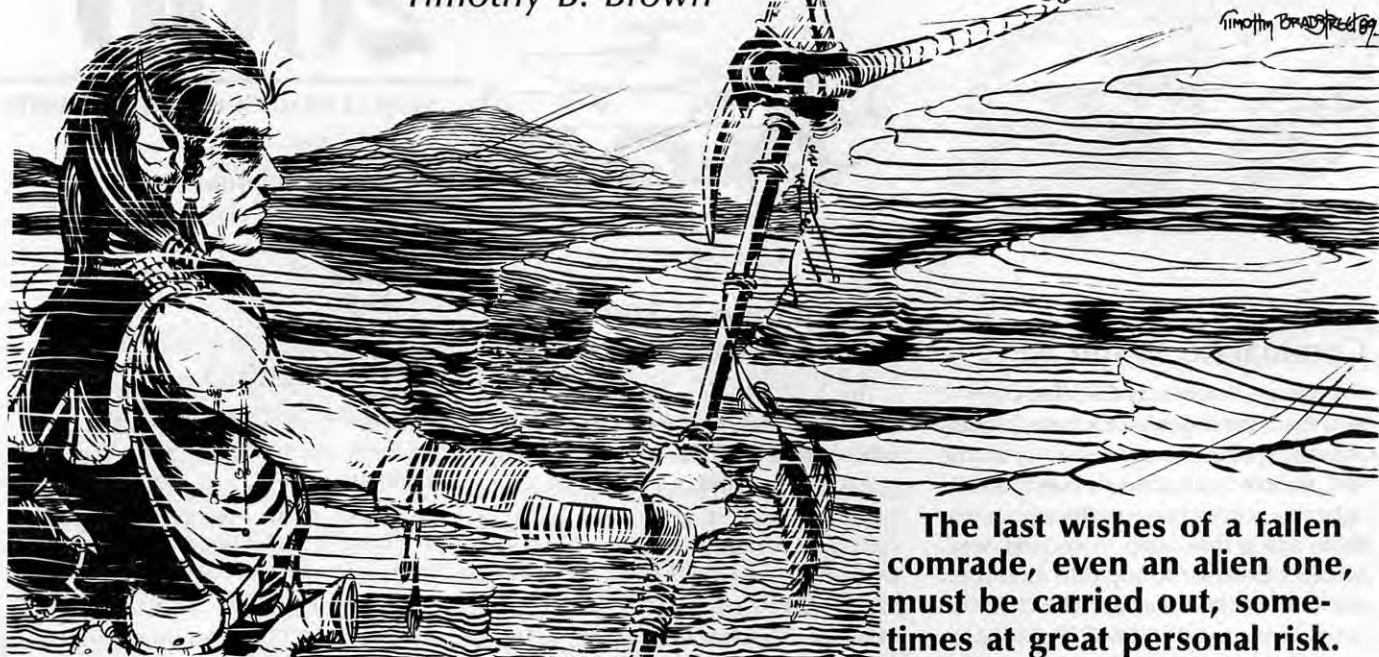


GDW

QUINN

A Journey to Oblivion

Timothy B. Brown



The last wishes of a fallen comrade, even an alien one, must be carried out, sometimes at great personal risk.

Dead he is, stone dead, and laid out on a slab of rock in a recessed chamber of his family's estate buildings in Avenel. His still features and the leathery coloration of his Martian skin make it all the more difficult to believe that he was, until recently, alive, totally animated, and totally committed to extending British influence on his native planet. Three days ago, in a skirmish in the southern badlands, an Oenotrian spear pierced his breast. Yesterday his final wishes, recorded on a stone tablet which was locked carefully away in a ceremonial urn some years before, were broken into and submitted to both your eyes and his family's scrutiny for the first time.

The life of your friend Shistwa had been one to write home about, and you had, often. He was the son of an outcast Hill Martian and was considered a veritable foreigner from birth among the Canal Martians of Avenel. Shistwa managed to claw out a mercantile business of his own by trading with local craftsmen and the newcomers from a faraway world, the representatives of the British Empire. His business never grew to mammoth proportions, but he did create a stable, prosperous existence for himself in Avenel.

Shistwa had always been fascinated by Earth and humans. He sought them out at first as business associates: He identified with their alien nature and felt more of a kinship with them than he did with his Canal Martian cousins. British affairs on Mars captivated him and even drew him into their service. Shistwa volunteered to accompany the British expedition against Shastapsh in 1887. It was on that successful campaign that you met him.

The two of you saw a dozen battles together and became closer than many brothers. His spirit was pure, his direction

true, and his honesty irrefutable. His keen interest in Earth put him onto his greatest adventure.

It will be a day long remembered when you both walked through the gate of your family home. Never before had Martian feet walked the meadows and fens of Solway Firth. Your brother John's dogs went into a frenzy, tearing for the safety of the hills as the giant Martian came up the walk. The look of astonishment that swept across your father's face as he shook the alien hand of a creature you introduced as a friend. The initial repugnance of your young sister is gradually growing into affection for Shistwa's exoticism; John's efforts to learn some of the Martian tongue as the two of them spent long evenings warming in front of the fire. Shistwa was as taken with your family and the people of the village as they were with him. Prejudices against his alien form soon bent to the welcome acceptance of this intelligent, erudite, and articulate man from another world. His departure was a sad one, and Shistwa's promises of a return visit have been shattered by an Oenotrian warrior whose blood is now on your hands.

He is dead, a Martian whose life touched many others. His family was already in the process of making the final arrangements for his corpse when the urn was shattered and his last wishes were revealed. Shistwa wished to make his final departure from this world in the traditional funeral ritual of his Hill Martian kinfolk.

"Preposterous!" bellowed Shistwa's son at the reading of the will. "His father, my grandfather, was an outcast, as are all his descendants through time." The young Martian flailed his arms in the air. "We are canal dwellers now, and the tribes would cut us down as if we'd never been of their blood!"

"You are right, my son," said Shistwa's widow, her face

behind a veil (a practice borrowed from humans). She slowly rose to embrace her frustrated child. "I am afraid we will have to disregard that particular wish of your father's. His romantic nature would have demanded it, but the reality of the situation prevents it. We will continue with the funeral here, as we originally planned."

REFEREE'S SYNOPSIS

As gentlemen, as former companions in arms, and as friends, your players cannot leave the last wishes of Shistwa unfulfilled. At the onset of this adventure, there are three major obstacles to overcome. First, since the players are humans (or, at the very least, not Hill Martians—see Characters, below), they have no idea what is involved in the Hill Martian funeral ritual. They don't know where it takes place for his tribe, what must be performed, etc. They will need to get this information before proceeding. Second, Shistwa's family has already set into motion a Canal Martian funeral, which will take place in three days. The family does not wish to attempt to take his body for an odyssey into the Aerial Hills and most likely cannot be persuaded to do so. Finally, getting the expedition with its late cargo out of Avenel and into the hill country will require planning. This is a time when skirmishes with Oenotrian raiders are common, and Hill Martian bands are afoot. A trek either through the air or across the ground will have to be undertaken carefully.

These three obstacles will have to be overcome one at a time. Each is given its own section below. In the case of preparing an expedition, two separate possibilities are given. The first examines the problems of travelling overland. The second involves securing a cloudship and making the journey by air. What information is to be presented to the players is left entirely up to you. Once these three obstacles are overcome, the adventure will break down into the final two phases, which are described later in this article, in the sections covering the journey to the traditional ritual site and the encounters with its keepers. Following that encounter, escape back to human-dominated territories is assumed to be automatic.

Characters: This adventure calls for any number of players with human or Martian characters. Since the adventure itself requires a certain amount of mystery regarding the ways of the Hill Martian tribes and clans, don't allow any of the Martian characters to be Hill Martians. Ample time will be built into the scenario to allow the characters to purchase appropriate equipment, so the players need not make such purchases prior to play.

A GUIDE BUT NOT A FRIEND

"Shistwa deserves better." The words fall from your tongue as you nurse a draft at a local pub. Your friends are with you, and they all nod and grumble in agreement. "How can they just let 'im go like that? I mean, without so much as checking into this Hill Martian thing."

"They don't seem to understand that where we come from a man's last wishes are carried out as if they was the Queen's own law! I says we give it a go ourselves!" More rumblings of agreement are heard.

"Gentlemen, I, too, agree. But I don't think we can just rush



into this nasty bit of business without giving it considerable thought. After all, we don't really have any idea what this Hill Martian burial entails, do we?"

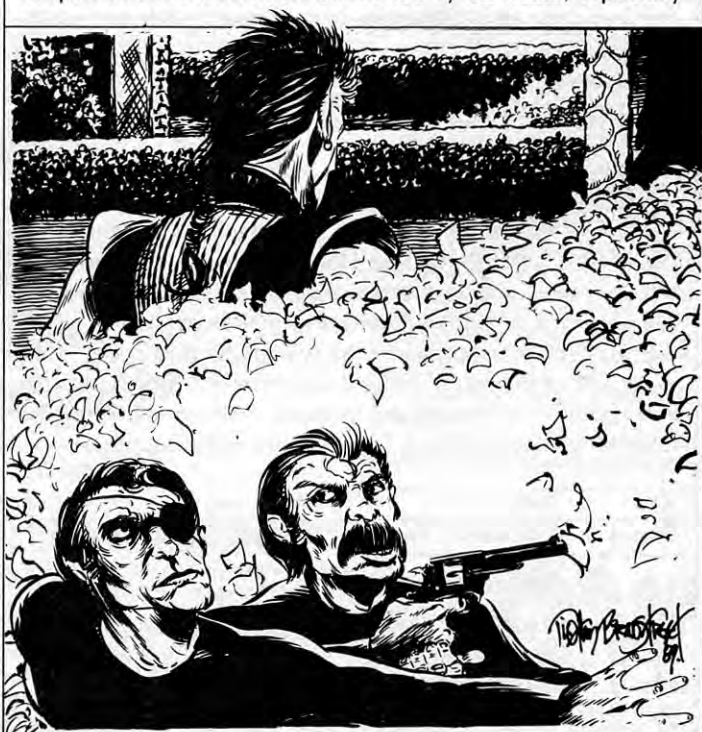
"E's got a point, ya know." You can almost hear the wheels turning. "Course, I bet we can find out a thing-er-two roundabouts that herb garden place toward the south gate. That's run by a Hill Martian woman. What do you say, lads? Shall we take this matter into our own hands?"

The herb garden referred to is the place of business of one Mrikh Ghon, a mystic and chemist specializing in local plants and medicines. She is reputed to be very knowledgeable, and she is most definitely of Hill Martian decent. The players can easily visit her establishment any day they wish, but since time is an issue (the funeral is planned for just three days hence), they will no doubt wish to go there today. They can reach her shop in about an hour.

Mrikh Ghon is merely a source of information, so statistics for her are not given here. She is an elderly Hill Martian woman who will be found resting comfortably on the cushions of her back room, burning a fragrant spice branch. Humans are infrequent visitors here, so the players will immediately gain her attention.

Many questions can be put to Mrikh Ghon, and she will answer them truthfully.

● *Did you know a Martian named Shistwa?* Yes, she did. Mrikh Ghon knows all the Hill Martians in Avenel, and she keeps track of them. She is saddened by his death, especially



a useless death in a war involving humans.

● *What does a Hill Martian burial entail?* Mrikh explains that practically every tribe or village of Hill Martians has its own burial ceremonies. She knows that Shistwa was of the Khchu clan, and that their dead are taken to the peak of a sacred mound and burnt as an offering to their god.

● *Where is this mound?* Mrikh can draw the players a map like the one given here. It shows the tenuous path through the hill country to the burial mound of the Khchu clan. She also adds that she doubts a group of humans would survive in that country.

● *Is there anyone who can help us get there?*

"I can get you there." A tall figure—a customer previously unnoticed—looms out from behind a tapestry and bead wall in the shop. He is a huge, savage-looking Hill Martian, wearing a warrior's headdress and sporting multiple weapons at his side. How such a warrior got into the city is a mystery. His cruel eyes stare down at you, and he repeats, "I can get you there."

"This is Chukchi, a, uh, customer of mine. There isn't a better fighter among all the cities of the Canal People." Mrikh looks admiringly up at him. "If he says he can get you there, you'd best believe, humans, that he can do it!"

In brief, Mrikh Ghon does not care for humans, but she feels the players are out to perform a worthwhile mission. She has no intention of sabotaging that mission, but she has no intention of changing her opinion of humans, either. As for Chukchi's opinion of humans, it appears that, for a price, he is willing to do just about anything.

Mrikh will explain that she is happy to help fulfill Shistwa's wishes, and she graciously accepts the players' gratitude. But since she cannot eat gratitude, she will insist on a payment of no less than £15.

CHUKCHI (ELITE NPC)

Chukchi is a wanderer, a mercenary, and an adventurer. His particular clan of Hill Martians is unknown to all but himself—and possibly Mrikh Ghon—but it is certain that his roots are far, far away. Among outsiders, who cannot fathom the complexities of Hill Martian society, Chukchi is what is known as a free-lance.

In any event, at some time he will no doubt return to his original clan and probably achieve some position of power. However, that time is not now. Chukchi tolerates humans and has worked with them before. However, he is far removed from the Oenotrian conflict, and he has no particular loyalty to either the Germans or British involved in that struggle.

If the humans accept him, he will gladly lead them to the exact site of the burial mound that they are looking for. He will also fight to protect the humans, if necessary. After that mission is accomplished, however, he will disappear.

Att.	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 3 (edged weapon)
Agl: 4	Stealth 3, Marksmanship 1 (bow)
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 5 (foraging), Tracking 2
Int: 4	Observation 4
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2
Soc: 1	Riding 2 (gashant)

Motives: Adventuresome, Proud.

Appearance: Chukchi is a fearsome-looking Hill Martian, standing nearly seven feet tall and scarred from countless encounters. He wears rags and relics collected from one end of Mars to the other; they are symbols of his many travels. He has reddish-brown hair and a particularly dark coloration to his skin.

Chukchi always carries with him his great sword, a bow, and a dagger strapped to his leg.

A DIFFICULT UNDERTAKING

The modest estate of Shistwa consists of five buildings in a protected residential district of Avenel. The buildings are of the typical clay and stone construction of the canal cities, built on a platform of stone adjoining the narrow stone-paved streets. Located on the property are the main house, the servants' quarters, the gashant stables, a storehouse, and a small masonry shed. Water for the estate is drawn directly from the main aquifer.

There are at least two ways to enter the estate compound in an attempt to secure Shistwa's corpse: through stealth or through the sewers.

Stealth: Climbing the walls will be no particular problem for characters in the cloak of darkness. The adjacent streets are generally very quiet during the late night hours, and they are rarely patrolled by the constables. That is why most residents here employ their own protection.

The map of the estate grounds shows the location of the three night sentries with their semi-domesticated cissawaan servants. If the guards raise the alarm, the city's constabulary will arrive with two dice worth of trained warriors.

Getting the body out over the walls might prove to be a bigger problem, but the characters will have to deal with it at the time.

Sewers: The water from the main aquifer in Avenel moves through the sewers—an extensive array of passages and waterways crisscrossing the subsurface of the city. Even when the canals are at their lowest, the aquifer and sewers are operational—Avenel has not suffered a severe shortage of water in generations.

The sewer connections to the surface within the estate compound are shown on the map. Due to the confusing nature of the sewers, randomize which sewer entrance the characters use first. You may even wish to further complicate things by making the characters come up out of the sewers into the wrong estate the first time. Any characters who were friends of Shistwa will know when they are in the correct estate.

Other Possibilities: The players may come up with other means for retrieving the body.

For instance, they might smuggle the body out in a supply wagon, or they might attempt to make a switch at the funeral itself. They might even wish to perform a grave robbing where they conceal the evidence—Shistwa's family could remain none the wiser, and everyone concerned in the matter could be happy.

In any event, the referee should let the players come up with their own means for getting the body and preparing it for the impending journey into the forbidding wastelands of the Aerian hill country.



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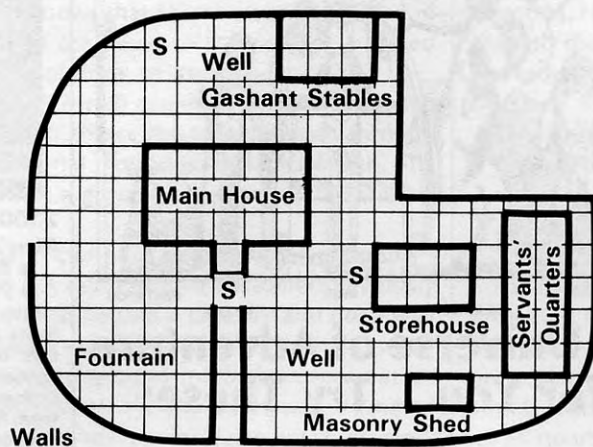
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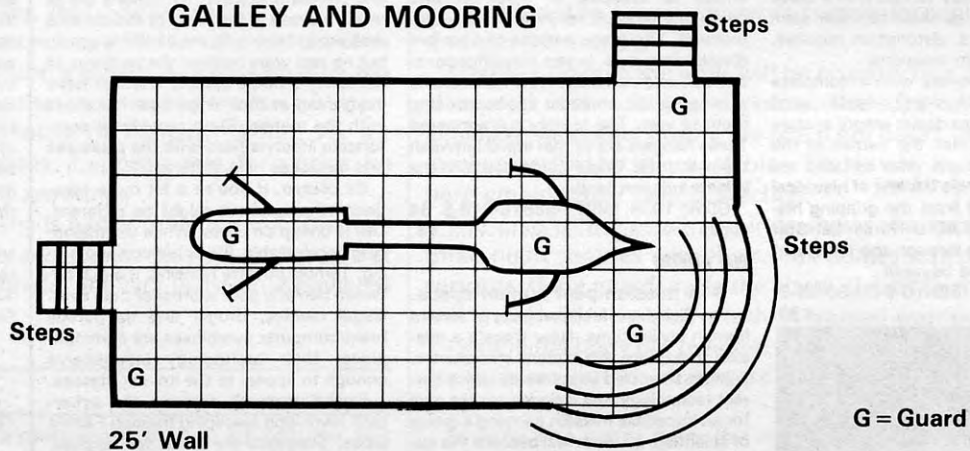
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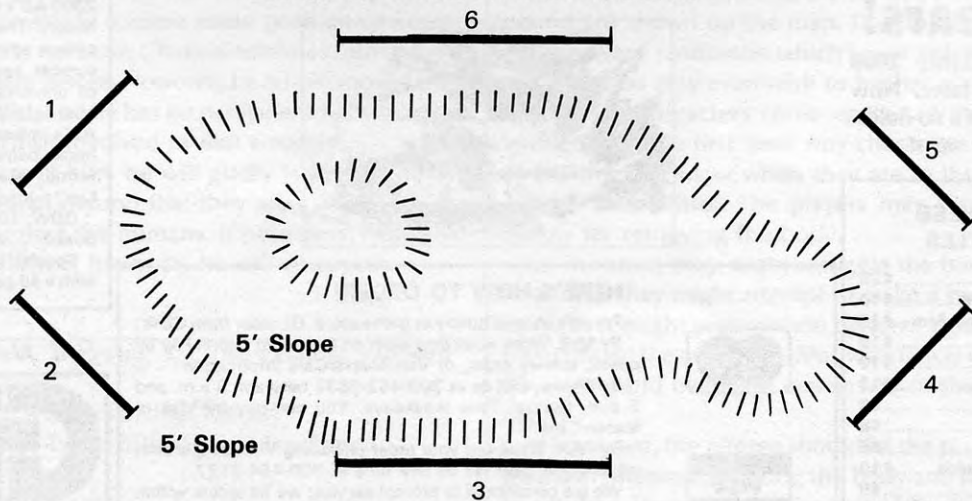


GALLEY AND MOORING



The screw galley is tied to the ground at four places.
It is presently floating 15' above the surface.

MOUND WITH ENTRY AREAS



THE HIGH COUNTRY AWAITS

No law forbids travel outside the city, but any aerial or ground expedition leaving in the direction of the highlands will draw quite an audience. Such an expedition would best be initiated at night.

One if by Land: Any journey into the hill country by land will have to be carefully organized. Animals will have to be secured, probably gashants for those capable of riding them and ruumet breehr for the baggage (including Shistwa's body). Obtaining the animals will not be difficult in Avenel—while land travel is infrequent, it is far from unheard of. Gashants, ruumet breehr, and wagons can be purchased for the prices shown in "Land and Water Transportation," page 73 of the *Space: 1889* rules.

It is fairly common knowledge that travel into the realm of the Hill Martians is a dangerous proposition. The characters will be well aware of this and should arm themselves accordingly. They may wish to consider hiring on additional guards or scouts for the journey, but these will be difficult to find and, considering the danger, rather high-priced. Consult the following table once per day that the players are attempting to locate mercenary guards in Avenel.

LOCATING MERCENARY GUARDS

Die	No.	Experience	Cost per day
1	1	Green	6d
2	1	Trained	12d
3	1	Green,	
	2	Trained	1/—
4	2	Trained	1/6
5	1	Experienced,	
	1	Trained	2
6	1	Veteran	3/—

The table shows how many non-player character mercenaries respond to the offer, and how much each of them will require in payment. They may be turned down, of course, or they may be bargained with. Also, roll one die for each—on a 5+ he has his own gashant; otherwise one must be provided for him. All applicants are Canal Martians, have a marksmanship 2, are physically oriented, and have muskets.

Two if by Air: The alternate method of travel is, of course, by air. If one of the player characters owns a sky galleon or if one is an inventor, they have the ideal solution to the problem. Chukchi, though unsure about air travel, will go along with their solution in order not to lose face.

If no aerial boat is immediately available to the players, you can present this to them: A small screw galley is used by a prosperous merchant in Avenel, and it is tied up near his home. The mooring and the guards placed there are shown on a map. They are all soldiers (consult Martian stock NPCs on the Mars Encounter Charts in the back of the *Space: 1889* book). It would be unethical to kill these guards just to assist in getting another Martian to his burial site, but if they can be subdued, the screw galley could be taken.

Under the cover of darkness, the stolen screw galley would be difficult to retrieve. However, the authorities will attempt to retrieve it anyway. When flying the stolen ship, you should



roll twice as often as usual for encounters. Any warships which are encountered will be from Avenel.

THE FINAL JOURNEY

Once transportation is secured, travelling to the burial mound will be a simple matter of consulting the Travel Rules (pages 114 and 115) of the *Space: 1889* book and the separate Mars Encounter Charts. Though simple from the point of view of this adventure, the impending encounters with bandits and nomad hunters or aerial pirates can be a difficult part of the expedition. Here are suggestions for some of the encounters.

Bandits: A particularly large group of bandits (60 or more warriors) attacks the player characters and, after killing a few of the non-player characters, simply overwhelms the party. The bandit leader, a loathsome, one-eyed Hill Martian named Thurd, is at first seeking plunder, but will forget about it when he discovers he has captured his old rival, Chukchi. The two had some falling out a few years back, as near as the players can gather. In his jubilation, Thurd will release the humans and the others, relieving them of any money first, of course, and simply keep Chukchi in chains for his future entertainment.

Obviously, the players need Chukchi to complete their mission. Also, they are honor-bound to help the Martian adventurer: "He's one of us, after all." They may have to set up a daring night raid into the bandit camp to free Chukchi. If the raid is successful, the bandits will be hot on their trail for the duration of the adventure.



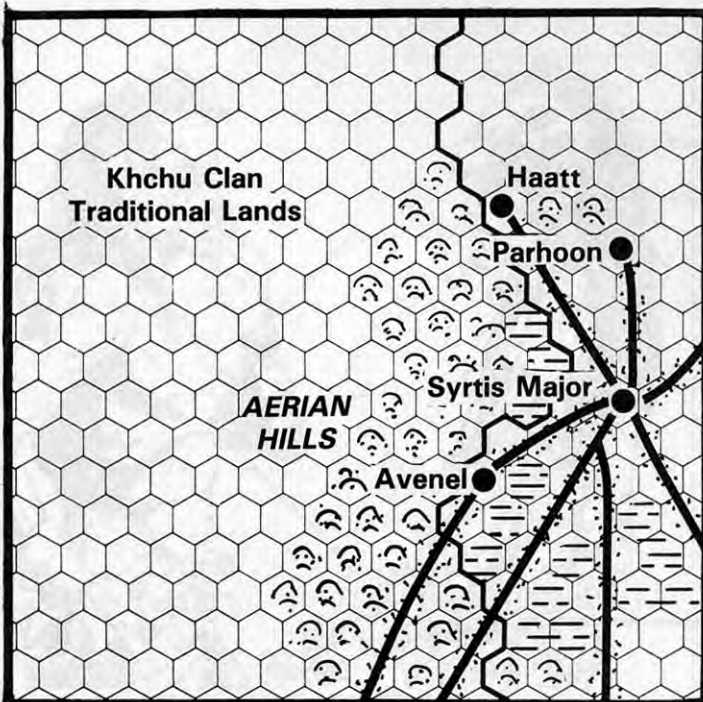
Nomad Hunters: Though no doubt many nomads will be encountered during a land expedition, one group might be from the Khchu clan. Chukchi will recognize this right off. If the clan members discover the true mission of the expedition, they might have one of two reactions. First, they may turn on the expedition, certain that if this is the son of an outcast, he has no business returning for any reason. Second, they may have the opposite reaction. They may know all about Shistwa's father and believe that he was made an outcast by an unjust clan leader. They could welcome the expedition and join in as added protection for the rest of the journey.

Merchant Kite: Another ship can be seen approaching from the distance, losing altitude and smoldering from fire. No other ships are in sight, but it is clear that this merchant kite was recently in a fight and is about to crash.

The players will be able to come alongside the heavily damaged kite and help rescue its crew. The kite's captain, an American named Jonathan Cramer, claims he barely escaped a pirate attack, but he just couldn't get his ship's fires out. They've been impossible to control, and the ship's been losing altitude for two days.

Cramer will be grateful if the players will do two things. First, they must accompany him to the surface where he will land his ship, camouflage it, and leave a portion of its crew behind to watch over it until he can return. Second, if the players take him and his cargo of hides eventually to Haatt, his company will most likely give them a reward in the hundreds of pounds.

*If THE characters
escape the mound,
they will be home free.*



KEEPERS OF THE FLAME

The conclusion of this adventure will be the approach to the burial mound of the Khchu clan, lost in the recesses of the hills and valleys of this rocky land. The mound is removed from the clan site—the burial ritual usually entails a ceremonial final journey from the village to the mound, something that will have to be skipped in the case of Shistwa. Honor will be served if Shistwa's corpse is simply burnt on the funeral pyre.

Chukchi will be able to warn the players, in advance, of the Keepers. The Keepers are a small group of priests charged with seeing the dead off this world. They are always at the burial mound, and in their minds they alone can initiate the sacred rights of that holy place. They will no doubt attempt to stop the characters from disposing of Shistwa—he is not of the clan.

What Chukchi doesn't know is that the Keepers are also masters of animal handling and that they keep hundreds of roogies foraging in the surrounding hills to protect the mound. These will be the real obstacle to burning Shistwa.

On approaching the mound, the characters will notice several of the Keepers, in their ceremonial robes, making a sacrifice or assembling wood for an upcoming cremation. Once the priests notice them, they will let out shrill cries into the night. The cries are so loud that it hurts the humans' ears and sends shivers down their spines. The Keepers will then disperse, knowing they have sounded the alarm.

It will take five combat turns, or two and a half minutes, to set Shistwa's body on the pyre and get it burning. At least two people must be tending to this for the full five turns. After two turns, however, the roogies will begin their attack on the characters.

The map has six entry areas marked. For each turn, roll one die and subtract 2 from the result (for a number from 0 to 4) for each entry area. That is the number of roogies which will enter and attack from that entry area that turn. As you can see, the roogies will swarm the mound very quickly once the alarm has been raised.

The referee should keep a tally of the roogies as they appear. Once 100 roogies have appeared, no more will be forthcoming. If the characters can escape safely off the mound, the roogies will disperse, and they will not follow.

The Keepers themselves will not initiate combat with the characters, and no clan members will be close enough at this point to begin a fight. If the characters escape the mound, they will be home free.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

By his very nature, Chukchi will not become a close friend of the player characters, and he will quickly disappear at the conclusion of the adventure. However, he may be encountered at a later date. If the small screw galley was stolen, the players will now have to deal with the consequences, which may involve some jail time. However, Shistwa's family, at first reluctant but now grateful, might intervene to lessen the severity of the punishment.

If the characters decide to continue on to Haatt with Captain Cramer, they might be able to find gainful employment there. ♪

No. 39

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CHALLENGE

The Magazine of Science-Fiction Gaming

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GDW



Ether Ship Etiquette

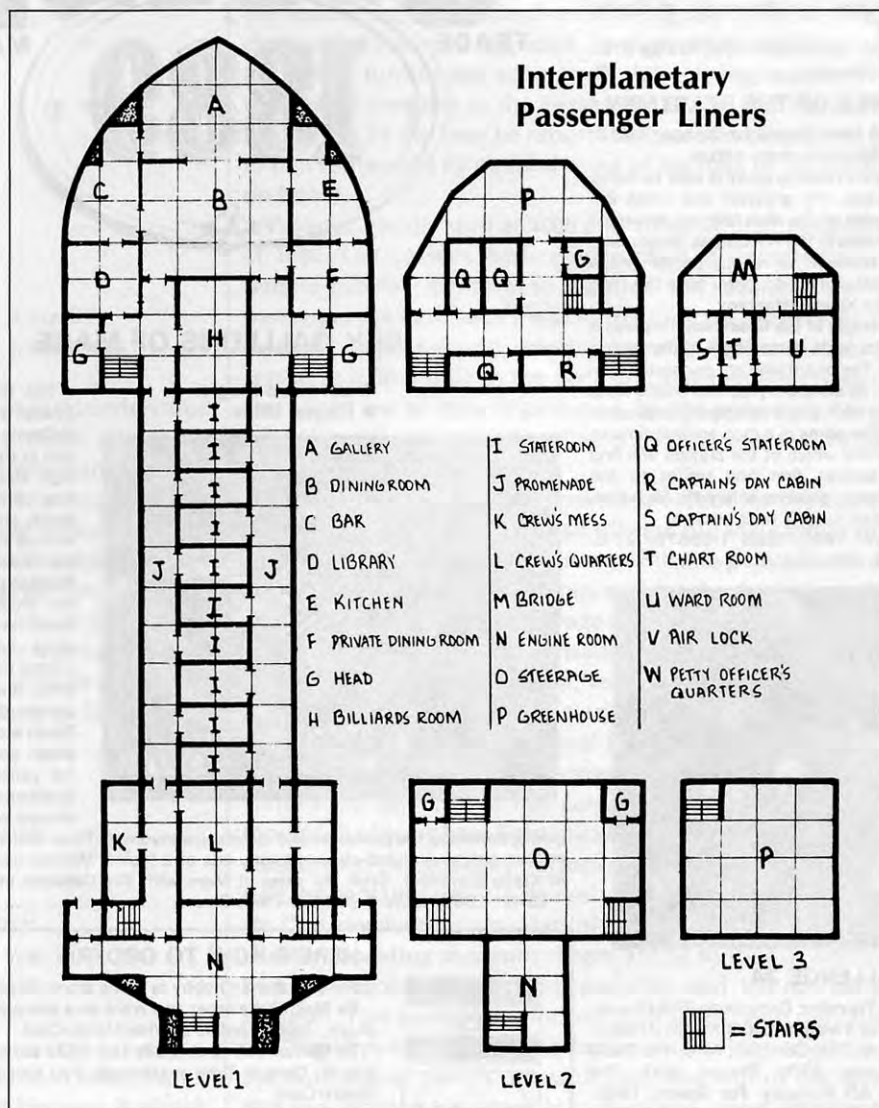
Greg Novak

A Guide to Interplanetary Ether Ship Etiquette,
or Getting There is Half the Fun

A Journey To Mars In 70 Days

To anyone planning to ship a party off to Mars, it may come as a shock to learn that it takes 70 to 90 days to make the trip. The average time needed to travel to Mars runs in the range of 80 days for the average liner. The restriction of a small area which the average interplanetary liner has to offer for such an extended length of time caused some problems on the early voyages of these vessels. To avoid future difficulties of a similar type, the companies involved in operating the liners to Mars have evolved an etiquette system that, in itself, provides some interesting background on this period.

The following is a guide to interplanetary ether ship etiquette and uses the trip of the Cunard liner RMS *Servia* to serve as an example of what a typical passage to Mars would be like to the passengers and crew involved.



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CHALLENGE 34

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The RMS *Servia* will depart from the London docks on January 24th, 1889, and to those in the know the ship's name alone gives two important facts. First, the fact that the ship's name ends in "ia" indicates that it is owned and managed by the Cunard line. (Other Cunard liners include the *Laconia*, *Caronia*, and *Carmania*, while the rival White Star liners' names end in "ic"—the *Adriatic*, *Oceanic*, *Olympic*, *Majestic*, etc.) Second, the letters RMS stand for Royal Mail Ship, which means the vessel was built with the direct support, both in terms of financial aid and planning, of the British government. Thus, one can be assured of a safe voyage in good hands.

Three types of people fill interplanetary ether flyers: crewmen, steerage-class passengers, and first-class passengers.

1. Below are the typical crewmen found on a passenger liner, using the RMS *Servia* as an example.

PASSENGER LINER CREWMEN

Deck Division	Engine Room	Passenger Service
Officers		
1 captain	1 chief engineer	1 purser
1 first officer	1 asst. engineer	—
1 second officer	—	—
1 third officer	—	—
Petty Officers		
—	3 bosuns (trimsmen)	—
—	3 machinist's mates	—
Crewmen		
—	3 oilers	3 cooks
—	—	6 stewards

The liner runs on Greenwich Mean Time, so that London time is kept during the voyage. The crew is divided into three watches: Each has an officer to serve as helmsman, a bosun as trimsmen, and a machinist's mate and oiler as engine room crew. The captain, purser, and engineering officers do not stand watches as such, but are on-call at all hours. The first officer and captain are responsible for navigation, and take turns at computing the ship's location to reduce the chance of error. The cooks and stewards do not serve watches as such, but are assigned to duty as needed. Medical services are usually provided by the purser. The ship's day starts at 1200.

TYPICAL SHIP'S DAY

Time	Activity
1200-1600	First (afternoon) watch
1600-1800	First dogwatch
1800-2000	Second dogwatch
2000-0000	Third (evening) watch
0000-0400	Fourth (midwatch) watch
0400-0800	Fifth (morning) watch
0800-1200	Sixth (day) watch

The seven-watch system is not really needed in ether travel, as it is always daylight, but has been kept because it allows the crewmen a chance to rotate duties throughout the voyage and allows the ship's crew to eat one major meal per day. While the food is served nearly around the clock, the supper meal



is considered to be the major meal of the day by the crew, and the dogwatch system allows all crewmen to take part within a reasonable length of time. In addition, without the dogwatch system, those crewmen and officers attached to the night watches would remain on those duties for the entire voyage, which in the case of the officers, limits their contact with the passengers on-board.

The watch system works as follows: Those crewmen serving the first watch have the following two watches off duty, and return to stations for the third (evening) watch. They are then off duty from 0000 to 0800, and end up their day on duty for the sixth (day) watch. On the following day, they are not on duty until the second dogwatch, then are off from 2000 to 0400, when they turn to and serve the fifth (morning) watch. While this seems complex to the passenger, to the ship's crewman it is old hat by the time he reports on-board an ether flyer, and to him represents an equal sharing of the load by all involved on-board.

Voyages usually start at 1000 and arrive at their destination at 1000. The vessel's basic construction is designed to use remote-control shutters to control the daylight on the passenger decks in such a way as to duplicate the average day on Earth. Thus on-board, dawn "breaks" at 0600, and darkness sets in at 2000. While to the deck and engineering crews day and night are of little importance, to the passenger service crewmen this use of London time is all-important as they carry out their duties.

The crew quarters for all crewmen, except for the captain, are very cramped, as usually all officers but the captain must share quarters with another officer, while the petty officers and crewmen use hammocks in place of bunks due to a lack of space. However, pay for a voyage runs two to three times that of a similar position on the transatlantic run, and leave between voyages is generous. As a result, vacancies do not exist, as there is a waiting list for all positions on-board. All crewmen and officers are members of the Royal Navy Reserve, and come to their posts well trained and experienced.

The RMS *Servia* does not carry any armament per se, although all officers have light revolvers as part of their personal equipment. There is an arms locker on the officers' deck outside the captain's cabin. Chained within are 12 naval cutlasses, six Colt revolvers, eight Martini-Henry rifles, and four Winchester repeating shotguns. There are 50 rounds of ammunition per revolver, 200 rounds per rifle, and 100 rounds per shotgun. This case is kept locked at all times, with only three existing keys to the lock. The captain carries one at all times; the duty officer carries one with him; and a third key is hidden in a location known only to the three senior officers: the captain, the first officer, and the chief engineer.

The weapons are carried for a two-fold purpose: first, in case the vessel is forced down on a hostile part of Mars (or Earth,

for that matter) due to engine failure or similar problems; and second, a more important reason in the minds of the ship's crew (although rarely told to passengers and the public), to help prevent any takeover of the vessel by its passengers. As interplanetary ether flyers can land in just about any location, one fear of the British government and the different shipping lines is that a group of anarchists or Fenians might wish to seize a liner to use for their own purposes. Several plots have been foiled already, and this fear remains in the minds of all crews making the run to Mars. (All weapons which are owned by passengers are locked in the cargo hold for the duration of the voyage, except for those sidearms carried by serving military officers.)

2. This fear brings into focus the second group of people found on such a vessel, those travelling steerage class. Steerage class on an interplanetary ether flyer exists because the subsidy paid to the different shipping lines is due in part to the fact that these vessels can be taken over and used as troop ships as needed by the British government. Each liner of the RMS *Servia* class can hold, in theory, an 80-man company of troops, as long as no other passengers are taken along. (The RMS *Servia*'s sister ship, the *Arabia*, carried a company of the Black Watch to Mars back in 1886 as a test of the ship's transport capacity.)

The company sergeant major compared the trip to the normal voyage out to India, with the disadvantage that there was far less room to move about on-board the *Arabia*, but the advantage that it was not as "bloomin' 'ot."

Up to 20 passengers can be carried in the steerage section, with the British government being the major user of this means of travel. While complete units are sent off to Mars in military transports and on-board naval warships, the need for replacement specialists to arrive causes the War Department and Admiralty to send small drafts of men from time to time. Likewise, those specialist workers needed on Mars by the different government offices (i.e., electricians, shipbuilders, etc.) are sent off in steerage.

To supplement these, one finds those men and women who are off to the red planet on a low budget in search of wealth and adventure. And this last group of individuals has, in the past, included elements such as Fenians and anarchists who have made attempts to seize the liner on which they were travelling.

Travelling steerage class is an experience in itself, as the passengers are limited to the steerage deck and the greenhouse deck above it. Meals are sent aft from the kitchen three times a day (0600, breakfast; 1200, dinner; and 1800, supper) and served in the common room in which all steerage passengers live, regardless of gender. While two separate washrooms (heads) exist for the basic needs of those travellers, the ability to take a bath is extremely limited on any voyage when both sexes are present on the steerage deck. (On male-only voyages, a washtub can be set up in the middle of the deck.) Privacy is not an element found in the steerage deck.

The steerage deck can be sealed off from the rest of the ship by use of the ship's bulkhead system. While parts of the rest of the ship can be sealed off by the same system for damage control, the steerage area can be closed by remote control from the bridge for security reasons and cannot be opened except by the controls on the bridge. No system of manual override

exists for opening the bulkheads in this area of the ship.

The steerage passenger list on this trip of the RMS *Servia* includes the following passengers (with 18 steerage passengers on-board, the RMS *Servia* has close to a full load).

STEERAGE PASSENGER LIST

WAR OFFICE TRAVEL WARRANT

Sergeant Joshua Oliver RE (Royal Engineers)

GOVERNMENT WARRANT

Harry Hansom, shipbuilder
Ian Robinson, shipbuilder
Alex Stewart, shipbuilder

ADMIRALTY TRAVEL WARRANT

Chief Petty Officer Michael Smith
Gunner's Mate David (Dusty) Rhodes
Gunner's Mate Alex Unroe
Machinist's Mate Eric McKenzie
Machinist's Mate Ian McGregor
Seaman Bertie Brown

PURCHASED PASSAGE

Mary Martin
Abby Green
Bessie Johnson
Klaus Kliet
Helmut Rommel
Kerry Conolly
Michael Collins
Patrick O'Flynn

3. The third group found on a liner like RMS *Servia* is the first-class passenger. The first-class fare on RMS *Servia* of £60 translates into a fare of \$300—at a time when the average wage earner in the United States is being paid from \$1 to \$2 a day for a 12-hour day. Travel to Mars first-class is worth that both in cost as well as in experience. The RMS *Servia* has 10 first-class compartments, lettered A through J. Compartments A, B, C, D, and E open to the starboard promenade, which is known as the "Ladies' Way." Staterooms F, G, H, I, and J open to the Port Promenade, which is known as the "Bachelors' Walk." (Stateroom J is not always rented, as on some voyages the purser and a junior deck officer berth here, thus allowing the first officer and chief engineer their own private cabin.) Staterooms are divided in this manner to better provide the services expected by passengers who are travelling first class. Single ladies are berthed first in cabins A, B, and C, followed by married couples in D and E. Single men are berthed in the remaining cabins, with the result that on the average voyage the port promenade (Bachelors' Walk) holds males only, while the starboard side is a mixture of representatives of both of the genders.

While basic sanitary facilities are found in the cabins for the occupants, better facilities are found at the head of each passage, with the men's washroom on the port side, and the ladies' on the starboard side. There one may find bathing facilities and, in the case of the men's washroom, a barber chair

and steward for such duties as shaving or hair trimming. To allow for the best possible use of these facilities, at set hours during the voyage the vessel goes into "purdah." During purdah hours, portable screens are set up in several places to block off the vessel into two sections. The stewards place two sets of screens on the Ladies' Way, the first between the single ladies and the married couples' territory, and the second between the married couples and single men's territory. The doorways into the private dining room and the Ladies' Way are locked, and one additional screen is placed on the stairway leading down from the officers' territory. The area enclosed within this section is considered off-limits to all males, though the screen arrangement at the married couples' end of the Ladies' Way will allow the married men the ability to reach their cabins, as long as they do not mind having to go through the steerage area of the ship to reach the aft end of the passage. The closure of the private dining room during the purdah hours allows this area to be used as a ladies' lounge, in the same manner as the library is used by the men.

For the men on-board, the billiard room, library, and Bachelors' Walk are likewise reserved for male use only during the purdah hours. Those male passengers who are married, or whose cabins are found on the Ladies' Way, can usually be found during purdah hours in the library or billiard room. (It should be pointed out that no woman who wished to keep her reputation would ever be found in the bar, library, or billiard room on shipboard, but some exceptions have occurred.) The vessel's dining room and gallery remain open during this time, and serve as a neutral ground in which meetings and classes may be held by passengers in mixed company.

Purdah hours are usually morning (0600-0800), midday (1000-1600), and evening (1800-2000).

In addition to the purdah hours, the meal times regulate life on-board the RMS *Servia*. Four meals are served per day on the following basis for first-class passengers. Breakfast and tea are considered minor meals, which can be served in one's cabin if a passenger wishes, while for dinner and supper all first-class passengers meet in the dining room. Breakfast is served in the dining room from 0800-0900 and is available from cabin service from 0900-1000. Luncheon is served in the dining room only, from 1200-1400. Tea is served in the dining room from 1600-1700 and is available from cabin service from 1600-1800. Dinner is served in the dining room only, from 2000-2200 (formal dress is considered mandatory for supper—uniforms or black tie for gentlemen, evening dress for ladies).

Dinner and luncheon are both multicourse meals, and attendance in mandatory attire is considered socially correct, although no actual punishment occurs to someone who misses one of these meals without good cause. The purser is responsible for seating arrangements and makes every effort to move people about to prevent the formation of cliques.

The bar is open to serve drinks Monday through Thursday from 1300-2000 and from 2200-2400; Friday and Saturday from 1300-2000 and from 2200-0200; and Sunday from 1600-2000 and from 2200-0000. While the male passengers are free to take their drinks in the bar, a steward will deliver drinks to the library or billiard room, or, in the case of the ladies, to the dining room or the gallery.

The hours at which the meals are served, as well as the times the bar is open, help regulate the times that everyone on-board



is together. The rituals of purdah and the watch system act upon this to break up the interaction between the ship's company and passengers, as the watch system means that an officer will only be present at any given meal once every three days (except the captain), while purdah means the ladies and men are not together all the time. Often classes in Martian languages are conducted en route, or passengers may entertain the crew with lectures and other amusements. Card games are popular, although gambling is not allowed for high stakes. Several of the stewards can play musical instruments and can function as a band if needed, and from time to time passengers have organized amateur shows with their help. An important part of every Sunday is the church service (Church of England) held by the ship's captain in the gallery between 1000 and 1200.

FIRST-CLASS PASSENGER LIST

LADIES' WAY

<i>Cbn</i>	<i>Occupants</i>	<i>Notes</i>
A	Miss Emily Johnson and her maid	Miss Johnson is a noted London dance hall performer
B	Miss Katriana Wolff and her maid	Miss Wolff is author of <i>Canal Life of the Martians</i>
C	Mr. and Mrs. Robert Grant	First Secretary of the Boreosyrtis League British Legation
D	Dr. and Mrs. Alan Hay	Royal Medical Corps (major)
E	Henri LaBorquet and his manservant	French merchant

BACHELORS' WALK

<i>Cbn</i>	<i>Occupants</i>	<i>Notes</i>
F	Mr. Robert Burke and Mr. Richard Thornburn	American merchants
G	Cpt. Michael Smyth and Lt. Harold Jones	Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery, respectively
H	Cameron Robinson and his manservant	Gentleman companion for Miss Wolff
I	Baron Hans von Schmidt and Thomas von Prince	Major, Guard Jaeger Battalion, and captain, Guard Fusilier Battalion, respectively, both of the Imperial German Army
J	Sub-Lt. Ian Gordon and Sub-Lt. John Masters	Royal Highland Regiment (Black Watch), and Rifle Brigade, respectively

A "crossing the line" ceremony is held halfway to Mars. "Winged Martians" induct those who have not yet crossed the line. Merriment and practical jokes abound. And those who

do not have their official certificate confirming that they have already crossed the line are put through various ordeals.

One interesting group of people found on-board in first class are servants, maids, and batmen, though their social class does not allow them to travel in first class on their own. As it would not be proper or fitting for them to travel in steerage, they are berthed in first class, but dine in the gallery or the kitchen. They are welcome guests in the crew's quarters and even steerage, and are known to help out with the job of keeping the first-class passengers, especially their employers, happy. (It has been suggested that they as a general rule have a more enjoyable voyage out than their employers due to their freedom to roam the vessel.)

Because of the lack of gravity during the voyage, certain steps must be taken to preserve decorum. All passengers are required to wear shoes fitted with magnetic soles (the steamship line makes these available at reasonable rates, but passengers of breeding prefer to have theirs custom-made). Practically everything on the ship is either magnetized or designed in such a way as to remain fastened in place. Loose objects present a hazard, and the ship's crew collects and deals with them. Gentlemen are required to keep control of their hats, canes, and other loose personal items by whatever means they find most convenient (hats are usually dispensed with).

Clothing presents particular problems in the lack of gravity. Gentlemen's coattails tend to float about in a most comical manner if they are not properly secured, but a few strategically placed hooks, buttons or magnetic fasteners solve this problem. Ladies' skirts tend to fly about in a most improper man-

ner if not secured in some way, also. A number of unique costumes have been designed to solve this problem (of which the most famous is the bloomer-like shipboard costume worn by certain members of the fast set), and some libertines actually have gone so far as to wear trousers! People of breeding, however, make use of more conventional solutions. Most women simply have a number of small and inconspicuous magnets sewn into their hems, which are attracted towards the deck, and keep everything in its proper place.

In steerage, passengers sometimes dispense with such restraints, and the high jinks and rough sport which take place belowdecks are legendary. A number of variations on popular games are played in steerage, especially when there are few passengers and is, therefore, room for such activities.

WHAT TO DO WITH THIS INFORMATION

If you need to send your characters to Mars, consider the *RMS Servia*. Just bump from the passenger list anyone you need to displace. Consider the following en route adventures.

- A plot by the Fenians to take over the ship—after all, who are Burke and Thornburn, and is that Royal Navy party really a Royal Navy draft?
- Use one of the other passengers on the ship as a way to introduce a non-player character to your players that they might end up meeting later under different circumstances.
- Find out what plots lurk in the hearts of your fellow passengers, and do what you can to stop them.
- Find out who is cheating at cards, and expose them for the cads that they are. ♪

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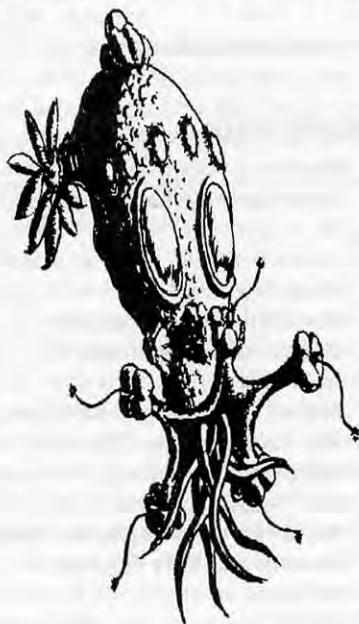
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Space Combat was designed to be easy to learn, but difficult to master. Every game starts with ten players, and as each is eliminated, the chances of the game ending will increase. Turnsheets are custom made on a laser printer to aid you in filling out your next turn. The games run about 12-16 turns. Cost is \$3.00 per turn. A rulebook (required before you can join) is only \$1.00.

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More Weapons

For Space: 1889 and Sky Galleons of Mars

By Bret A. Foland and Lester W. Smith

In the untamed regions of Space: 1889, a good weapon may often be all that stands between a character and certain death.

We offer the following new weapons for those referees and players who might like to try something out of the ordinary.

FIREARMS

Sometimes it is important to be well prepared for the unexpected. At such times, it can be annoying, to say the least, to find oneself armed with a revolver when a shotgun would be better, or with a shotgun when a rifle is needed. Combination weapons such as the two described here were created for just such contingencies.

Le Mat Revolver

The Le Mat revolver, invented by Dr. Jean Alexandre Le Mat, a Frenchman residing in America, might seem at first glance to be an overly large, unwieldy weapon. But in reality, it can be very effective in close combat due to its multi-barrel nature and heavy firepower. The weapon consists of a .44-caliber, nine-chamber cylinder that revolves around a central, .65-caliber shotgun barrel. Together, these features allow the weapon's user a total of 10 shots before having to reload, with one of those shots being a blast of "grapeshot." In fact, the weapon was often called the "grapeshot" revolver in reference to this last feature.

An earlier, percussion model of the Le Mat revolver was in great demand by the Confederate cavalry during the American Civil War, being favored by such notables as Jeb Stuart and General Beauregard. However, relatively few of the revolvers were ever actually made. Because of their rarity, Le Mat revolvers should be very hard to come by in any **Space: 1889** campaign. It is suggested that no more than one be available at any time, perhaps only one over the course of an entire campaign. *Wt: 3 lbs Price: £6.*

Drilling

A Drilling is a break-open, combination weapon with three barrels, typically used for hunting when it is not known ahead of time what the quarry will be. In the most common version of the Drilling, two shot barrels are mounted above a single rifle barrel. But occasionally, a Drilling may be found that consists of two rifle barrels above a single shot barrel. Usually, the double rifle barrels are of a larger caliber than that of the single-rifle-barrel version. The basic price for a Drilling is approximately £8, but the **Space: 1889** referee can adjust this upward to account for customized weapons and varying calibers. Drillings are readily available from civilian sources. *Wt: 10 lbs Price: £8 and up.*

ARTILLERY

Before the arrival of humans on Mars, Martian culture had reached a point of stagnation in which innovation had nearly died out. In the years before the onset of this stagnation, Martian engineers developed a number of interesting and innovative weapons which have never entered common usage for one reason or another. Two of these are listed below.

Thunderbolt Quick-firing Light Gun

The Thunderbolt is a variation on the theme of Earth's 15th-century Veuglaire, which uses a removable firing chamber. This removable canister allows the Thunderbolt to have a longer barrel than standard light guns, since the weapon need not be muzzle-loaded. The canister is held in place by one or more wedges in primitive models, or by a rotating screw in more advanced models. After firing, the crew loosens and removes the expended cartridge, replaces it with a loaded one, and tightens it in place.

This means of loading raises the gun's rate of fire somewhat, although three gunners are required to crew the weapon. The canister must be loaded with powder and shot in conventional fashion, but a number can be prepared ahead of time, at leisure, ensuring a better measured charge than

is possible in the heat of battle. The increased rate of fire is achieved at a loss of range, however, because the seal at the breech is usually poor (due to the corrosive effects of Martian gunpowder), and considerable pressure is lost, with consequent reduction in range. Despite this, Thunderbolts are still popular with some captains.

THUNDERBOLT TABLE

Weapon	Wt	Pen	DV	ROF	Crew	Rng	Cost
Thunderbolt	30	0	1	2	3	1/2	600

Lob Gun Incendiary Projectile

The incendiary round for lob guns is a projectile that combines some of the impact damage of a normal lob gun round with the incendiary traits of Martian liquid fire. In form,



the incendiary round consists of approximately a dozen small, stone containers of Martian liquid fire, banded together with iron to form a projectile nearly the same size as a normal lob gun round. The containers are scored to make them fracture upon impact, even with a wooden-hulled ship. The round is loaded into a lob gun in the same manner as a normal lob gun round. When the projectile is fired, one of the stone containers sometimes fractures in flight, which gives the round the appearance of a fireball as it flies through the air. The remaining containers burst and spill liquid fire when the round strikes its target. The fire level suffered by the target is determined by rolling 1D6 and subtracting the range in hexes from the gun to its target.

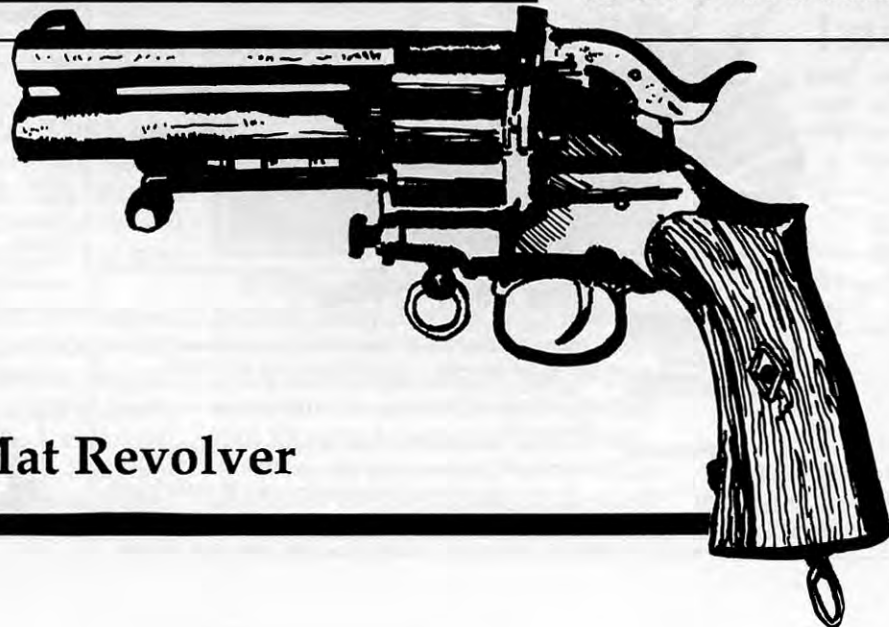
Impact damage is also caused by the incendiary round: A lob gun firing such a round is considered to have a penetration of 1 and a damage value of 3 (rather than the standard values of Pen 2 and DV 4). As well, there is some chance of a loss of trim critical being caused by an incendiary round, but because of the projectile's lighter weight, that chance is not so great as with a normal round. When a target is hit by an incendiary round from a lob gun, roll 1D6: On a roll of 1-3, a loss of trim critical occurs.

Because of the difficulty involved in constructing incendiary projectiles for lob guns, each round is considered to have a cost of £5. Players should be careful to keep track of exactly how many incendiary rounds a ship carries. If a hit occurs on a lob gun magazine containing incendiary projectiles, roll 1D6 for each such projectile to determine the level of fire that breaks out on the ship. Ω

SMALL ARMS FIRING TABLE ADDITIONS

Weapon	Shots	Mag	Reload	Wnd	Req Str	Save	Range
Le Mat Revolver							
Pistol	3	9	3	1-2	2	1	15
Shot	1	1	—	1D6/2	3	0	5*
Drilling (Basic)							
Rifle	1	1	1	2	3	1	100
Shot	2	2	1	1D	3	0	30
Drilling (Variant)							
Rifle	2	2	1	3	3	1	100
Shot	1	1	1	1D	3	0	30

*Shot barrel adds 1 to to-hit numbers at close-combat range (10 meters).



Le Mat Revolver

R.H. 89

A Simple Conversion Guide for Flying Vessels

Stephen Lawrence



Only a limited selection of vessels could be included in **Sky Galleons of Mars** when it was released, so GDW concentrated on providing a good generic mix of ships. The Martian vessels consist of a large and a small screw galley, and a large and a small kite. While the large vessels resemble the familiar *Whisperdeath* and *Hullcutter*, many vessels are not specifically represented. Furthermore, with only eight cloudships in the box, gamers were understandably reluctant to begin cutting them apart and experimenting with different configurations. This is compounded by the fact that parts of several ships are required in these conversions, and parts are often left over when the work is finished.

But now our worries are over: GDW is now making the vessels separately available in boxed sets. Converting the basic miniatures into the large variety of screw galleys, kites, and gunboats that ply the skies is now an easy task.

In order to undertake these conversions, you need a good *hobby knife* (a No. 1 knife with a No. 11 blade) and *plastic glue* (such as Testors Liquid or Pic Plasti-Stic, or a solvent-based glue such as Weld-On). Do not use a thick tube glue because it is more likely to mar the miniatures. *Sandpaper* can also be handy for removing gun mounts and sanding surfaces smooth on hull conversions.

Some of the more advanced conversions also call for the use of *hobby putty* (such as Miliput or Tamiya two-part ribbon epoxy) or a gap-filling cyanoacrylate (like the Pic Slow+Accelerator). Do not use a filler, such as Squadron Green Putty or most cyanoacrylates, because they will soften and warp the

plastic and may actually dissolve the miniature. Also handy are very thin *sheet styrene* (also called plastic card) and a *Dremel* or *Moto-Tool* with sander and cutting heads (be very careful with this tool).

Paints are a necessity—no matter how good the conversion is, some lines and slight imperfections will show up. Either enamels or acrylics will work. Despite the small size of the ship models, painting them is a breeze. The hard plastic of the models takes and permanently holds either enamel or acrylic paint. For suggestions on colors and techniques, see *Painting Your Models*, page 19.

Martian Ships

In this section we are going to go through every Martian ship that has been described to date in **Space: 1889** publications and explain how to build each from the parts included in the **Martian Skyships** boxed miniatures set.

As we do so, several terms will be used over and over again, so for clarity I'll try to cover them all here.

Large Kite: The large cruciform hull with a hole for an upright mast.

Small Kite: The medium-sized hull with a groove running across its deck for a crosspiece mast.

Large Screw Galley: The long, mastless hull.

Small Screw Galley: The small, mastless hull with a gangplank at both ends.

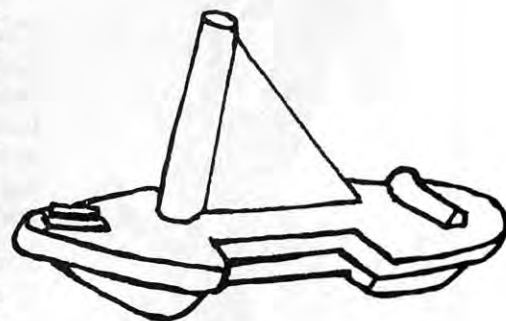
Forecastle: The large decked structure that makes up the front part of the ship.

Quarterdeck: The large decked structure that makes up the rear part of the ship.

Mounting Socket: The structure on the bottom of the hull into which the end of the base fits.

Outrigger: The two wings that extend to either side of the large kite's hull.

Sprue: The plastic "tree" to which the ship parts are attached.



Bloodrunner

The *Bloodrunner* conversion requires the hull of a small screw galley and the mast of a small kite. Cut the forward and

Zap 'em.**Blast 'em.****Fry 'em.**

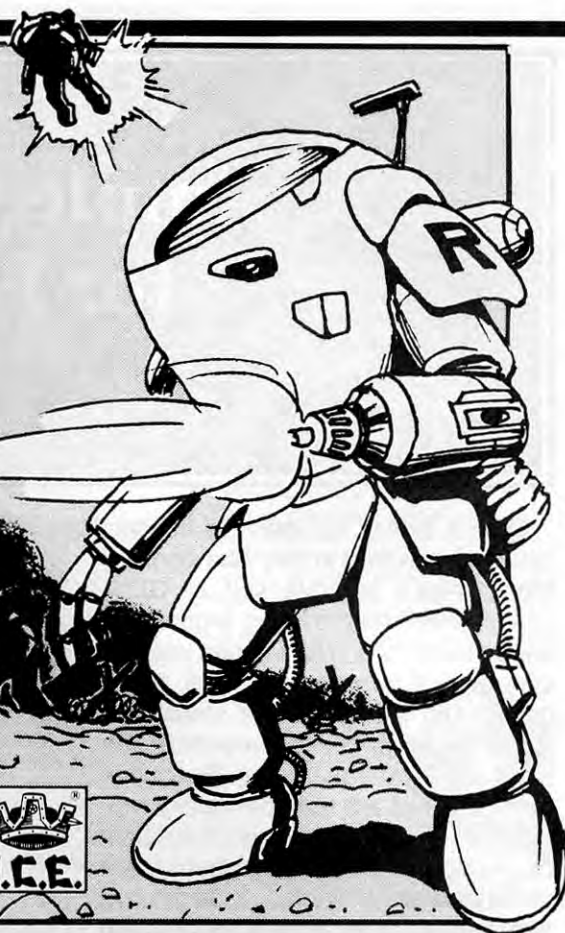
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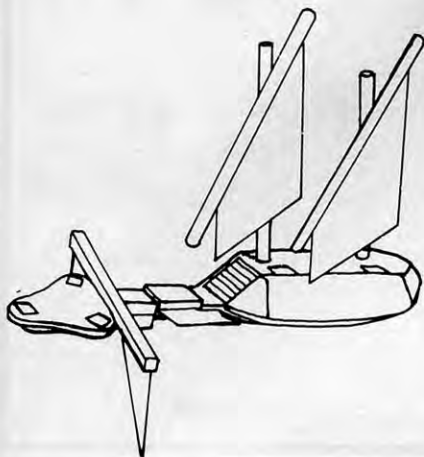
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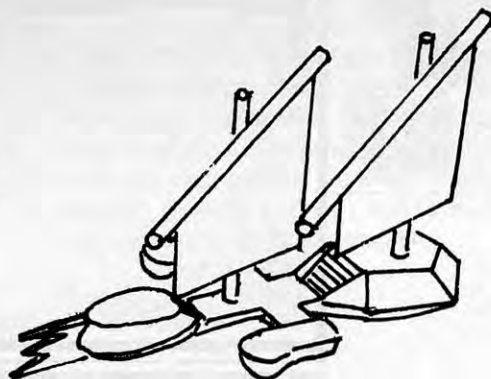
aft gangplanks off the hull. Sand the guns off of the rear gun mounts and use one of the gangplanks to make a single aft gun mount. Now cut one of the sails off the small kite's mast and glue it to the top of the hull as an upright sail.

deck, one immediately behind the stairs and one between the two aft gun mounts. Glue one of the large kite masts in each hole. You should, however, cut one-eighth of an inch off the bottom of the mizzenmast (the one to the rear) before gluing it in place, so that it is shorter than the mainmast.



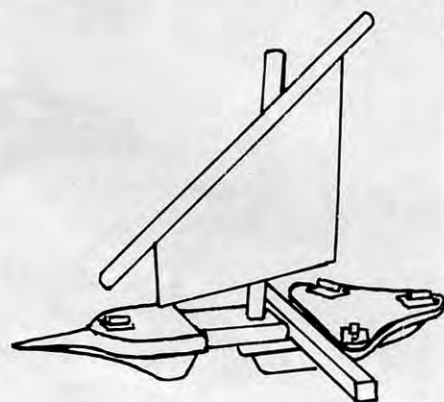
Warm Winds

The main feature of the *Warm Winds* is that it is really big. For this conversion you will need two large kites and one small one. Start with one of the large kite hulls and cut off the forecastle and the two outriggers. Next, cut the stern off flat, slightly behind the two gun mounts on the quarterdeck, then sand the guns off the mounts. Now take the second large kite and cut the quarterdeck off immediately behind the stairs. Sand the guns flat on these two mounts and glue this piece to the back of the first hull. You now have an enlarged quarterdeck. Next, take the hull of the small kite and cut off the forward half of the ship, making the cut just behind the mounting socket. Sand the guns off this piece, and sand the bottom of the mounting socket until it is even with the bottom of the hull. Fill in the remaining depth of the mounting socket with putty. Now glue this to the main hull assembly. The last step is attaching the masts. Glue the small kite's mast in place in its normal bracket. Drill two holes in the quarter-



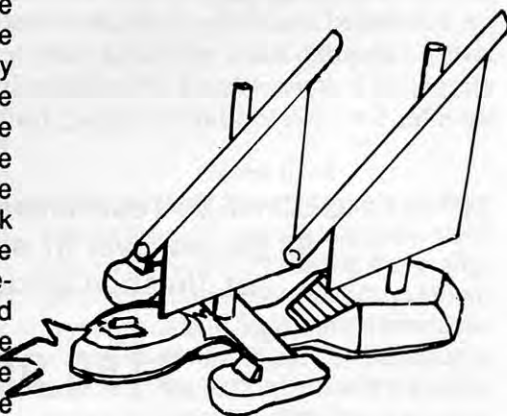
Skylord

The *Skylord* is simply a larger version of the *Whisperdeath* with its guns mounted belowdecks. For this conversion you will need one complete large kite plus one of the outriggers and the mast from a second large kite. Start by sanding the various gun mounts off the upper deck. Next, cut the deck of the outrigger away from the large structure at its end and cut the forecastle off the main part of the hull. Glue the short deck section from the outrigger where the forecastle was and then glue the forecastle to the end of this. This will extend the length of the ship and give it a more massive appearance. Finally, drill a hole in the quarterdeck just at the top of the aft stairs and glue a second upright mast in place. As with the *Whisperdeath*, a little bit of sheet plastic can be used to make a more elaborate ram if desired.



Swiftwood

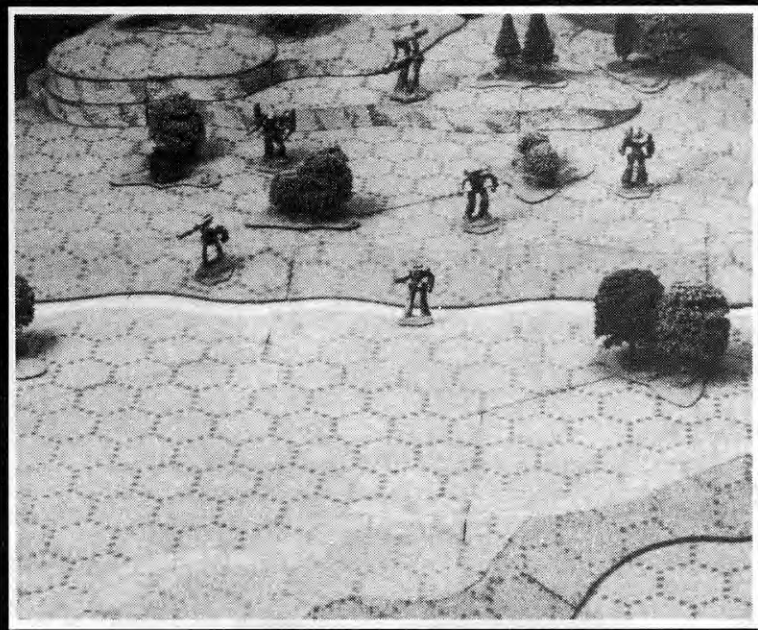
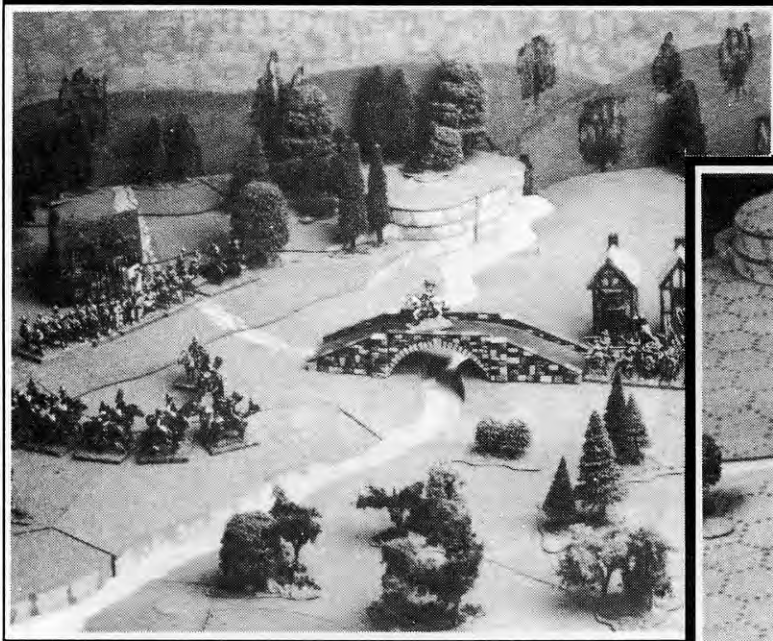
The *Swiftwood* conversion requires the hull and mast of one small kite, the hull of one large screw galley, and the mast of one large kite. Cut the quarterdeck off the small kite's hull and place it in your parts box. Now cut the forecastle off the screw galley and glue it on in place of the small kite's quarterdeck. This becomes the new bow of the ship. Now take the mast of the small kite and cut the two sails away from it. Glue the mast in its normal place, where it now serves as the ship's outriggers. Finally, drill a hole in the deck immediately in front of the crosspiece of the outrigger and glue the upright mast in place.



Whisperdeath

The large kite included in the current set is patterned after the *Whisperdeath*,

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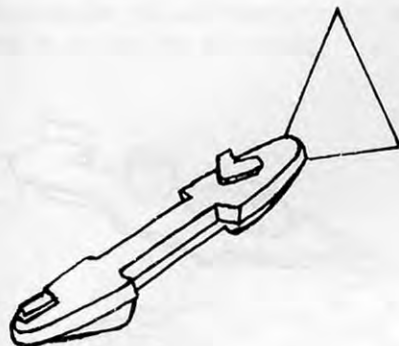
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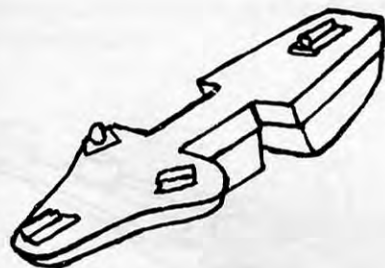
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and can be used as is. It has only one mast, though. To make an accurate version of the *Whisperdeath*, drill a hole in the quarterdeck just at the top of the aft stairs and glue a second upright mast in place. If desired, a little bit of sheet styrene can be used to make a more elaborate ram.



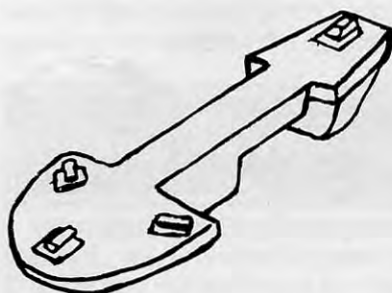
Small Bird

The model of the small screw galley was patterned after the *Small Bird* and may be used as is. If added detailing is desired, cut off the gangplanks at the bow and stern and add a rudder, cut from sheet styrene, to the stern.



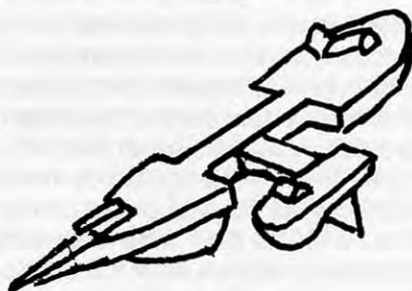
Clearsight

This conversion requires the hull piece from a small kite model. Cut away the central deck and hull from immediately behind the mounting socket to the immediate front of the quarterdeck. Now glue the quarterdeck to the main hull, thus shortening the hull. Fill in the mast hole with putty.



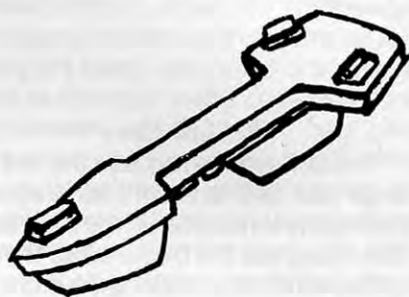
Endtime

This is a very easy conversion and requires only the hull of the small kite. The gun arrangement on deck is correct as is. Just take putty and fill in the hole for the mast. If desired, a small amount of putty can be used to round out the shape of the forecastle.



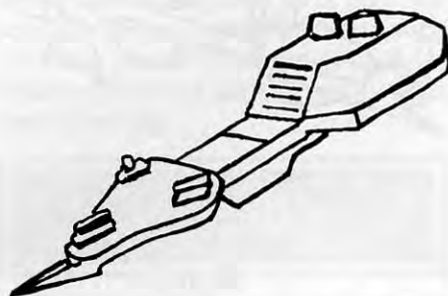
Fleetfoot

This conversion of the smallest of screw galleys requires a small screw galley and the left outrigger from a large kite. Cut the stern gangplank off the screw galley hull but leave the forward one in place. Sand the guns off the gun mounts and glue the outrigger to the left side of the hull. The outrigger will look better if you use your hobby knife to shave the sides of the deck connecting it to the hull. This should be done before you glue it to the hull. Finally, a small triangular piece of sheet styrene glued to the bottom of the outrigger represents the rudder.



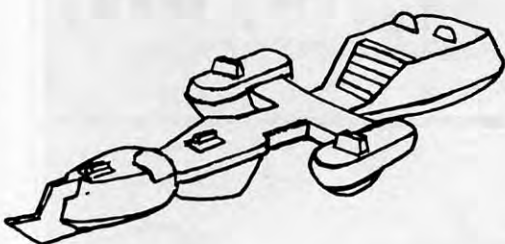
Sky Runner

This conversion requires only the hull of a small kite. Begin by cutting off the front of the hull just behind the forward gun mount and sanding the front into a smooth, gentle curve. This will now be the stern of the ship. Next, sand the bow of the ship (which used to be the stern) so it has a rounded shape instead of a rectangular shape. Finally, fill in the mast hole with putty.



Glory Sled

These High Martian screw galleys require the hull of a large kite and a small kite. First, cut the forecastle and outriggers off the large kite's hull and put them in your parts box. Next, cut the forecastle off the small kite's hull. Use sandpaper to smooth the bottom of the hull and the remnant of the mounting bracket. Glue this to the front of the large kite's hull as the new forecastle. Finally, make a ram out of sheet styrene and add it to the new bow.



Fenian Ram

This conversion requires the hull of a large kite and a small kite. Begin by cutting the forecastle off the large kite's hull. Next, cut the back half of the hull off the small kite, making your cut just behind the mounting socket. Return the forward part of the hull to the parts box. Turn the back half of the small kite's hull around and glue it to the front of the large kite's hull, so that the stern of the small kite's hull faces forward. Now glue the forecastle of the large kite to the front of the ship, filling in any gaps with putty.

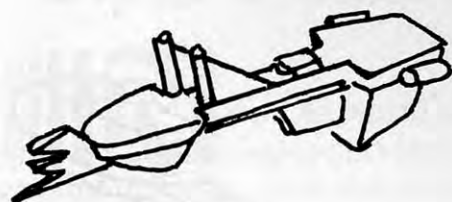


Hullcuttter

The model of the large screw galley is patterned after the *Hullcuttter* and does not require any conversion work. Some sheet plastic can be used to detail the ram, however, and that can improve the appearance of the piece considerably.

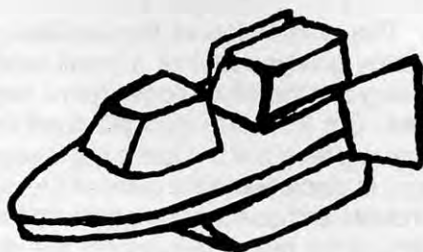
British Ships

Many of the aerial vessels of the European powers are very elaborate in their design and require complex conversions which are beyond the scope of this article. However, British ships have a commonality in design which makes it fairly easy to conduct simple conversions to model their most frequently encountered vessels. All of these will be undertaken using the three basic models included in the original **Sky Gallions of Mars**, which represent the *Aphid*, *Dauntless*, and *Reliant*.



Skyfire

The *Skyfire* is similar to the *Hullcuttter*, only larger. This conversion requires one large screw galley and the mast from a small kite. First, sand the guns off the gun mounts, as the *Skyfire*'s weaponry is located belowdecks. Next, cut the two sails off the mast and glue them, standing upright, to the ship's deck. These represent the small auxiliary sails that the ship sometimes uses while cruising. Although the *Hullcuttter* has these as well, adding them to this model will give it a distinctive look. Finally, use thin sheet plastic to detail the ram, if desired.



Aerial Steam Launch

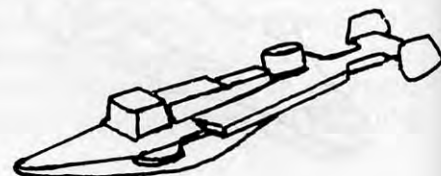
This conversion requires only an *Aphid* and some sheet styrene. Cut the tail off the *Aphid* immediately behind the

boiler. Cut the gangplank off so that the bow has a more rounded appearance. Trim the round wing mounts off the deck and cut two indentations in the deck on either side of the boiler. Now cut two trapezoidal rudders out of sheet styrene and glue them into the indentations you cut in the deck.



Locust

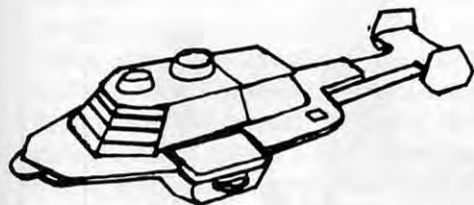
This conversion requires only an *Aphid* hull and a piece of sprue. Carefully trim the boiler off the rear of the *Aphid*'s superstructure. Now cut a short cylindrical section from the sprue. Glue this to the deck in place of the boiler to represent the *Locust*'s stern tower.



Macefield

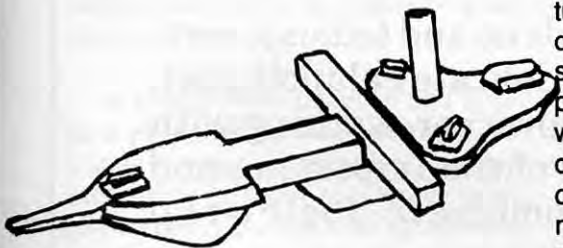
The *Macefield* requires both an *Aphid* and a *Dauntless*. Cut the tail off the *Dauntless* and return it to your parts box. Trim the forward hull of the *Dauntless* down so it is level with the deck forward of the bridge. Fill in the area between

the bridge and the gun tower behind it with putty and sand it smooth, so it looks like a continuation of the bridge. Cut away the rear third of the ship's boiler and replace it with a new gun tower cut from sprue, just as you did with the *Locust*. Now cut the tail off the *Aphid* just behind the boiler and glue it to the back of the *Macefield's* hull. (Note that if you have already done the steam launch conversion, you will have an extra *Aphid* tail to use for the *Macefield*.)



Triumph

This is a fairly simple conversion requiring a *Reliant* and the tail from an *Aphid*. Cut the tail off the *Reliant* just behind the gun tower. Sand the gun tower down and, using putty, extend the superstructure back to cover the boilers. Now glue the tail of the *Aphid* to the back of the *Reliant*.



U.S.S. Ranger

This is not a British vessel, but it is so easy to model that it seems foolish not to include it here. Begin by making the

Swiftwood conversion described in the Martian section above, but leave off the mast. Now find a small piece of plastic rod or piece of scrap plastic that can be filed into the shape of a smokestack, and glue it to the center of the quarterdeck.

Painting Your Models

Once you have completed your conversions, you will want to paint them. The finished model should be glued to its base and then spray painted with a single, even coat. If you don't want to invest a lot of time in this, pick an appropriate color and leave it at that. (Brown for Martians and gray for British is, of course, recommended.) With very little extra effort, however, you can add a great deal to the appearance of the ships by painting them in a "historical" fashion.

To make this extra effort, start, as before, with a coat of spray paint, but make it white or light gray. Be careful not to overdo this: It is easy to lose detail if too much paint is applied. The overall spray coat is important because the models, particularly the bases, have large, flat, smooth areas which tend to show brush marks. If you spray them first, you will have a slightly textured surface which your paint will adhere to evenly. It was common practice in all navies to have the decks done in a light, natural wood color or polished white, and you should do the same. Paint the decks either white or light tan. For steel-hulled European ships, the hulls and superstructures should be either gray or steel, with detailing picked out in black. Martian ships, however, are often flamboyantly painted, and individual captains have wide latitude in selecting their own colors. Contrasting upper and lower hull colors are common, with sails often matching the dominant hull color. Gun mounts should be painted black or brown, while guns should be painted black or brass. Merchant vessels are more often somber colors, perhaps a simple brown with white or linen-colored sails.

Once the basic painting is done, you may wish to add some special detail work. Two very easy ways of doing this involve decals and art markers. Many



hobby shops have a variety of heraldic shield decals available. These have emblems on them such as jumping fish, rampant lions, and coiled dragons, as well as more geometric designs such as shamrocks, stars, circles, bars, etc. These can be used to excellent effect in detailing ships, particularly on the large upright sails of kites. For example, if you have a green fish decal, you might paint a ship with a green hull and a yellow sail and then put the green fish on the sail to match the hull.

Art markers are an even more useful means of detailing ships, particularly colored fine-line markers. Martian ships are often painted over with contrasting filigree work, and this can be added both easily and expertly with a colored marker. You can use a black fine-line marker to add the lines of deck planking, and to outline the masts and booms where they lie against the sails.

You can also use a black marker against the vertical faces of stairs to make them stand out and give the impression of shadows. On British ships the black marker is extremely useful in drawing portholes and doors, as well as deck planking.

Conclusion

While this article doesn't cover every aerial vessel in service in *Space: 1889*, it does provide a wide variety of fairly simple conversions that will produce most of the ships you will want or need. By the time you have completed just a few of these conversions, you may find your appetite whetted for more adventuresome conversions. And the more conversions you complete, the more your confidence will grow in your own modeling abilities. After finishing a few of these conversions, you'll be ready to begin kit bashing and even scratch-building aerial gunboats of your own. Ω

US \$3.25

CHALLENGE

41

The Magazine of Science-Fiction Gaming

TWILIGHT: 2000
The Village

D. Acre

SPACE: 1889
**The Puzzle
of the Shard**

Loren K. Wiseman

2300 AD
Macrocombat

David Nilsen

STAR TREK
Dragon's Flight

C. W. Hess

GDW
GAMES

Surprise at Clearwater

Red Captain Gary Hawkins
is a source of constant irritation
to the Oenotrian Empire.



Ever since Ronald Whitfield first became a Red Captain, he and his kite, the *Cloud Leopard*, have been a source of constant irritation to the merchants of the Oenotrian Empire. To date, the

this increased threat by stepping up efforts to locate and destroy the *Cloud Leopard* and its companion vessel. With great numbers of Oenotrian warships searching for them, Whitfield and Phillips recently headed north to prey upon High Martian pirates until the ire of the Oenotrians had cooled a bit. Unfortunately for the two Red Captains, a number of Oenotrian warships pursued them all the way to the Meroe Badlands.

A few days before the beginning of this scenario, the *Cloud Leopard* and the *Sky Lynx* stumbled upon a pair of *Sky Runner*-class vessels. The Red Captains heavily damaged the two ships, but in the fighting, the *Sky Lynx* took a boiler hit, and the *Sky Runners* were able to escape.

Most of the drinking water on both Red Captains' ships went to replace that lost from the *Sky Lynx*'s boiler. With the crews on short water rations, Whitfield and Phillips decided to set a course for the city of Mylarkt to replenish their water and pick up other supplies.

While heading for Mylarkt, however, the Red Captains discovered an abandoned High Martian kraag and stopped to explore it. Upon entering the kraag, they found a spring at its bottom. With the *Cloud Leopard* keeping watch overhead, the *Sky Lynx* set down and replenished its water supply. Then, the two ships switched places, and the *Sky Lynx* kept watch. While the *Cloud Leopard* was thus occupied, a violent sandstorm swept through the region. Unable to climb above the turbulence, the *Sky Lynx* was forced to set down as well.

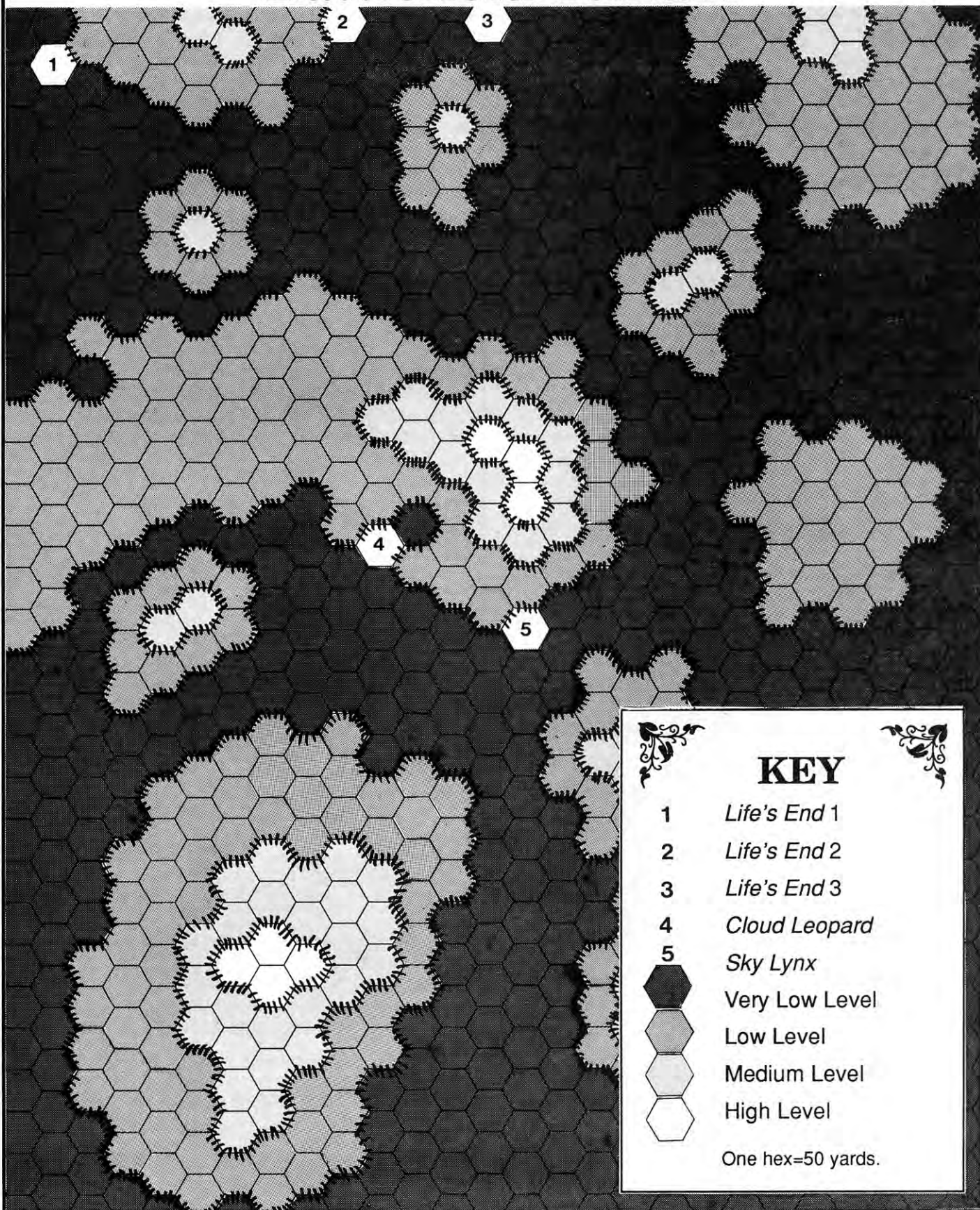


By Bret Foland
and Lester W. Smith

Cloud Leopard has captured a dozen prizes, all Oenotrian, and caused great damage to the sky fleets of the empire. As well, Whitfield's old first mate, Andrew Phillips, soon became a Red Captain in his own right, commanding the *Sky Lynx*, a small screw galley refitted with a steam engine. By working together, the two Red Captains have been able to defeat more dangerous opponents than ever before.

The Oenotrian Empire responded to

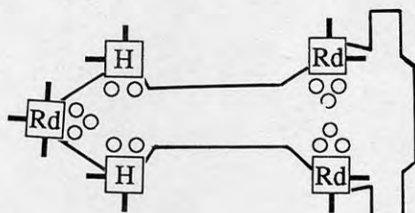
Battlefield Terrain



Life's End 1 & 2

0

£20,680



Wood

3

300 Tons

4

Bridge CHTS O O

Deck □ □ □

Maneuver □ □ □

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Hull

Hits

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VL □ □

Marines

□ □ □ □

Screw

4

3

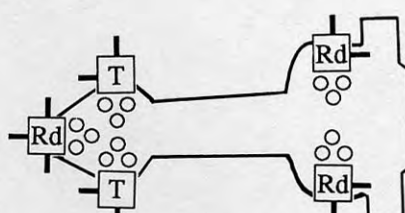
2

1

Life's End 3

0

£20,680



Wood

3

300 Tons

4

Bridge CHTS O O

Deck □ □ □

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Hits

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Marines

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Screw

4

3

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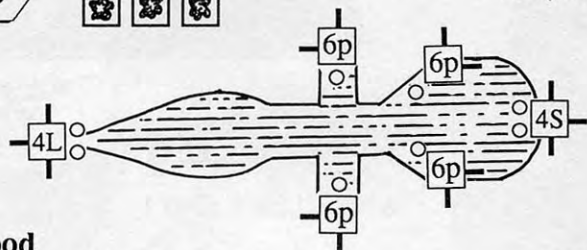
*Cloud Leopard**Kite*

0

Smoke Screens



£23,000



Wood

3

Spike Droppers



220 Tons

K

Bridge CHTS O

Deck □ □ □ □ □

Maneuver □

 □
 □
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Hull

Hits

VH □ □

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M □ □

L □ □

VL □ □

Marines

0 □ □ □

Masts

□

-1

-2

-3

-4

-5

-6

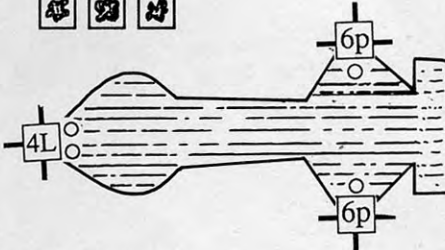
*Sky Lynx**Aerial Gunboat*

0

Smoke Screens



£19,000



Wood

2

Spike Droppers



200 Tons

3

Bridge CHTS

Deck □ □

Maneuver □

Hull

Hits

H □

M □

L □

VL □

Marines

0 □ □ □

Screw

3

2

1

Once the storm had passed, the two vessels prepared to get under way, but a trio of Oenotrian warships had followed close on the heels of the storm. Spotting the two ships on the ground, the Oenotrians closed in for the kill.

At this point the scenario begins.

THE RED CAPTAINS' VESSELS

THE *CLOUD LEOPARD* is simply a *Swiftwood*-class kite that has been refitted with British weaponry. The *Sky Lynx* was originally built in a Martian yard, but was later refitted with a British steam engine and weapons.

The *Cloud Leopard* has Crack crews on its four-inch long gun and the spar-mounted six-pounders. Its other gun crews are Trained. The *Sky Lynx* has Crack crews on all its guns. Marines on both vessels have modern rifles and are Trained.

Both vessels have a number of smoke screens and spike droppers, as indicated in their respective ship record forms. (Details of these two items are described in **Challenge 36**.)

THE OENOTRIAN VESSELS

THE THREE *Life's Ends* in this scenario are new designs, not encountered by the Red Captains before. One of these vessels is equipped with a thunderbolt (described in **Challenge 40**) and has exchanged its forward heavy gun for a rod gun.

Each of the three ships has one

Crack, two Trained, and one Green gun crew (to be distributed as the Martian player desires). The marines on all three ships carry muskets and are Trained.

SETUP

SHIP RECORD FORMS for all ships in this scenario are included with this article, as is a map of the terrain over which the battle takes place. To play this scenario, you will need to reproduce this map on a two-inch hex grid (if this is not practical, the Kraag Barovaar map from *Sky Galleons of Mars* may be substituted, in which case the starting points will have to be changed). The *Cloud Leopard* begins at Low altitude at point 4. The *Sky Lynx* begins on the surface (one step below Very Low altitude) at point 5.

Marian 1 begins at point 1, at Medium to High altitude. Martians number 2 and 3 enter the map at points 2 and 3 respectively, during the Martian player's movement phase of the second game turn. They also begin at Medium to High altitude.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

THE OENOTRIANS get 1 victory point for driving the *Sky Lynx* from the map, 2 points for destroying the vessel, and 4 points for capturing it. They get 2 victory points for driving the *Cloud Leopard* away, 3 points for destroying it, and 6 points for capturing it.

The Red Captains get no points for driving an Oenotrian vessel off the map,



but they get 1 point for each ship they destroy and 2 points for each one they capture.

MODEL CONVERSIONS

YOU CAN EASILY make specific models for the ships included in this scenario using the standard *Sky Galleons of Mars* sprues.

Extra sprues of these ships can be purchased from GDW in the packages of **Martian Cloudships** and **Aerial Gunboats**.

To make a *Life's End*, simply replace the forecastle of a large screw galley model with the forecastle of a small kite model, then carve or sand off the lob gun mount.

The *Sky Lynx* can be built from the hull of a small kite and the tail of an *Aphid*. Remove the fore gun from the kite and glue the tail of the *Aphid* in its place to create a quarterdeck. Finally, fill in the mast hole and sand it smooth.

The *Cloud Leopard* is built as if it were a *Swiftwood*, following the instructions included with **Martian Cloudships**.

Paint the ships to your individual taste, and enjoy the game. Ω

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The Puzzle of the Shard

The market at Meroe, while not as large as the bazaar of Syrtis Major, is still an impressive place. Almost 50 acres of twisting, turning streets, alleys, and back roads lead the adventure seeker along a thousand paths to intrigue, fame, and fortune.

This adventure begins late in the evening, in one of those back alleys, behind a tavern catering to the worst of both human and Martian tastes. Here, the characters stumble upon two thieves engaged in a spirited tug-of-war over the body of their latest victim. The two are actively disputing possession of a small leather pouch and exchanging comments on each other's ancestry. One thief concludes his argument with a knife blade, and the other joins the victim on the ground but will not release his hold on the bag. Noticing the approach of the players, the upright thief drops the bag and flees, vanishing into the rabbit warren of alleys and streets. Pursuit seems pointless.

THE BAG

THE SECOND THIEF and his victim are both dead. When the characters manage to pry the bag loose, they will find it contains a handful of small coins of all nationalities, two small figurines of carved eegaar horn, and a small, folded parchment sealed with wax and containing something hard and angular. Investigation of the bag will reveal that it is a cheap affair made of tanned gashant hide, available just about anywhere. The coins total just under three shillings in value. The parchment package contains a small, dirty, semitranslucent crystal and a shard from a much larger crystal of the same type. Prudence dictates that a dark alley in the depths of a bazaar is not a good place to perform a detailed examination of anything, and the PCs rapidly retire to their quarters.



THE FIGURINES

BOTH FIGURINES are about four inches in height and are carved from the base section of an eegaar horn (the material is quite unique in appearance and is easily identifiable). Old Mars hands will know them to be *Homindaar*, good-luck charms found practically everywhere on Mars for a penny or two, and so common as to be worthless to a serious collector of Martian curios (but popular with tourists). Both carvings are very common motifs: One shows a Martian water monk at prayer, kneeling over his holy pan in the meditative posture of his sect. The other shows a Martian peddler carrying a bundle of his wares on his back. Both were carved by the same artisan (indicated by the maker's mark on the base of each), and both are done to a high standard, indicating that they might fetch several times the normal market value of such objects (perhaps sixpence for the pair).

THE PARCHMENT

THE PARCHMENT is actually a crude map, showing what seems to be a canal, a city, a number of small villages, and a location marked with a small drawing of the crystal. It is not labeled, however, so it will be a matter of some difficulty to determine what area of Mars the map depicts.

THE CRYSTAL

THE CRYSTAL is hexagonal in cross section, about two inches long, and one-half inch in diameter, ending in a blunt point at either end. The surface is dirty and pitted, but the crystal seems to glow slightly, more at one end than the other. If the crystal is cleaned, the glow will increase; if the crystal is exposed to bright sunlight, a faint beam of light will extend a few inches from the glowing end. Covering the dark end causes the glow to stop.

THE SHARD

THE SHARD is of the same type of crystal, but it is a portion broken from one end. If the large crystal is proportional to the small one, it was originally over one foot long. The shard is also dirty and pitted, and filled with fine hairline fractures that seem to diffuse light—perhaps this explains why it does not glow like its smaller cousin when exposed to light.

A MYSTERY

THE CHARACTERS will discover that the crystal is one of a rare type called the "Tears of the Sun." It can be used to focus and concentrate the rays of the Sun into a powerful weapon. How the victim came into possession of them is a mystery. Clues soon lead the characters to the city of Polodaar, where they learn that the map is not a completely accurate guide to the crystals, and they will need someone experienced in the northern Martian wilderness to guide them.

The characters' search for a guide in Polodaar will bring them into contact with Damien Van Owen, a prospector whose knowledge of the wilderness will be very useful in the search for the crystals. Van Owen, it will transpire, is untrustworthy, and they will soon have to cope with both his treachery and the

dangers of the Martian ice cap in order to locate crystals.

Their quest will lead them to a canal that runs under the surface of the ice, ultimately taking them to a long-forgotten city in an isolated valley forever frozen in the ice. Here, however, Van Owen will finally realize that his only chance of getting a share in the crystals lies with the characters, and he will change from enemy to friend.

TEARS OF THE SUN

THE CRYSTAL and the shard are indeed both the same substance and are called Shineek Kar (Tears of the Sun) in Martian legend. These crystals, long thought to be apocryphal, are the secret to the canal-building barges which Jules Verne and other humans have speculated about for years.

If the naturally occurring facets of the crystal are carefully cleaned and polished to mirror smoothness, light entering one end of the crystal is polarized, concentrated, and reflected continuously inside the crystal, causing it to glow. Because of its crystalline structure and polished facets, the crystal allows light and heat to enter with ease, but they cannot exit as readily. As more light is fed into the crystal, it acts as a

capacitor, soaking up energy until the front facets can no longer hold it back, and it discharges in a narrow beam. In smaller crystals (those shorter than a few inches), this beam is enough to cause fires at a few hundred feet. The larger crystals, however, are much more powerful.

Using giant crystals, the ancient Martians are able to use the rays generated to melt rock and cut the canals over the face of their planet. This was accomplished as follows: A single gigantic crystal, three or four yards in length, was suspended in a framework slung under a large sky barge. The upper surface of the barge carried a system of dozens of huge mirrors, reflectors, lenses, and concentrators (smaller crystals), which gathered sunlight and focused it at the receiving end of the crystal. The discharge of these large crystals was powerful enough to melt the rock of the surface of the red planet. Properly aimed, the crystal could dig a canal in a remarkably short time. The main drawback to such a device was that it was clumsy. By charging the crystal almost to the discharge point, then covering and uncovering the mirrors at the proper instant, the operators of the barge could fire the crystal at will.

In their natural state, as the characters will discover, the crystals are pitted and dirty, and will not absorb or discharge energy. Likewise, cracked or broken crystals are similarly useless. Only relatively undamaged crystals will do anything more than glow.

ALTERNATIVES

THE SCENARIO detailed in the players' introduction on page 19 is only one of many alternatives. The referee is free to devise other methods for getting the shard into the hands of the characters. How the characters come into possession of the shard isn't important. What matters is that they realize the profits to be made from a larger crystal.

Likewise, the adventure need not begin in Meroe, either. The referee should adapt the beginning sequence to fit the needs of the players and the individual campaign. As long as they eventually arrive in Polodaar, all will be well.

CLUES

THE CHARACTERS will presumably wish to investigate the interesting objects that have just come into their possession. Just how they go about this is for them to decide. The following paragraphs are a summary of the various results.

The Map: A detailed examination of the map by someone knowledgeable in Martian geography will identify the city as Polodaar and the point indicated by the crystal as somewhere to the north at the edge of the Martian polar ice cap. The map is obviously a very crude one, since it is not done to a consistent scale and the locations of certain landmarks are inconsistent.

A guide who has some familiarity of the area north of Polodaar will be necessary.

The Carvings: If one of the characters decides to take the carvings to a dealer for an evaluation, the dealer will remark that the carvings are of exceptionally fine craftsmanship and will offer four pence for the lot. If questioned (or bribed), he will identify the maker as a well known artist from Polodaar whose work sometimes makes it to Meroe. This may be enough to persuade the characters that the solution to their mystery probably lies in Polodaar.

ORIGINS

THE CRYSTALS, called "Tears of the Sun," were formed as a result of a rare combination of pressure, material, and temperature eons ago in the remote prehistory of the red planet. Long before life arose on Mars, the conditions that gave birth to these crystals ceased producing them. Most of them are quite small, less than an inch in length, but a few large ones (more than a yard in length, rarely longer) made it to the surface. The crystals are like quartz or volcanic glass in that they are quite hard and, at the same time, very brittle.

The crystals are brought to the surface as a result of conventional geological processes, and occur in surface or near-surface deposits in certain locations on Mars. All known deposits of the crystals were mined out generations ago, during the period of the canal builders, when they were used in the construction of the canals (see the explanation in the main text). No examples of the crystals are known to survive, and they were thought to be mythical by most humans (and not a few Martians).



The Crystal and the Shard: If the characters display the crystal and/or the shard at the same shop they show the carvings, the merchant will show momentary surprise, but will quickly recover. After examining them for a few moments, he will remark that they are a curiosity of slightly greater value than the carvings, especially if a large one can be found. He will offer a shilling for the one the players have and will inquire where they got it. Further events will depend on the characters' actions. But the merchant will know the true value of the crystals and will try to steal the characters' map (unless they are fool enough to give it to him.) Depending upon what the characters tell him, the merchant may decide to have them followed, send a gang of thugs to steal the map and the crystals, or offer to come along on an expedition to find crystals. But he will not reveal the true value of the crystals.

THE TRIP TO POLODAAR

ASIDE FROM a possible ambush by thugs, the characters' trip to Polodaar should be uneventful and swiftly concluded by whatever transport the characters have at their disposal. The normal Martian encounter tables can be used until the players arrive in Polodaar (modified at the referee's discretion). Depending on how vigilant the characters are, they may notice that the merchant has had them followed. If the characters have not aroused the merchant's suspicions by showing him the crystal, the referee may still wish to implement an encounter with a marauding group of bandits, just to keep the group alert. The merchant may have recommended a contact in Polodaar, either Damien Van Owen or some other individual. If this is the case, the ambush by thugs seeking the map will not occur (at least not until later).

THE CITY OF POLODAAR

THE CITY OF Polodaar is one of the northern-most city-states of the old empire, and it presently owes its existence to the regional fur trade. Most of the city is deserted, and the population is less than one-tenth of what it was during the height of Seldon's empire. A

canal runs through the city, but only the stretch south of the city is maintained. The only traffic from the north is the annual flood water (in uncontrolled surges) that has often threatened to wash away the city entirely. Travel northward from the city is fairly easy, however, since the canal is scoured clean of debris by the annual torrents of melt water. Nomads bring in hides throughout the spring and summer trapping seasons and trade them in the market for manufactured goods and luxuries. A few small farming villages still exist, scratching out a sparse living in the short and chilly growing season.

POSSIBILITIES

MULTIPLE POSSIBILITIES are open to the characters once they arrive in Polodaar. These depend, to a large degree, on what actions the characters took in Meroe while investigating their collection of artifacts.

The Carvings: The purpose of the two carvings is to draw the players' attention to Polodaar and get them to guess that it is the city shown on the map. Trying to trace down the artist who made the carvings will prove to be a dead end (but the referee should not discourage such action). He will be fairly easy to locate and will readily identify the work as his own, but he will know nothing further about them. He makes hundreds of such carvings a year and has no way of keeping track of them after they leave his shop. He will know nothing about the map and will know only vague legends about the Tears of the Sun (he will tell the players that they



are said to store sunshine during the day for use as lamps after dark).

The Map: If the characters consult a person knowledgeable in Martian geography, they will learn the same things noted on page 20.

The Crystals: If the characters have not consulted anyone about the crystals in Meroe and do so in Polodaar, the referee should simply transfer the events in the merchant's shop from that city to here. The merchant will express some slight interest, all the while secretly plotting to steal the map from the characters. Otherwise, the characters will learn little more than they already know.

Searching for a Guide: If the characters ask about a guide to the territory in the north, they will eventually be led to Damien Van Owen (who seems best suited to the job). If the merchant has suggested the characters contact Damien, the human and the Martian will be confederates; otherwise, Damien will be acting on his own. The players can possibly be followed by the Meroen merchant's thugs and the Polodaar merchant's thugs, and be the subject of Damien's plottings all at once (but this may be a little complicated for most referees).

EQUIPMENT

MOST OF MARS is decidedly warm, but the polar regions are a different matter entirely. The local inhabitants wear much more clothing than their southern cousins, and certain items of equipment are required for travellers in the icy north of the red planet. Tents and several blankets are required, of course. The characters might find a couple of other items useful as well.

Clothing, Cold Weather: Primarily, this consists of thick woolen undergarments, a long, heavy coat, mittens, knit mufflers, scarves, earmuffs, and so on. *Weight:* 12 lbs. *Price:* £1.

Stove, Portable: This is a small, liquid-fuel stove designed to be used to heat a tent or other small enclosure. *Weight:* 4 lbs. *Price:* 8/6.

DAMIEN VAN OWEN (Experienced NPC)



DAMIEN VAN OWEN is a standard fixture in many frontier settlements, the broken-down old man who has spent his life chasing rainbows and has ended up in the gutter. Van Owen was bitten by the gold bug in the 1840s and was one of thousands who went to California after the discovery of the rich deposits near Sutter's Mill. Like many others, Van Owen did not strike it rich in California, but he did manage to scrape out enough of a living in the gold fields to whet his appetite for more. Since that time, Van Owen has sought gold in Colorado and Australia, emeralds in Venezuela, ivory in the fever-ridden interior of the dark continent, and fire jewels on the high plains of Moab.

It is not for lack of ability or intelligence that Van Owen is still searching. Like many men, he has found a fortune many times, and he has always squandered it while seeking more. Usually he finds just

enough to get a grubstake for his next trip, which he believes will be the one where he finds his Ophir, his El Dorado, his Cibola. Although Van Owen is very intelligent, he has never realized that it is the search he enjoys above all else. Finding the Tears of the Sun, however, might be just what it takes to satisfy him and make him settle down. Van Owen will initially intend to betray everyone concerned to get the crystals, but upon arrival in the Valley of the Crystals, he will realize he needs help to accomplish this goal.

Attributes Skills

Str: 5	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat 3 (edged weapon)
Agil: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 1 (rifle)
End: 6	Wilderness Travel 5 (foraging), Fieldcraft 1, Swimming 1
Int: 4	Observation 3
Chr: 3	Linguistics 2 (Koline 1)
Soc: 1	Leadership 1

Motives: Frugal, Stubborn, Ruthless.

Appearance: Van Owen is a short, stocky man in his sixties who looks about a decade younger. He is bald and has a short but bristly beard (which was originally auburn but has been bleached to a grayish yellow by the years and the Sun). His skin has been burnt brown as a nut by years of living in the wilderness, and his nose shows signs of having been broken once or twice. At first glance, he might appear to be just like a hundred other battered old prospectors, but on closer examination the players will notice several things that give the lie to this impression. For one thing, his limbs are powerfully muscled, and he is stronger than many men half his age. For another, his eyes are sharp as a gimlet, and he has a piercing stare that shows intelligence lurking behind the senile facade. Van Owen carries a pair of heavy revolvers, a 12-gauge shotgun, and a throwing knife in his boot.

DAMIEN

AS DESCRIBED in the sidebar, Damien is a grizzled, old prospector with some experience in the region, although he has never been to the specific area indicated on the map. If the players show him the map, however, he will immediately recognize several of the key landmarks and will know exactly where the crystals are to be found. He will not reveal this fact to the characters, however, intending to betray everyone concerned and keep the crystals for himself.

Damien will pretend to be a little slow, just enough to convince the players that he is too stupid to be anything but honest. At the same time, he will display considerable knowledge of the area and its dangers, enough to convince the characters that he will make a good guide.

If Damien and the merchant are confederates, the prospector will be planning to betray him as well. If the merchant has had the players followed by his gang of thugs (but Damien is not in cahoots with him), Damien will notice this fact immediately and call it to the characters' attention, as a means of convincing them of his loyalty.

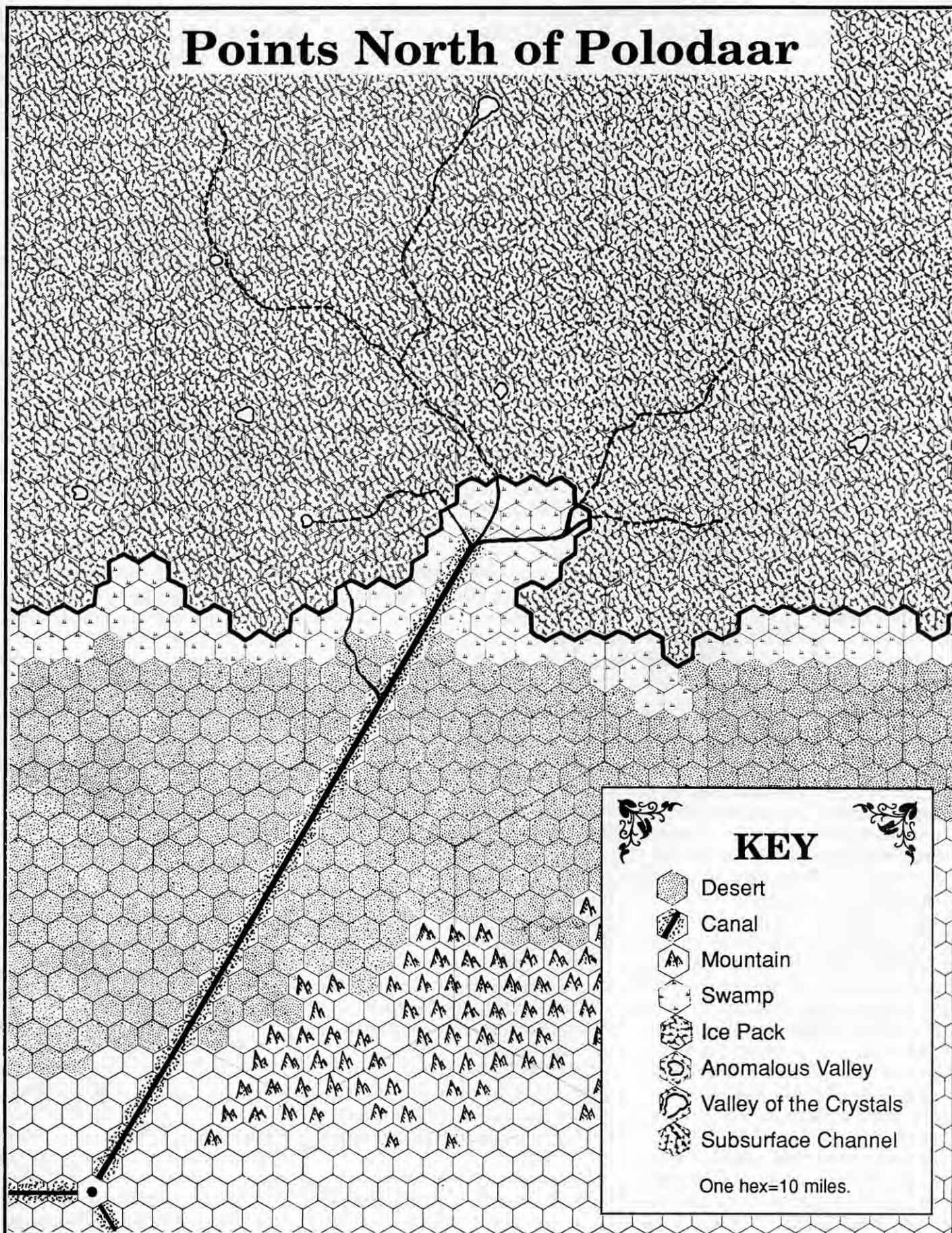
Observant players may be able to see through Damien's act. How this comes about is for the referee to decide. The best way to work it is to have Damien's actions seem odd, but not to reveal too much at any one time.

Whatever happens, if Van Owen is still with the group when they arrive at the Valley of the Crystals, he will undergo a change of heart as he realizes that he needs the cooperation of the characters to get the crystals (and the wealth they represent) back to civilization.

Damien will advise the characters on the equipment they will need for a trip to the ice cap, primarily warm clothing and ample stocks of food. Ruumet breehr cannot survive the cold very well and are not used in the area around Polodaar.

The players will need to acquire gashants (a specially acclimatized northern breed, readily available in Polodaar) if they are to travel by land.

Points North of Polodaar



If the players are to travel by flyer or canal boat, the trip will be easier in the initial stages, but Damien will suggest that they take a few gashants along, just in case ("Tha' make good eatin', 'fit comes to that.").

POINTS NORTH

IT IS ASSUMED that the characters are making their trip north in the late winter, after the worst of the cold weather is over, but before the large-scale flooding that will make travel along the canal more hazardous. It is also assumed that the characters have no canal boat or aerial flyer, and are travelling on gashants. If necessary, the referee should adjust the situation to reflect the characters' earlier actions and decisions.

ENCOUNTERS ON THE WAY

DURING THE TRIP north of Polodaar, use the encounter table on page 25.



Ice Pack/Glacier: The only place on the red planet where precipitation falls is at the poles, in the form of snow. As snow builds up, its own weight compresses it into ice. Sometimes this ice pack is trapped by various geological features and remains static. Most of the time, however, it begins to move in an ice formation known as a glacier. The movement is very slow (hence, the word "glacial"), but it can be overwhelmingly powerful as well. During epochs known as "ice ages," glaciers on Earth have periodically moved down out of their birthplaces to grind mountains to powder and have scoured the plains of North America into the flatlands for which they are famous. Because of the known power of glaciers on Earth, it was believed that nothing could live in the polar regions of Mars except a few bands of Hill Martians and the thinly scattered game they pursued. This was a mistaken notion.



Anomalous Valleys: For various reasons, small oasis-like valleys are occasionally found in the depths of the polar ice pack. These valleys are usually the result of volcanism bringing heat from the depths of Mars to keep the ice from building up. In these small valleys (less than a couple of miles across), tiny colonies of plant and animal life survive, surrounded by thousands of square miles of barren ice and drifted snow.

MARTIAN POLAR ENCOUNTERS

THE POLAR REGIONS of Mars are different than similar locales further south. The climate is cooler, and the region is less densely populated. The animals encountered bear some resemblance to their more southerly relatives, but there are significant differences. Use the encounter table on page 25.



Ancient Wreck: This encounter can represent the wreckage of an ancient canal barge from the time of the deterioration of the empire. It was picked clean long ago but may still be of archaeological interest and may be worth a second expedition. The condition of the wreck and its specific details are left up to the referee to describe.

Camp: This encounter represents the discovery of a temporary camp of a group of valley people. The results of this encounter depend upon the characters' actions.

Covered Pool: This encounter represents a pool in the surface of the ice, concealed from view by a thin crust of ice and coating of snow. The only way

to discover one is to fall through the surface into it. Quick action is necessary to extract the victim, and it will be necessary to stop, pitch a tent, and dry out the victim's clothing near a fire before proceeding.



Lone Eegaar: This encounter is with a rogue eegaar, driven from the herd for some reason such as disease or age.

Eegaar Herd: These creatures are as described in **Space:1889**.

Eelowaan: These creatures are as described in **Space: 1889**.

Flying Skrill: These creatures are as described in **Space: 1889**.

Lone Gashant: This encounter is with a rogue gashant, one driven from the herd for some reason such as disease or age. It is one of the northern variety, described below.

Gashant Herd: Wild gashants encountered north of Polodaar are of the specialized northern variety. These gashants are more adapted to the colder climate of the polar and semipolar regions. The main adaptation is a thicker layer of insulating fat than is found on their more southern cousins. They tend to be darker in color than their southern counterparts, possibly as an adaptation to absorb more heat from the Sun.

Great Kommota: These creatures are as described in **Space: 1889**.



Hibernating Cissawaans: This far north, cissawaans are active only during the warmer months of the year. During the colder periods, they hibernate in large lumps in caves and sheltered burrows. They are readily awak-

ened, however, and can come bursting out of their shelters to take unwary travellers by surprise.

High Martian Hunter: This encounter is with a solitary hunter from one of the mountain kraags of the far north.

High Martian Hunters: The High Martians of the northern mountains have little contact with humans. Nevertheless, they will be slightly hostile.

Impassable Crevasse: This is a wide, deep chasm in the surface of the ice. Its walls are too steep to climb or descend, and it is too wide to jump. Parties on the surface will have to detour around this hex.

Lone Hunter: This encounter represents a single nomad hunter, and is identical to the lone nomad entry in the Martian wilderness encounters of **Space: 1889**.

Nomad Hunters: This encounter represents a group of nomads on a hunting expedition, and it is identical to the nomad hunters entry in the Martian wilderness encounters of the **Space: 1889** rules book.

Prospector/Lost Prospector: This encounter does not represent the individual so much as traces of his presence. The region around Polodaar is not well known for its mineral wealth, and the prospectors in this region are not as numerous as elsewhere. In the case of a lost prospector encounter, the group has run across a prospector who has lost his bearings and is wandering aimlessly. Van Owen may or may not know the prospector, but he will not be

inclined to share secrets with him.

Quicksand: This encounter is with a pool of quicksand, which can trap and drown the unwary. Fast action is needed in order to extract the victim, and rescue is usually achieved at the sacrifice of any equipment carried.

Roogie Pack: These creatures are as described in **Space: 1889**.

Snow-worm: This encounter is with a single large snow-worm, as described on page 26.

Valley Hunters: This encounter is with a group of three to six hunters from one of the anomalous valleys of the polar ice pack. Their reaction to humans will be similar to that discussed under the next entry.



Village: A relatively permanent village of a few dozen valley dwellers in an anomalous valley. Their knowledge of humans will mostly be based on hearsay and limited contact with a prospector or fur trader. At the referee's option, they may be openly hostile or cautiously curious. If good relations can be established, they can prove to be valuable guides and reliable sources of information about local conditions.



CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER

THE LOCATION MARKED by the drawing of the crystal proves to be the mouth of a small feeder channel for the main canal to Polodaar. Investigation of this area will reveal a number of small sandbars and other deposits containing small Tears of the Sun (an inch or less in length) and broken fragments of larger crystals, evidently washed down from higher up the channel. Any crystals the characters find (this number is left up to the referee) will be pitted and cracked to such an extent that they are useless.

The obvious course of action at this time is to follow the channel upstream, because somewhere up its course lies the source of the crystals. The polar ice soon becomes visible on the horizon, a faint white line at first, gradually increasing in thickness as the characters approach. The channel does not meander like a natural stream—it seems to have been cut into the bedrock, like a smaller version of the canals. It points straight toward the ice wall on the horizon.

From time to time as the characters travel along the channel, they will find more crystals (always small, cracked,

ENCOUNTERS						
Terrain	Desert	Canal Bank	Mountain	Swamp	Ice Pack/Glacier	Anomalous Valley
Encounter #	1	2	2	3	1	3
Die Roll	Encounter Type					
1	Prospector	Prospector	High Martian Hunter	Lost Prospector	Snow-Worm	Snow-Worm
2	Hunter	Nomad Hunters	High Martian Hunters	Hibernating Cissawaans	Covered Pool	Village
3	Lone Hunter	Prospector	Flying Skrill	Quicksand	Lone Eegaar	Eegaar Herd
4	Roogie Pack	Roogie Pack	Eelowaan	Roogie Pack	Valley Hunters	Camp
5	Lone Eegaar	Ancient Wreck	Great Kommota	Hunter	Impassable Crevasse	Roogie Pack
6	Lone Gashant	Gashant Herd	High Martian Hunters	Lone Gashant	Lone Gashant	Gashant Herd



SNOW-WORMS

THE SNOW-WORM is one of the most mysterious and little known creatures on Mars. The beast's metabolism is unique in that its blood contains a naturally occurring compound that counteracts the effects of the region's extremely low temperatures. This compound enables snow-worms to remain active in temperatures that would leave other beasts frozen solid, even though they are not warm-blooded.

Despite this, snow-worms could not survive in the barren polar regions if it were not for the existence of the anomalous valleys scattered throughout the polar landscape, which provide them with a relatively constant food supply.

Type	# App.	Size	Move	Wounds	Save	Weight (lbs.)	Weapons
Snow-Worm	1	1x3	L20	6	31	200	Teeth (3, 2, 0, 1)

and useless) and occasional large fragments. At some point, to keep up their spirits, they should be allowed to find one or two small crystals in good condition, suitable for polishing (which they are not capable of doing in their present location). As they approach the ice, the weather becomes colder and colder, and they soon find a thin layer of snow on the ground. The snow gets thicker the closer they approach the ice.

Finally, the characters arrive at the edge of the ice and find that the channel emerges from a hole about 20 feet up the icy slope of the glacier's edge. At this time of year, a small stream of water trickles from the opening and flows down a small groove in the ice slope. The hole from which it emerges is oval in cross section, and about 30 feet wide and 10 feet high. Sand, silt, and gravel are being washed down out of the glacier, and the channel down the frozen slope is lined with such detritus. Also, fragments of crystal are sprinkled down the slope—their source obviously lies inside the glacier.

EXCUSES

VAN OWEN, upon arrival at the edge of the ice, will claim that he has had no

experience in travelling on the ice cap and will suggest that they turn back. This is a lie, of course. Although he has not travelled extensively over the polar ice and has never been to this particular section before, he has had more experience at such travel than he lets on. This is a ruse to get the players to abandon the search for the crystals so he can return later and claim them.

If pressed, he will exaggerate the dangers involved and argue against continuing, but he will acquiesce to the characters' demands if it becomes obvious that they intend to continue without him.

HARD CHOICES

TWO OPTIONS are now open to the players. They can enter the channel in the ice and follow it wherever it goes, or they can climb to the top of the ice and try to follow the channel from above. A short investigation will reveal that the ice allows a small amount of light to pass through to the channel, so the interior will not be totally dark (contrary to what Van Owen says), although it will not be possible to see more than a few dozen yards down the tunnel. Investigations will also reveal that it is possible to trace

the course of the channel from the top of the ice, but travel there will be very slow because of a thick layer of snow.

In 10 minutes, any unencumbered human may climb to the channel or to the top of the ice. Using ropes and a block-and-tackle arrangement, they will be able to bring up packs, gaslamps, and any other equipment they have brought along. This will prove to be equally difficult, regardless of which course is taken. Van Owen may (at the referee's discretion) attempt sabotage by arranging an "accident" during the hoisting process. He is no fool, of course, and will not take any overt action that will expose his plans. Likewise, he will do nothing that will get himself killed (e.g., destroy vital supplies such as fuel and equipment). If the PCs have barges or boats, they will not be able to use them to travel in the subsurface channel or along the top of the ice. It will be impossible to trace the course of the channel from the air, and the PCs will need to send at least part of their group on foot if they have an aerial craft.

THE SUBSURFACE OPTION

MELT WATERS form ice rivers on top of the ice during the summer. Often, the

surface will freeze over in the fall before the flow has completely stopped, forming a cavern-like channel just under the snow. The channels will become more or less permanent features of the landscape, detectable from the surface only by careful inspection of the ice. These channels almost invariably follow the old imperial drainage watershed which leads to the canals, feeding them water each season.

Travel beneath the surface of the ice will be somewhat easier than travel on top of it: The characters will not be exposed to the wind and weather during the trip. A small trickle of water flows down the channel, but not enough to cause problems.

Van Owen will pretend to fear a sudden flash flood, but this is a ruse to persuade the characters to turn back. The floor of the subsurface channel will be lightly coated with silt and sand, and crystals will be found embedded in the ice from time to time. Most of these will be unusable, but the referee should allow enough good ones to keep the characters' interest.

The light level in the channel will change from time to time as the thickness of the ice overhead changes (visibility will range from several dozen yards to a few feet, unless the characters have thought to bring some form of artificial illumination). Sometimes the ice overhead will open up completely, only to close again after a few miles. In this way, surface encounters can be justified while travelling underground.

THE SURFACE OPTION

TRAVEL ON THE SURFACE will be half the normal walking rate, due to the deep snow on the surface. Once each day, the characters must check to see if they keep on track with the subsurface channel (use the best Observation in the group for the roll). Failure means that the group must backtrack for a day to regain the trail. An impassable crevasse encounter while following the channel should be interpreted as an opening leading downward to the subsurface channel. This presents the PCs with the option of entering the channel or continuing on the surface.

VALLEY OF THE CRYSTALS

IF THE CHARACTERS follow the channel successfully, they will eventually come to the source of the trickle of melt water. This is one of the anomalous valleys of the region. The characters' arrival in the valley assumes that they have successfully ignored Van Owen's attempts to dissuade them from continuing.

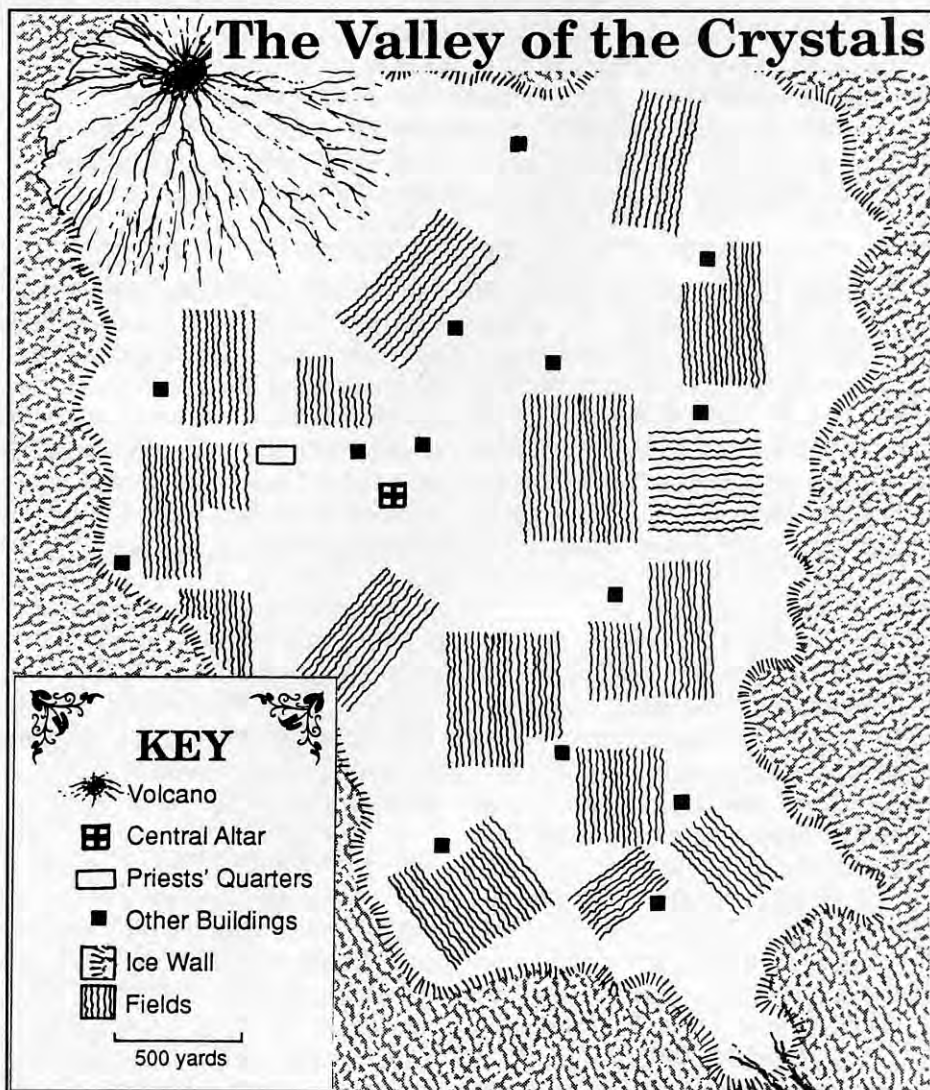
The valley is surrounded by impassable walls of ice. The only way in or out is the subsurface channel, which the locals consider to be the passage to the afterlife and imbue with mystical characteristics. The heat from volcanic hot springs enables small-scale agriculture in the valley, but the food produced is limited; strict population controls are necessary.

Heat from the hot springs constantly melts some of the ice (which the mov-



ing glacier replaces as fast as it melts). The resulting water drains down the subsurface channel.

The volcano occasionally spews forth showers of ash (replenishing the soil) and (rarely) crystals, which are taken to be gifts of the gods and put to use as field markers, landfill, building materials, etc. depending on their size and condition. Small and broken crystals will be sent down the channel as offerings to the dead.



REWARDS

THE PCs WILL COME OUT of this adventure with interesting stories and at least one small crystal (which will make a nice cigar lighter). Also, the characters should get the normal experience points for their actions.

If the PCs made it to the Valley of the Crystals, they can raise a little money (and not inconsiderable renown) giving lectures and publishing articles about the society there. The Royal Geographic Society or some other group may fund an expedition for further study of the polar regions, especially in the light of the discovery of the isolated anomalous valley cultures. The characters will be in a good position to act as guides with such an expedition.

If the characters get away with the large crystals, they have three options. First, they could give the crystals to the government of their choice as a demonstration of their loyalty, trusting said government to reward them properly. Second (more likely, given the way most characters think) they could sell the crystals (preferably exercising some discretion—it wouldn't do for such weapons to end up in the hands of that rascal Bismarck, would it?). Third, they could keep the crystals and try to build their own heat ray.

Building a heat ray will be quite a job. How to polish the crystals for maximum capacity, how to mount them, how many times they can be used before they shatter from stress, how long they must be exposed to the sunlight to charge them, etc. can only be learned by experimentation and careful study.

It is no easier to invent a heat ray with the crystals than it is without them, but the final product will be 20 percent lighter. A heat ray of the type described in **Space: 1889** will require one large crystal and three one-foot crystals as concentrators. Smaller crystals are simply scientific curiosities.

Society: Government is by council of elders, primarily priests. Since outside attack is not possible, soldiers are unnecessary, except as enforcers of the council's will. Hunters exist only to kill vermin that eat crops. Farmers make up the rest of the population, except for a few craftsmen who live and work in the temple. Everyone has his place, and the society cannot afford experimentation or revolutionary changes.

Religion: The local religion holds that the world consists completely of ice, and the inhabitants of the valley are the last members of the Martian race in existence. The volcano embodies heat, and therefore life, and is the physical representation of spirits and gods of life. The ice embodies cold, and therefore death, and is the representative of all the spirits and gods of death.

The priests use ceremony and sacrifice to maintain a careful balance between heat and cold, light and dark, and life and death. Part of the means of maintaining this balance is the altar of

the gods of life and death. The altar consists of a raised platform of rammed earth, crowned by two large (four-foot-long) crystals, buried broad end (receiving end) downward. The left crystal represents heat/life; the right represents ice/death. Each large crystal is surrounded by a ring of four smaller (one-foot-long) crystals, representing the lesser gods of the local Martian pantheon. Burial customs involve interment in small caverns at the base of the ice wall, preceded by ceremonies at the mouth of the subsurface ice channel (the gateway to the afterlife). Over the years, natural movement of the glacier carries these graves away.

ARRIVAL

HOW THE CHARACTERS are greeted and treated when they arrive will depend on what route they take. If they arrive from the surface (lowering themselves by rope down the sheer ice walls of the valley), they will be greeted as representatives of the gods of life. If they arrive

from the ice tunnel, they will be greeted as representatives of the gods of death. In either case, the humans will not be considered gods themselves—merely messengers or servants of the gods (there is a great deal of difference).

If the characters arrive during the day, they will be discovered immediately. If they arrive during the night, they will not be discovered until daylight. It will be extremely difficult for the characters to remain hidden in the valley, since every square yard is used to its fullest extent for cropland, storage, or living space. It will be difficult to find a place to hide. On the other hand, the locals do not have sentries on patrol—life is so controlled that there is no need for guards except to prevent vermin from eating the crops or the stored food.

During nighttime, any character may remain concealed unless he performs some blatant act, such as firing a gun or attempting to enter a storehouse. During daylight, any moving character must roll against Stealth to remain concealed. If the characters are spotted, they will be immediately identified as strangers.

Strangers in the valley can only be messengers of the gods, and it is important that the priests interview them immediately to determine what the gods want. Within minutes of their discovery, the natives will approach the players, bowing and showing other signs of great respect.

They will greet the characters in a dialect of Old Gaaryani (the nearly extinct language of the old Martian Empire). They will then explain that the priests did not expect a visit and will ask the messengers to follow. The Martians will be puzzled if the strangers do not understand, but after a minute or two they will signal their request by insistent gestures.

BEFORE THE COUNCIL

THE PCs WILL BE taken to the council, which meets in an open space in the center of the valley, before the altar to the gods of life. After a voluminous greeting and small ceremonial chantings, the characters will be brought before the priests, who will ask what the

gods wish to tell their children (also in a dialect of Old Gaaryani).

Anything that indicates that the messengers have been damaged (such as the fact that the messengers can only speak gibberish—cannot speak Old Gaaryani) or a sign that the gods are testing their priests (such as the statement that the gods want their symbolic crystals back) will require the priests to take the proper steps. The proper response, in either case, is to return the messengers and hope the gods try again. If they came from the realm of death, they must be killed and returned in that fashion. If they came from the realm of life, they must be sent skyward by throwing them into the volcano.

On the other hand, if the messengers can speak properly (that is, if one or more of the characters speak Old Gaaryani, even with an accent) and they give an innocuous message ("the gods wish us to watch you for time," or if they present some trinket and say "the gods have sent this gift to their children") their reception will be different. They will be conducted on a guided tour of the valley and shown that everything is being done properly. This will include a short tour of the altar and a description of the upcoming "return the messengers to the gods" ceremony, which will be conducted tomorrow, after a night of cleansing and purification rites. The characters' reactions to this news are predictable. The 10 fire priests will conduct their rites at the lip of the volcano, the 10 ice priests at the mouth of the channel. The central altar will also be purified and cleansed at dawn, just before the ceremony begins.

Subsequent events will be left to the referee. The PCs will be allowed free run in the valley through the night (providing they don't upset the purification rituals), and some activity, other than sleep, is expected.

As to how they make their escape, there are a number of options.

The Wall: To climb the sheer cliff wall, they must roll against Agility or Mountaineering skill, whichever is greater. Characters are allowed two tries; failure on both means they have run out of time.

The Crystals: The characters can be

allowed to gather 2D6 crystals each (roll 1D6×2 for length in inches) from scrap heaps, field boundaries, etc. If they try to take the larger crystals, they will encounter four difficulties:

- The guardian/priests at the altar.
- Digging without being discovered.
- Getting them out of the valley.
- Dealing with priests (engaging in night-long rites) at the channel entrance.

Time will be an important consideration. It will take one person 10 turns to loosen and free each large crystal; two people can halve this time (additional workers don't help). One turn will be enough to loosen and extract four of the smaller crystals.

Alarm and Pursuit: The six guardian/priests at the altar (Trained NPCs armed with clubs) must be dealt with swiftly and silently, but they will not be expecting treachery and will be easy to surprise (roll once against each attacking player's Stealth, implementing a +1). If surprise is achieved, the defenders can be killed or rendered unconscious within four turns without a gunshot being fired, and no alarm will be raised. If the fighting lasts longer than four turns or if a gunshot is fired at any time, the alarm will be raised, and the PCs will have four turns before reinforcements arrive.

Reinforcements will be 4D6 Martians (Green NPCs armed with clubs and farming implements). Every five turns, roll 2D6 for more reinforcements.



Carrying the Crystals: The two large crystals each weigh about 300 pounds, and the foot-long crystals weigh about three pounds each. Two or three characters will be needed for each crystal, depending upon the characters' Strength and the other load they carry. It is just under one-half mile (800 yards) from the altar to the nearest ice wall, and about the same distance to the channel entrance. If the alarm has been given, roll against the worst Stealth characteristic in the group every four turns for discovery. If the alarm has not been given, roll for discovery every 10 turns. Discovery will be by a party of 4D6 Martians (Green NPCs armed with clubs).

The Channel: The 10 ice priests at the entrance to the subsurface channel (Trained NPCs armed with clubs) will be engaged in purification rituals and will be easy to surprise, unless the alarm has been given. If the alarm is given, they will be alert (surprising them will be a Difficult task in this case). Once the characters have escaped down the ice tunnel, they will not be pursued. Ω

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CHALLENGE

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The Biology of Liftwood

Marcus L. Rowland



espite the fact that space travel and flight are almost wholly dependent on liftwood, little is known about the plant's biology. It should be emphasized that much of what follows is based on examination of a very small number of specimens; liftwood species only develop their antigravity properties in the soil of the remote high kraags of Mars, and expeditions to these regions are invariably attacked by thieves or the barbaric High Martians. There has been little opportunity to study these curious plants in their native habitat. The physics and chemistry of the liftwood effect remain an enigma.

Liftwood

Liftwood is the generic name for a group of similar plant species (*Lignivolucer* var.) found exclusively on Mars. No close correspondence to any Terran plant family exists. The seeds show unique dispersal mechanisms.

Main Species

Three species have been studied—they are the most widely cultivated types. They are named for the areas where they were first seen by Terran scientists.

- *L. aeria* is the broad-leaved species first reported by Edison on his return from Mars. It is the most common form and is now known to be widely distributed throughout the Martian heights. The physical properties of *L. aeria* are used as the standard by which other liftwoods are judged. Mature plants produce wood that is usable for approximately 10 years.

- *L. edensis* was first reported in the Eden hills and has a broad north-south distribution in mountain ranges from Cydonia to Noarchis. The plant is smaller than *L. aeria* and tends to produce less usable wood for a given volume of timber. However, it is believed to tolerate poorer soil conditions than *L. aeria*. This is probably the reason why its lifting power and service life are half that of *L. aeria*.

- *L. arabia* is distributed sparsely through the Arabia, Meroe, and Tempe mountains. It is a smaller tree, but the trunks are generally knot-free and give a good yield of usable wood—up to a third more than *L. aeria* for a given volume of logs. Lifting power is roughly 1.5 times that of *L. aeria*, and the service life is longer; it is usable for approximately 12 years after harvesting.

Pollination

All liftwood plants produce pollen and are prepared to receive it throughout the Martian year. The plants are apparently capable of self-pollination, but this has not been confirmed experimentally. The pollen is extremely fine-grained, on a par with that of the finest grasses. It does not appear to have any antigravity effect, but its size and the fierce mountain winds ensure that grains stay airborne for many months. Scientists have collected samples at all altitudes and over all areas of Mars, including the poles and deserts.

Biological Role of Antigravity

At first sight, there seems to be no obvious natural need for the antigravity properties of liftwood; the plant dies if uprooted, so it is apparently unable to take advantage of this capability. The importance of this characteristic only becomes apparent if the habitat of the plant is considered. Liftwood plants are dependent on the soil of the high kraags; they can be cultivated elsewhere but seldom reach maturity, rarely bear seed, and do not show any antigravity properties. Other plants which only grow in the same areas and seem to require the same soil do not develop the liftwood capability.

Thus, it seems clear that the soil fulfills some nutritive need; the antigravity effect is secondary to this need.

As yet it has proven impossible to make a careful survey of many liftwood groves. On the evidence available, it would appear that similar liftwood plants are found in widely separated areas of Mars, but the other species associated with liftwood

groves are far more varied, often unique to a single mountain. Two conclusions are possible: Either the liftwood species have been widely distributed by the High Martians, or their spread is aided by their remarkable properties. Although the High Martians undoubtedly cultivate and spread these plants, discoveries of isolated plants and untended groves suggest that they can spread unaided. Wild liftwood is generally 10 to 20 percent weaker (in terms of the antigravity effect) than cultivated plants. Wild liftwood also gives lower yields of usable straight-grained wood. A rumor persists that wild liftwood is better, but this is untrue.

On Earth most seeds are distributed by animals or the wind. On Mars there are significant barriers to animal distribution, primarily huge expanses of arid land where animal life is scarce. Liftwood plants have an additional handicap—their need for special soils. To take full advantage of suitable habitats, all known liftwood species are able to propagate by the use of runners (like banyan or strawberry plants). However, dispersal beyond these areas requires a mobile seed; in view of the vast distances involved, a flying seed is preferable. The three species studied all produce seeds which show the liftwood effect. Escaped slaves report that High Martian liftwood farmers remove most of the seeds as they form; thus, this may make the trees retain more of the liftwood chemical and is possibly one of the reasons why cultivated liftwood is more powerful than wild plants.

L. edensis shows a good example of this form of seed dispersal. The pea-sized seed trails thin root-like tendrils which do not have any gravity-negative property. The seed is initially able to lift its own weight plus the weight of the tendrils. Seeds float slowly upward from the plant, dispersing widely on the mountain updraft. After a few hours, the seed loses a little lift and is gravitationally neutral, staying at a constant altitude for weeks or months. Not surprisingly, this altitude happens to be ideal for the species. Drifting flight continues until the tendrils touch any solid object. Within a few moments of contact, the seed loses some buoyancy and sinks until approximately half the length of the tendrils rests on the ground. With some of the load removed, the seed remains airborne and continues to drift, dragging the tendrils behind it. When the tendrils encounter a patch of suitable nutritious soil, thin root hairs dig in to anchor the seed and slowly pull it into the ground.

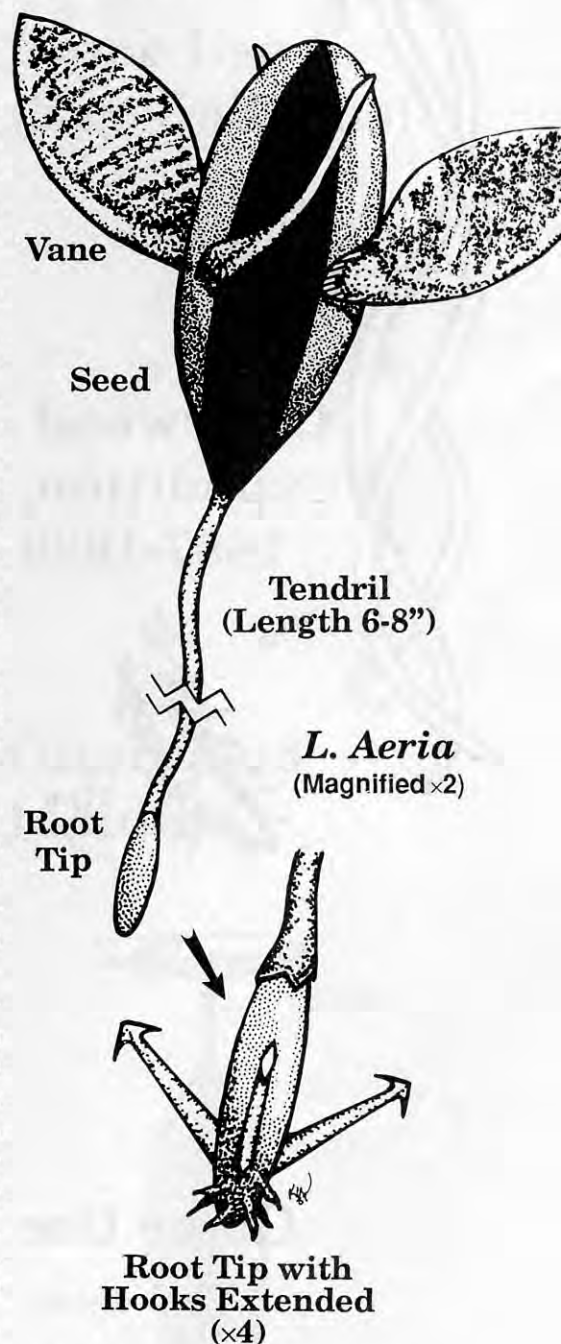
One drawback of the method used by *L. edensis* is that the low-altitude flight is triggered by accidental contact with the ground. Given a strong updraft, it is possible for such seeds to encounter a mountain and fly over it without ever making this initial contact.

This problem is avoided by the acorn-sized seeds of *L. aeria*. *L. aeria* secretes the lift chemical in the seed and in leaf-like vanes attached to it. The vanes are arranged to make the seed spin if they catch the wind. The seed trails a single tendril with a bulbous tip. Like *L. edensis*, *L. aeria* is initially gravity-neutral. However, after a few days, the vanes dry, and their point of attachment becomes extremely brittle. If the seed then encounters turbulent winds, such as the updrafts near a mountain, the vanes snap off, and some lift is lost. The seed descends until the tendril touches the ground and commences low-altitude trailing flight, in the manner of *L. edensis*. If suitable soil is encountered, four barbed hooks spring out, anchoring the seed while the root tips grow. Extension of the hooks takes approximately three seconds and appears to use a mechanism similar to the collapse of leaves on the Terran mimosa plant. A simpler method is used by *L. arabia*, the smallest of the common liftwood species. Thousands of tiny seeds are produced, each topped by an oval disk—a “float” of gravity-negative material. This seed is stable in calm conditions but tilts and loses much of its lift when it encounters turbulence. It then descends randomly and starts to grow regardless of the type of soil. Most of the seeds die, but a small portion fall onto suitable soil.

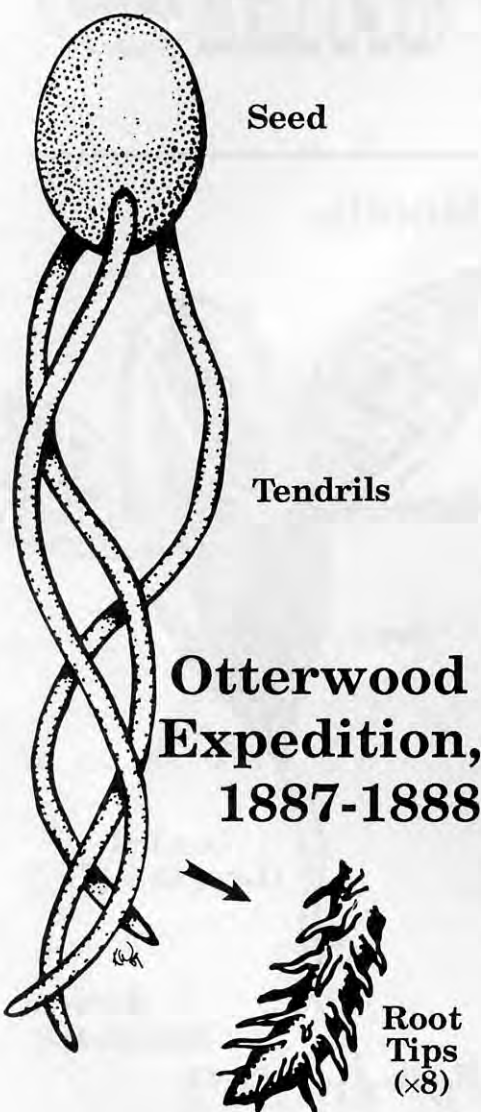
At least two other liftwood species may exist, but they are only known from second-hand accounts, wood, and fruit. As yet, no Terran scientist has seen the actual plants, and scientific names have not been assigned.



Seeds



Other Species

L. Edensis(Magnified $\times 2$)

● Shiuskup is a rare Martian fruit that resembles a sweet blue apricot with a spicy aftertaste. It is much prized by Martian gourmets and can be fermented to make an extremely potent liqueur. If the oval seeds are carefully removed, they float upward. It is assumed that these seeds are normally dispersed by animals, possibly the flying skrell or one of its smaller relatives. The seeds retain the anti-gravity ability, which is used if animals are not available. There is no obvious mechanism for efficient airborne distribution, unlike the other large seeds studied. Experiments show that the seeds lose their antigravity effect after passing through the gut, which would support this theory. Presumably uneaten fruit rots to release the seeds, which drift off in any wind. Martian sources claim that the plant is a bush, not a tree, and does not produce usable liftwood—but this has not been verified. It apparently has a limited range in the Noachis heights.

● Seerdiik is an extremely rare, dense liftwood with straight grain and very powerful antigravity effects. A piece of seerdiik will lift approximately twice the load of a similar volume of *L. aeria*. It is claimed to retain its lift for 20 to 30 Martian years, far longer than other species. The largest piece examined by Terran scientists is the hull of a model ether flyer, given to a British merchant by the amwaak of Parhoon shortly before he was assassinated. The uncut wood was approximately a foot long by four inches square. The grain patterns suggest that it may have been cut from the main trunk, which would appear to be no more than six to eight inches wide. The source of seerdiik remains unknown. Unreliable reports say that it is a dwarf hybrid species cultivated by members of a civilized High Martian tribe, but this seems extremely unlikely.

In 1887 naturalists working at the Royal Botanical Gardens decided to mount an expedition to obtain samples of liftwood plants, the soil they grow in, and associated plant and animal species. The expedition was led by Dr. John Otterwood, a botanist who had previously been involved in expeditions to the Congo and Upper Amazon. For logistical reasons, the explorers decided to visit the Astusapes Highlands.

Unfortunately, it took some time to arrange the hire of a steam launch and other equipment, and the departure from Parhoon has delayed until February of 1888, a few days before the Kraag Barrovaar incident.

For some time, there was no news of the expedition, and it was feared that the explorers had been caught up in the fighting that led to the Oenotrian War. These fears were justified; an Oenotrian *Bloodrunner* kite encountered the launch on its return journey and attacked it.

The scientists (armed only with a Nordenfelt machinegun and small arms) retaliated by running the launch into the kite's sails and setting them on fire, then picked off the kite's crew as they tried to extinguish the blaze. The kite ultimately crashed, with no survivors. The launch was badly damaged in the fight and made a forced landing in the Meroe Badlands. The scientists escaped across country and eventually reached Parhoon but were forced to abandon the soil samples and most of their equipment. Otterwood's leg was broken in the crash and became gangrenous during the return journey; he died less than a week after the expedition returned.

Seed specimens and drawings returned by members of the expedition were one of the principal sources for this article.

Game Use

Adventurers are more likely to be interested in the commercial and military uses of liftwood than in its botany or ecology. However, this research can lead to some interesting plot ideas.

● The adventurers trade for liftwood. During the return journey, they realize that the liftwood they are carrying is *L. edensis*, not *L. aeria*, and has less than a quarter of the value they expected—probably not enough to pay their expenses and debts.

● Seerdiik contains an unusually stable and concentrated form of the liftwood chemical. Given a large sample, it might be possible to make a detailed analysis

and discover its secrets. The only accessible sample is a model ether flyer, the pride and joy of a rich Parhooni merchant who has no intention of selling it.

- Where does seerdiik grow, and who (or what) grows it? Could there be civilized High Martians?

- Shiuskup plants are cultivated as food, not for their antigravity capability. Can the plant be grown in a more civilized setting? If so, will it have the taste that Martian gourmets expect from this delicacy?

- Somewhere in the Meroe Badlands is the wreck of the Otterwood Expedition launch, containing several hundred pounds of liftwood grove soil, a variety of plants and seeds, and scientific instruments. Have the Oenotrians found it? If not, is there anything worth salvaging? Did anyone ever salvage the *Bloodrunner* kite?

L. arabia gives more lift than normal liftwood—usually 150 tons per hull size number but up to a maximum of 240 tons per hull size number. It costs £8000 per hull size in Martian yards (but is usually unavailable; roll 1D6 plus hull size to determine the number of months needed to obtain the supply necessary for a given vessel). British yards can never get large quantities. At best, they can supply enough for one hull size for £12,000, but it will take 2D6 months to obtain the wood. To calculate the lift of a hull built from *L. arabia*, use $L_v = 150H_s/T$, where L_v is lift value, H_s is hull size, and T is tons.

L. edensis gives less lift than normal liftwood—usually 50 tons per hull size number but up to a maximum of 80 tons per hull size number. It costs £3000 per hull size in Martian yards, £5000 per hull size in British yards. However, the disadvantages of this wood mean that no yard routinely stocks it. It must be ordered (delay 1D6 months) or supplied by the purchaser of the hull. In practice, it is mainly used for small craft, conveyers, and other applications where strong lift capability isn't needed. To calculate the lift of a hull built from *L. edensis*, use $L_v = 50H_s/T$.

For a steel hull (British yards), add £2000 per hull size to the cost of the wood.

If these variant woods are used, the exact type of hull should be noted on the ship record form (e.g., *L. arabia* wooden hull, steel-clad *L. edensis*, etc.).

For game purposes, species of liftwood with different lift values cause trim instabilities and cannot be mixed in the construction of a hull.

Seerdiik is not available for ship construction.

The material presented here will permit interested players to recreate the Otterwood party's encounter with the hostile kite.

Map: Use the Kraag Barrovaar map from *Sky Galleons of Mars*. Each brown line is a terrain boundary. The highest point on the map is at high altitude. Ignore all ground installations apart from the trees on the smaller peak.

Ships: The British have an aerial steam launch: *Move:* 5 *Hull Size:* 1 *Armor:* 0 *Bridge:* C, H, T *Passengers:* 4 *Wpn:* Nordenfelt gun bearing forward, port, starboard *Cost:* £4840 *Weight:* 50 tons *Max. Height:* VH.

All passengers and crew have modern rifles. The passengers count as Green crew when using weapons; one of the passengers must man the gun. For ship plans and other information, see *Space: 1889*.

The Martians have a standard *Bloodrunner* kite with a Trained crew.

Setup: The British launch begins landed on the smaller peak, height Medium. The Martin kite begins on the edge beyond the other peak, height High.

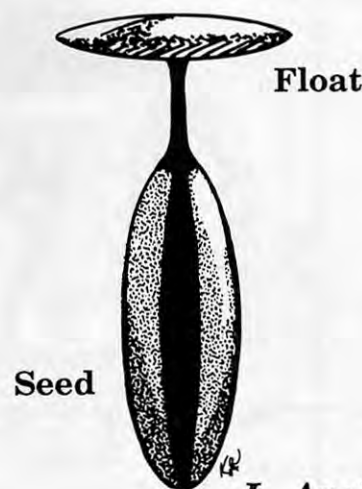
Special Rules: Neither craft is a military vessel, but the kite captain is sure that he can take on one puny launch. He will attack until his ship is damaged or crew is killed, then try to withdraw. If it is obvious the kite cannot continue (e.g., the gun is destroyed), the captain will press the combat unless the kite retreats off the map. For the purposes of this combat, a boarding party may deliberately start fires with damage value 1.

Victory: The British win if the kite retreats off the map or is destroyed or disabled, and they are then able to leave the map. The Martians win if the launch is captured, destroyed, or disabled. Ω



Game Use (Sky Galleons)

Otterwood Incident



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Secrets of the Ancients

Lester W. Smith

IT HAPPENS TO ALL referees at one time or another. You prepare a group of baddies to attack your player characters, taking great care to provide the PCs with a challenge but not to overwhelm them. Then, during actual play of the adventure, your players suddenly prove unable to make a decent combat roll, and it seems that the villains will overwhelm the PCs. Suddenly, you are faced with a dilemma: Do you fudge your die rolls to make the NPCs as inept as the PCs, or do you let the PCs be defeated? If you choose the former, the players may begin to feel that their characters are never really threatened; but if you choose the latter, you somehow have to provide the PCs with an opportunity to turn the tables and escape at a later time.

That is where the following adventure can be of use. It depends upon the PCs being led as captives into a mysterious danger they might otherwise have avoided, then it provides them with an opportunity to escape both their captors and the jaws of a trap set long ago by the ancient canal builders of Mars.

OUR STORY THUS FAR

WHILE ADVENTURING on Mars, somehow the player characters have been captured by a band of cutthroats and clapped in irons, soon to be sold into

slavery in some undisclosed hell pit. To ensure that they do not attempt a premature break for freedom, the referee has the cutthroat band meet up with enough compatriots to guarantee that the PCs are outnumbered by at least three to one. It does not matter if the villains are travelling by land or by air: What matters is that they are traversing some seldom travelled tract of land, someplace the PCs have never been to.

AN ANCIENT ENIGMA

WHILE FOLLOWING the course of a dead canal (or while flying overhead in a sky galleon), the villains, with the PCs in tow, come across a fair-sized lake in the middle of nowhere. What is even more remarkable is that the lake rests near the edge of the top of a small cliff. Closer inspection reveals an ancient pumping station standing just between the border of the lake and the edge of the cliff. The villains decide to halt their travel long enough to inspect the pumping station, hoping to discover some priceless ancient devices. They take the PCs along in order to keep a close eye on them.

If the referee desires, a steppe Martian village or two may be located on the lake's borders. The villains will most likely seek to avoid contact with villagers unless supplies are low, but the villagers might consider the pumping

station to be a shrine—making them very protective of it (such details are left to the referee's discretion).

THE PUMPING STATION

FROM THE LOOKS of its outer shell, the ancient pumping station is in surprisingly good repair. Only one floor is visible above ground (the other two are subterranean—or subarean, to be precise), and the only apparent entrance is blocked by a door of some strange metal alloy. No lock is evident, but the door fails to open when pulled or pushed. In the end, the villains are forced to chisel the stone wall around the door in order to insert pry bars. Chains are attached to the pry bars, and the player characters form into teams to pull on those chains. Eventually, after much sweating and groaning on the PCs' part, the ancient latch gives way, and the door comes crashing open.

Immediately inside, a hallway stretches toward the center of the building. Another door in the eastern wall of the hallway has a lock in it. While one of the villains kneels to begin working at opening it, the player characters are ushered on down the hall into the large room at its end.

This room was once the station's central meeting room. It contains two long metal tables in its center, a counter along the west wall, and what looks to

be some sort of oven unit (still operable) near the door in its southwest wall. As well, in the northeast corner of the room lies an entrance to a staircase leading downward.

Once the PCs are herded to the room's northwest corner and placed under guard, another of their captors checks the door in the southwest wall. It opens fairly easily, its hinges shedding flakes of rust, and reveals a barracks-style sleeping room with the metal frames of bunks and a few empty metal chests.

THE GUARDIAN AWAKENS

SHORTLY THEREAFTER, the villain in the hallway succeeds in picking the lock of the door in the east wall. The PCs hear the groaning of the door as it swings open, followed by a sharp scream from the villain, which is cut off by a nasty thump. Another villain runs into the hallway to investigate, and his lifeless body immediately comes flying back into the meeting room. A pair of red eyes glow in the hallway's darkness, swaying slowly back and forth in time to the ring of metal on stone. Within a few moments, the owner of those eyes plods heavily into the meeting room: It is some sort of mechanical man, with a barrel-like chest, jointed metal limbs, and two stubby antennae sprouting from its head.

During the earliest years of its operation, a complement of Martian technicians dwelt in the station (hence the sleeping room and meeting room). At that time, the room to the hallway's east was an office, and metal desks and chairs are still stacked along its walls. After the station had been on line for a few years, however, the technicians were reassigned to another location, and a mechanical guardian was left to deal with intruders and saboteurs. What had formerly been the station's office became the guardian's resting place. By breaking into the station, the villains have brought the guardian back to life.

While the leader of the villains and a few of his men keep watch over the PCs, another dozen of them attack the mechanical man in unison. But fists, blades, and bullets alike impact upon it with no effect. It plods steadily onward, rhythmically swinging its fists, felling a villain permanently with each blow.

Meanwhile, a few other villains slip past the melee, running for the door to the outside. The PCs hear a loud sizzling sound echo from that direction, followed by a cry of pain. The escaping villains rush back into the room, one holding to his chest a hand that literally smokes. They report to the captain, "The thing has locked us in, and the door is guarded with lightning!" As the captain weighs this news, the mechanical man approaches steadily nearer.

If, for some reason, the PCs attempt to attack the mechanical man during this part of the adventure, let them roll their dice, then tell them, "You hit, but it doesn't do any damage." Then, without rolling any dice yourself, describe how the thing clobbers another villain, who drops lifelessly to the floor. The message ought to be obvious to them: There is no way to attack the mechanical man successfully. He moves slowly enough that he can be run from, however—assuming there is someplace to run to.

DEEPER INTO TROUBLE

FACED WITH A SEALED DOOR and a seemingly unstoppable opponent, the villains' captain decides to opt for the only other exit: the stairs leading downward in the room's northeast corner. To guard himself and his few remaining men against the possibility of a trap or an ambush, he insists that the PCs precede him down the stairs. As the composite party heads in that direction, the station's mechanical guardian finishes off the last of its attackers and turns toward the escaping group, plodding slowly but steadily after them.

The next level the group comes to contains two huge machines that throb with a rhythm just below the threshold of hearing. Any PC who succeeds at a quick roll versus Mechanics (electricity or machinist) skill will immediately recognize these machines as great pumps. At the east end of each of them, a large pipe comes up through the floor and bends to join the back of the machine. At the west end, another pipe exits each machine and passes through the wall of the station. Water from under the dead canal at the cliff's base is drawn upward through the eastern pipes and pumped outward into the base of the lake through the western pipes.

The pumps move more water than the dead canal at the cliff's top can carry,



resulting in the lake.

What is not evident in this room is the pumps' power source.

After the PCs have had a few minutes to look around, the villains' captain calls them back out into the stairwell and orders them downward. The mechanical guardian has almost reached the rear fringes of the group, and the captain has decided that this floor offers no hope for escape.

Continuing down the stairwell, the PCs enter the station's lowest floor. Like the middle floor, it is composed of one large room. The pipes attached to the eastern end of the two great pumps on the floor above enter this room from the floor and exit through the ceiling.

In the center of the room, a glowing, glassy sphere almost 20 feet in diameter rests upon an immense metal tripod, the legs of which are rusted and pitted with age. The light from the sphere seems to pulse, and the PCs feel all of the hair on their bodies stand on end with static electricity while their clothing clings uncomfortably to them. From the bottom of the sphere, large conduits dangle and snake across the floor in various directions, but it seems they are unconnected to anything and lead nowhere.

LIKE CORNERED RATS

THE PCs' VISUAL INSPECTION of this machine is broken by a hoarse scream from the stairway. The station's guardian has caught up with the villains and is wreaking havoc among them once again. As their captain sweeps his gaze around the room and realizes there is no exit, a whimper escapes his lips. Then, with a ferocity born of terror, he turns and wades through his men to battle the mechanical man.

The PCs have a few moments in which to act before the guardian finishes with the villains. They may have deduced that the device in this room is some sort of alien power station and that it provides the electricity for the charged exit on the main floor. If they look the machine over any closer, it will become

obvious to anyone who makes a Simple roll versus Observation that one of the legs of the tripod upon which the sphere rests has rusted almost completely through. In fact, with little effort the PCs could topple the whole contraption over. To do so, they will need to make a combined skill roll, using the total of their Strength attributes to determine the number of dice allowed. The target level for the task is Formidable (but the referee can adjust this up or down if desired).

SOME GOOD NEWS AND SOME BAD NEWS

WHILE THE PCs STRAIN to topple the energy device, the mechanical man destroys the last of their captors and starts across the floor toward them.

Just before he reaches the nearest character, the tripod's weak leg gives way, and the sphere tears loose from its moorings to shatter on the stone floor in a shower of flying glass and searing light. When their vision clears, the PCs discover the mechanical man frozen in place, its eyes no longer glowing with power.

The hum of the pumps on the floor above has stopped as well, and the player characters can hear the pipes groaning with the flow of water rushing downward.

Within a few moments, fractures begin to appear in all of the pipes, spraying water at high pressure into the room. Then one of the pipes suddenly begins to tear loose from the ceiling, releasing a deluge that threatens to flood the building.

The player characters have only a few minutes in which to climb the stairs and exit.

As they do so, they can feel the building shudder around them as if in the grip of an earthquake.

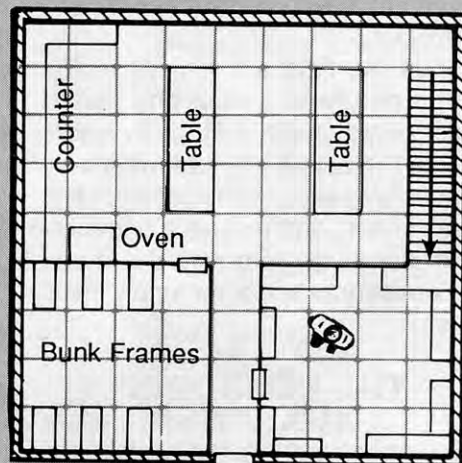
Regaining the surface, the player characters exit the building just before it tears loose from the cliff and tumbles downward, releasing the waters of the lake in a torrent to the plain at the cliff's base.

The player characters' lives have been saved, and they have escaped their captors.

But in the process an ancient device of great power has been destroyed, and an oasis in the desert has forever been lost. Ω

Pumping Station

Ground Level



Basement

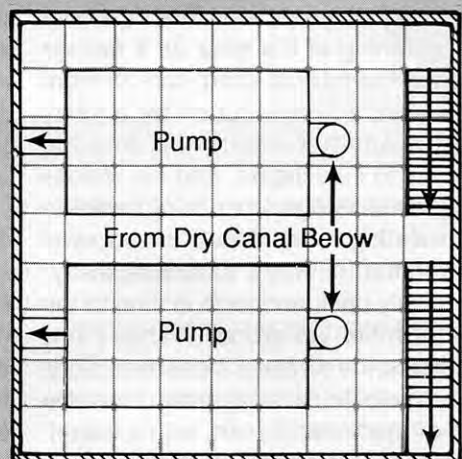
To Lake

Pump

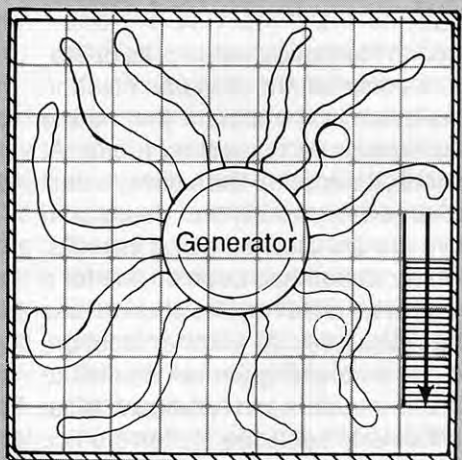
From Dry Canal Below

Pump

To Lake



Subbasement



Key



Mechanical Man



Door



Stairway Down



Pipe Down



Mysterious Conduit



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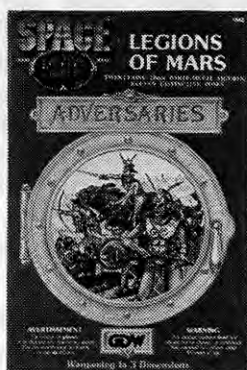
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THE CHARACTER generation rules in **Space: 1889** are intended to permit the generation of British subjects—and succeed very well at that. The generation of American characters, however, requires some modifications to the basic rules, primarily in the specific careers available. Likewise, since America differed from Great Britain in certain social aspects, this article will summarize those differences. All page references are to the **Space: 1889** rule book.

AMERICA AND THE WORLD

AMERICA in the late-19th century had just begun to exercise its economic muscles and had not yet developed military ones. America had no colonies in 1889, a relatively small standing army, and some thoughts of building a modern navy. It did, however, have economic spheres of interest: Americans believed that it was their God-given right to go anywhere and sell anything to anybody who had the money.

The vast plains of the Midwest produced grain in quantities previously unthought-of, and the burgeoning railroad network constructed in the '70s and '80s permitted this grain to be readily transported to eastern harbors for shipment and sale to Europe. American factories were growing rapidly, and while they were closing in on those of Great Britain, they had not yet overtaken them. Overall, the American economy was in its infancy, but some observers were already predicting that the baby would soon grow up to be a behemoth.

Americans were world-class in one category, however: machines. Nobody could invent them, build them, or maintain them like Americans. When Oscar Wilde said, "There is no country in the world where the machinery is as beautiful as in America," he did not mean physical beauty, but the beauty of a well-oiled, efficient mechanism. American machines worked, and they worked well, and American tools were acknowledged to be second to none.

Americans had a fascination with gadgets and gizmos that was to continue into the 20th century and was to change the world radically. The back-

Ye Can Always Tell a Yankee, But Ye Canna Tell 'im Much

Loren K. Wiseman

yard inventor and the tool shed tinkerer were typically American mythic characters. Tom Swift, Hank Morgan, and their ilk would soon replace the Horatio Alger-type heroes in American literature.

In some ways, America is the same as it was then. In many other ways, however, there was a tantalizing mix of the alien and the familiar. Cigarettes (especially those new-fangled ready-mades) were still viewed as a radical invention in some circles and were illegal in some states. Edison (who chewed) refused to hire cigarette smokers. Baseball was the great American pastime in 1889, but the rules were not the same as today. In 1889, overhand pitching had only recently been introduced, and the batter could signal for a high or low pitch (the pitcher was required to oblige).

The dimensions of the field were recently altered (the distance from the pitcher's plate to home plate was increased from 45 to 50 feet in 1881'),

and no pitcher's mound appears in the rules until 1903.

AMERICAN SOCIETY

"THERE ARE only about 400 people in New York society," one social arbiter remarked in 1888 in reaction to the publication of that city's first social register. It contained 3600 entries drawn from telephone customer listings, among other sources (this is not as silly as it sounds—the telephone was still something of a rich man's toy in those days). The statement is of value here only in indicating one person's opinion of the number of socially acceptable people in the largest city in America: 400 out of four million.

Class divisions in America were not as sharp as in Europe, and movement between them was much easier. Few families had been in America for more than a few generations, and most Americans were not interested in pedigrees—only the present (and the future, of course) was important. America had no royal family and no titled nobility, but it did have a rough equivalent in the various "socially acceptable" families in each community.

Social level in America revolved completely around money and how you had gotten it: If you had made the family fortune, you were *nouveau riche*; if your father had made it, you were barely acceptable; and if your grandfather had made it, you were in.

The *aristocracy* consisted of two parts: old and new. The old were the prestigious families of the eastern seaboard (like the Adams) and families like the Vanderbilts, whose money had been around long enough to have worn off some of the stigma. The new were the families of the self-made millionaires like Andrew Carnegie or John Rockefeller, who still had a slight *nouveau riche* taint to overcome. Unlike the aristocrats of England, however, engaging in business was not socially forbidden—provided it was the right kind of business (that is, if there were heaps of money to be made at it) and provided that your family fortune had been made by a remote ancestor (it was acceptable to make

¹Before you baseball fans write scathing letters, bear in mind that the distance was extended again, in 1893.

money if you already had a lot of it to start with). Indeed, the aristocracy of America tended to send its sons into business. (It tended to send its daughters to Europe to marry land-rich but cash-poor noblemen.) Government was the only other respectable career.

At their best, these people could be quite laudable. Andrew Carnegie founded libraries throughout the country and was famed for other philanthropies. It was Carnegie who said, "The man who dies rich dies disgraced."

At their worst, these people could be totally ruthless and uncaring, especially where business was concerned. Competitors were to be eliminated by whatever means worked, legal or illegal, short of actual murder. The callous and conspicuous displays of wealth (especially during the minor recessions of the era) defined a stereotype for the bloated, money-grubbing, sybaritic capitalist that became a stock character in many melodramas and provided ammunition for anarchists and Marxists for decades.

The *gentry* were the less wealthy versions of the aristocracy—those who hadn't quite made the climb to multimillionaire yet or who had fallen from that dizzying height. Ante bellum Southern families (who tended to be on the landlord end of the sharecropper system) were often in this class. The American Civil War (aka the War Between the States) had eliminated (or freed) the bulk of their wealth but left their pride intact.

In the North, the growing economy spawned thousands of mills, factories, newspapers, breweries, steamship



SPACE 1889

lines, railroad lines, banks, and brokerage houses, and their owners were accumulating money faster than it could be spent (remarkable though it seems). Not that there was any shortage of places to put it: There was always some new invention to be invested in (the cash register, for instance, or that new-fangled office machine that was revolutionizing business paperwork—the typewriter).

The *middle classes* were likewise burgeoning. They consisted of the same sort of people as the middle classes in Great Britain and in many ways were identical to them, except for a more optimistic attitude about their immediate future. America was obviously on the way up, they felt. Any boy could grow up to be president, if only of a major business concern. All it took was hard work, intelligence, and a free marketplace.

The *working classes* of America's cities were mostly immigrants or the children of immigrants. (Between 1845 and 1917, 33 million immigrants settled in the United States.) They labored in the factories of the gentry and the sweatshops of the middle class, and dreamed of better days to come. Unions were in their infancy, and this was the time of the 12-hour work day and the six-day work week (although the burgeoning unions would soon

The Closing of the Frontier

THE TRUTH of the statement that "every laborer could dream of owning his own farm if he worked and saved" was largely due to the gigantic quantities of inexpensive land opened up to settlement by the end of the Indian wars. The census of 1890 would conclude that the American frontier no longer existed, and most of the country could be counted as organized, if not actually civilized.

Except for occasional flareups (the Ghost Dancers of the plains Indian

tribes, for example) the great Indian wars were over. Red Cloud and Crazy Horse were dead. Chief Joseph of the Nez Percé and Geronimo of the Chiricahua had surrendered, and Sitting Bull of the Sioux had recently been on tour with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. The clash between cultures was inevitable, and the final defeat of the various tribes was simply a matter of time after 1865. Some tribes emerged in better shape than others, but even those that coop-

erated with the army (such as the Crow) usually got shafted.

Huge ranches (often owned by absentee landlords) dominated the grazing areas of the West once the Indians were out of the way. The Homestead Act allowed settlers to acquire cheap land, but the influx of farmers was viewed with alarm by the local cattlemen, who often opposed settlement with criminal measures (such as those which caused the so-called Johnson County War).

change both of these). Children were employed as soon as they became strong enough to do work, and most women either worked in a sweatshop or did piecework at home. The lucky ones were employed as servants of the middle and upper classes. Nevertheless, there was still a good deal of optimism, and most believed that their children, at least, would have a better life than they.

The *rural laborers* tended to be farmers or ranch hands in America, although in some regions they were miners (copper, lead, silver, and gold in the West, coal in the Appalachians, iron in upstate Minnesota). Unlike Great Britain, there was plenty of room for agricultural expansion (the conclusion of the last of the Indian wars had seen to that), and every laborer could dream of owning his own farm if he worked and saved.

ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES for Americans are determined in the standard fashion, without modification (although the definitions of the various social levels are somewhat different from those listed in **Space: 1889**).

The types of skills available are the same, and these skills are obtained in the same way as for British characters, although the specific careers differ somewhat. General skill points are allocated as noted on page 12 of the rules. Skill explanations remain identical.

CAREERS AND MONEY

THE RULES ON CAREERS, wealth, additional benefits, and inventions outlined on pages 12-13 of the rules remain unchanged, except as outlined below.

Government Careers

GOVERNMENT CAREERS suitable for **Space: 1889** characters are pretty much the same as in the rule book, with a few minor changes.

In the American Army, there were no fashionable regiments and no native regiments; artillery was largely restricted to coastal batteries; and the technical services were quite small. The U.S. Army had no native regiments, but it did have the scouts, which were similar. Likewise, it had no fashionable regiments, but it did have staff. Americans didn't like their army much (in peacetime, anyway), and it was commonly viewed as a career suitable only for misfits, criminals, and the lower classes (those of higher social standing who insisted on joining the military tried to get themselves assigned to staff positions). Therefore, implement the following changes:

Soc 1: Private soldier—skills for Social Level 1 are unchanged, but add the following branch:

Scouts: Fieldcraft 1, Tracking 2.

Soc 2: Noncommissioned officer—skills for Social Level 2 are unchanged, but add the following branch:

Scouts: End 4+. Fieldcraft 1, Tracking 1, Leadership 1.

Soc 3-5: Line officer, common regiment or scouts—Leadership 2, Marks-

manship 1, Close Combat 1 (pole arms). For Soc 5, technical services are not allowed.

Infantry: Fieldcraft 1, Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping), Observation 1.

Cavalry: Riding 1, Fieldcraft 1, Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping).

Artillery: Gunnery 1 (MLC or BLC), Mechanics 2 (machinist).

Engineer: Engineering 2 (earthworks), Mechanics 1 (machinist).

Surgeon: Medicine 2, Science 1 (biology).

Scouts: Fieldcraft 2, Linguistics 1 (as troops commanded).

Soc 6: Staff officer—Leadership 1, Riding 2 (horse), Eloquence 2, Bargaining 1, Linguistics 1 (any European language).

The U.S. Navy was somewhat more socially acceptable as a career than the army. All skills are identical to those on page 15 of the rules, except that "BLC or machinegun" should be replaced with "MLC or BLC" since the American Navy was not as technologically advanced as the British Navy.

In the United States, the state department is the equivalent of the Foreign Office (even though the only firm foreign policy in 1889 was to have as little to do with foreigners as possible). The careers of agent and diplomat remain the same. Since America has no colonies, it has no Colonial Office and no colonial administrators—the Colonial Office career does not exist. The remaining careers are identical.

Exotic Careers

EXOTIC CAREERS are all identical to those in the **Space: 1889** rules, with the following three additions.

Shootist: Agl 4+. Wilderness Travel 1 (foraging), Fieldcraft 2, Tracking 1, Marksmanship 3 (pistol). As a special bonus, the shootist may fire two pistols in the same action, thus getting off up to six shots per action instead of the normal three. Marksmanship is one less for both pistols.

Circus Performer: Agl 5+. Theatrics 1, Eloquence 1, Fisticuffs 1.

Aerialist/Acrobat: Wilderness Travel 2 (mountaineering), Marksmanship 1 (rifle).

Animal Trainer: Riding 2 (horse, elephant or camel).

Magician/Escape Artist: Crime 3 (lockpick 3, pickpocket 1).



Richest Man in the World

WILLIAM K. "THE PUBLIC BE DAMNED" VANDERBILT considered himself to be the richest man in the world, even though he admitted that certain British nobles owned more property. He held that since their value was tied up in useless property, his income was greater (it was in the millions of dollars).

People with less disposable income than Vanderbilt were only able to accomplish minor investment feats—such as that of New York financier W.R. Grace, who assumed the debt of two Peruvian bond issues in 1890, saving the country from bankruptcy and effectively buying control of the nation's resources (including several railroad leases, all the Peruvian nitrate deposits, five million acres of oil and mineral lands, and the Cero de Pasco silver mines).

Unfortunately for players, people such as these are completely off the scale as far as **Space: 1889** goes. If your character is Social Level 6, you are perhaps a distant cousin to one of these wealthy families, and you have access to only a minuscule fraction of the vast family fortune (assuming you roll high enough).



Gambler: Int 5+. Theatrics 2, Marksmanship 1 (pistol), Observation 2, Eloquence 2.

Service Careers

Service careers are also identical to those in the rule book, except that grounds keeper is replaced by cowboy/frontiersman.

Cowboy/Frontiersman: Soc 2-, End 3+. Riding 2 (horse), Wilderness Travel 2 (foraging), Close Combat 1 (edged weapon or bashing weapon), Tracking 1, Marksmanship 1 (pistol).

Mercantile and Professional Careers

Mercantile and Professional careers are identical.

Criminal Careers

Criminal careers are identical, except that poacher is replaced by rustler, and the career of desperado is added.

Rustler: Soc 2-. Riding 2 (horse), Wilderness Travel 2 (foraging), Tracking 2, Marksmanship 1 (pistol).

Desperado: Soc 3-. Riding 2, Fieldcraft 1, Marksmanship 2 (pistol), Close Combat 2 (edged weapon or bashing weapon). As a special bonus, the desperado may fire two pistols in the same action, thus getting off up to six shots per action instead of the normal three. Marksmanship is one less for both pistols.

RACE

THE 19TH CENTURY was a time of overt racial prejudice, and feelings still ran high on the subject. It wasn't a very happy time to be nonwhite in America. On the other hand, things were not hunky-dory for all whites, either. Blacks shared the lower rungs of society's ladder with other groups: Mediterranean and Eastern Europeans were just beginning to arrive and were subjected to the overt prejudice that the Irish had finally managed to overcome. Jews were subject to mistreatment, especially if they came from eastern Europe. Physical appearance, however, tended to keep blacks, Indians, and Orientals on the bottom. The social and career restrictions below are reasonably historical. It might have been exceptional to see some combinations of race and career, but player characters

represent exceptional individuals, don't they?

Blacks: Blacks were the most numerous of those who could be distinguished by physical appearance. Reconstruction was over, and although slavery had been eliminated, the system of tenant farming and sharecropping that sprang up after the civil war wasn't much of an improvement. The so-called "Jim Crow laws" were beginning to eliminate the freedoms the 13th and 14th amendments had established, and the South (where most blacks still lived—the migrations to northern cities were still to come) was in an economic doldrums that was only to be made worse with the coming of the boll weevil (which would destroy southern agriculture as it was then known). The civil war had settled the question of the existence of slavery, but the racial problems of the "peculiar institution" would last to the present day. Night riders (groups of white vigilantes) intimidated the newly freed slaves and persuaded them to remain in "their proper place." Only in the West, on the frontier, was there a measure of equal opportunity, but the frontier was rapidly vanishing—on Earth.

All was not hopeless, however. In the 1880s, the first freeborn generation of American blacks reached adulthood. There were black colleges (of which Tuskegee in Alabama was the most famous), black intellectuals, black scientists, black cowboys, black soldiers, black professionals (albeit they served only black communities), black sailors (one even commanded a coast guard brig in the gulf of Alaska and as such was the only government for most of that territory and some of Siberia), and even black inventors. No reason exists why there could not have been a black anarchist. Within another generation, a black statesman (Booker T. Washington) would be a dinner guest of the president.

Black Characters: Black characters are restricted to Social Level 3 or lower. Blacks did not achieve ranks higher than noncommissioned officers in the army or petty officers in the navy (and then only in command of other blacks) and were forbidden from the diplomat career, but they may enter any other career for which they qualify.



BLOODLETTERS AND BADMEN

ONE OF THE CLASSIC CHARACTERS of the American West was the gunfighter (aka gunman, gunslinger, hired gun, owl-hoot, pistolero, and several dozen other things). For the purposes of *Space: 1889*, a distinction is drawn between the white hat gunmen we have labeled *shootists* and the black hat gunmen we have labeled *desperados*. Shootists are mostly good guys and have some scruples. Desperados are basically crooks. Some examples: The James gang started out as shootists and ended up as desperados. Wyatt Earp, the Sundance Kid, and any gunfighter John Wayne ever played were shootists. James Dalton, Butch Cassidy, and Lee Van Cleef (in *The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly*) were desperados. Historical personalities tended to be a complex, continually shifting mixture of both good and evil. *Space: 1889* characters, however, can (and should) be larger than life and will show one predominant characteristic.

Oriental: Japanese in America were almost unknown, but Chinese workers had built the western third of the transcontinental railroad, along with much of the rest of the West. They were subject to horrible prejudice and mistreatment in many places, and barely tolerated in others. Anti-Chinese riots were not unusual in some areas.

Oriental Characters: Oriental characters are restricted to Social Level 3 or lower. Orientals operate under the same career restrictions as blacks.

Indians: War, pestilence, and socioeconomic factors had significantly reduced the number of American Indians by 1889. In 1888, congress formally did away with communally held Indian land and gave each Indian family 80 to 120 acres. The plan was to encourage them to take up agriculture. In practice, most were soon forced to sell the land in order to survive or were cheated out of it. The religious revival/antiwhite rebellion called the Ghost Dance began in late 1889 and would end (a couple of years later) in disaster for the tribes involved.

Interestingly enough, it is possible for Indians to have participated in the Indian wars on either (and sometimes both) sides. Members of one tribe sometimes enlisted with the army to fight their tribal enemies (Crow warriors fought as army scouts against the Sioux, for instance, and it was not uncommon for Apaches of one group to assist in fighting another).

Indian Characters: Indian characters are restricted to Social Level 3 or lower. They are restricted from all government careers except the army scouts and navy. They may enter any other career for which they qualify.

Hispanics: Americans of Hispanic descent might be respected, barely tolerated, or subjected to prejudice as horrendous as that inflicted on any other group, depending upon the location. The old "land grant" families of the Southwest were much like some European aristocrats in that they were often land-rich and cash-poor (and like them, they tended to marry into cash-rich but status-seeking Anglo-American families). Among the middle range

of society, different cultural values sometimes caused conflict between whites and Hispanics. Hispanics were also guilty of their own form of prejudice—a distinction was drawn between those of "pure" European ancestry, and those of mixed European and Indian descent. The lower classes were despised by both upper-class whites and upper-class Hispanics.

Hispanic Characters: Hispanic characters are restricted to Social Level 5 or lower (no Hispanic equivalent to the Astors existed). They may be treated with less respect in some circles, however. Hispanics may enter any career they qualify for without other restriction.

CONCLUSION

THIS ARTICLE was not intended to be a complete summary. I encourage players to read up on the period (look in the card catalog under "Gay '90s" or "Gilded Age"). For pictorial references, check out the Time-Life *The West* series. You will find that Buffalo Bill and Calamity Jane looked nothing like Paul Newman and Doris Day. ☐

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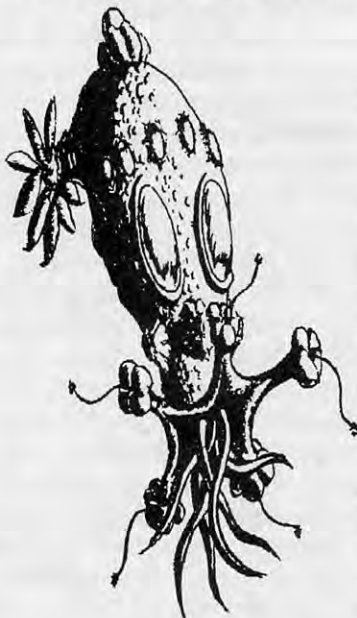
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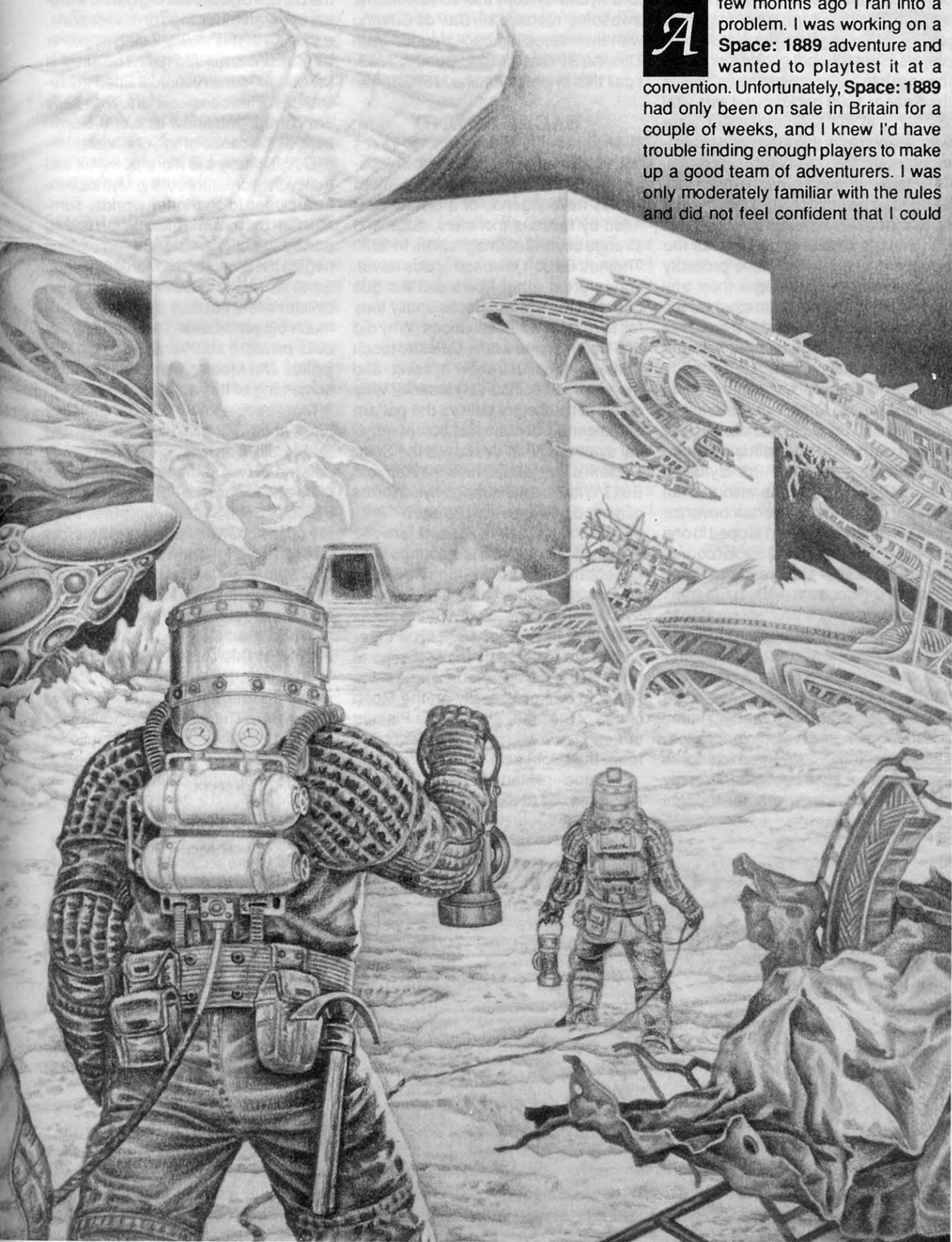
CTHULHU:

Imagine the awesome menace of
Call of Cthulhu against the exciting
background of Space: 1889!

1889



A few months ago I ran into a problem. I was working on a **Space: 1889** adventure and wanted to playtest it at a convention. Unfortunately, **Space: 1889** had only been on sale in Britain for a couple of weeks, and I knew I'd have trouble finding enough players to make up a good team of adventurers. I was only moderately familiar with the rules and did not feel confident that I could



do justice to the scenario. When I looked through the adventure, I decided what I was really testing was the plot. Would players make the right choices, or would they run into endless dead ends? While the **Space: 1889** background was vital to events in the scenario, there were very few points at this stage of development where the rules were critical.

To make a long story short, I finally decided I'd be better off using rules that I and other players already knew well. Chaosium's *Call of Cthulhu* was the obvious choice, since I have probably spent more time running it than any other game system. What cinched the choice for me was that I also owned the *Call of Cthulhu* Victorian background pack, *Cthulhu By Gaslight*.

There are a lot of advantages to using *Call of Cthulhu* rules, not the least of which is that many players are already familiar with them; in Britain it's the third or fourth most popular RPG. By using *Call of Cthulhu* rules you also add an element of fear—players can never be quite sure that you haven't slipped in one or two Mythos creatures, and of course there's nothing to stop you from doing so. At a first glance the sanity rules aren't particularly useful if you are sticking to a strict **Space: 1889** background. But even the bravest Victorian adventurer may occasionally run into a genuinely horrific situation; the sanity rules give you an easy way for fear to affect them.

Although I was developing a **Space: 1889** adventure and wanted to stick to a strict **Space: 1889** background for my playtest, I've since given some thought

to a hybrid system that combines the awesome menace of *Call of Cthulhu* with the interesting backgrounds from *Cthulhu By Gaslight* and **Space: 1889**. I call this system *Cthulhu: 1889*.

BACKGROUND

Ancient ruins hint of strange races that produced many of the known species on Earth, Venus, and Mars. All three worlds have legends of a distant past ruled by hideous monsters, huge and strange beyond all imagination. In 1870 Thomas Edison invented space travel. Today great ether flyers sail the gulf between the worlds. Occasionally they fail to reach their destinations. Why did one freighter, the *Marie Celeste*, reach Venus with half the crew missing, and the rest dead or incurably insane? Why do certain scholars believe the pattern of the canals of Mars is a potent magical symbol? What destroyed the Solar System's fifth planet, now the Asteroid Belt? What are the strange flying forms glimpsed between the planets?

Cthulhu: 1889 is based on the *Cthulhu* Mythos, but it is a Mythos H. P. Lovecraft might have imagined if he were writing some years after humanity colonized the Solar System, as described in **Space: 1889**. The outer worlds are haunted by the creatures of the Mythos. R'lyeh is somewhere in the Asteroid Belt or possibly on the Moon of one of the outer planets; the Plateau of Leng is on Mars; and fire vampires roam the bright side of Mercury.

The ancient Martians drove the worst creatures out of the inner system, and

the canals of Mars are a gigantic warding spell, an Elder Sign on a vast scale, a symbol that is slowly losing its power as the canals fall into ruin. The effort of the canals' construction drained the resources of the canal builders. Their heirs are corrupt and know little of the symbolic significance of the channels.

Occasionally the more powerful and malevolent creatures of the Mythos venture closer to the inner worlds, summoned by evil magicians or taking advantage of rare natural events which negate the power of the Martian pattern. Earth still has its share of evil cultists and sinister sites, but they are just part of a much bigger picture. There are similar cults on Mars and Venus, and the Selenites and Moon Men may also know something of this ancient horror.

Most people know little or nothing of the Mythos; Britannia rules the ether, and the empire (on which the Sun never sets) is slowly expanding toward the stars and toward the horror that waits in the outer Solar System. Of course there are occasional unexplained events, but most people ignore them. Only a few brave souls are aware of the terror that surrounds them and are prepared to fight the creatures of the Mythos.

While it would be possible to set events in this variant system in the 1920s to tie them to the main *Call of Cthulhu* game, a Victorian environment is more fun. There's also the advantage of being able to use anything published for **Space: 1889** without the need to change social and political details.

THE CTHULHU: 1889 SYSTEM

These rules additions will help you set *Call of Cthulhu* adventures against the **Space: 1889** background or run **Space: 1889** adventures under *Call of Cthulhu* rules. To make the most of them, you'll need the *Call of Cthulhu* rules, the **Space: 1889** rules, and *Cthulhu by Gaslight*. If you don't already own both systems, I'd advise trying one game at a time, rather than attempting to learn variants of two games simultaneously!

CHARACTER GENERATION

Use the normal *Cthulhu* and *Gaslight* rules and character sheets, but let players know a few extra languages and skills are available, described as follows.

Conversion Table

Characteristic		Examples		
		Caruthers	von Gruber	
<i>Cthulhu</i>	1889	1889	<i>Cthulhu</i>	<i>Cthulhu</i>
STR	Str×2+6	6×2+6	18	14
DEX	Agil×2+6	3×2+6	12	10
INT	Int×2+6	2×2+6	10	16
CON	End×2+6	1×2+6	8	8
APP	Chr×2+6	4×2+6	14	12
POW	Chr+Soc+6	4+5+6	15	15
SIZ	Str+End+6	6+1+6	13	11
EDU	Soc×2+Int	5×2+2	12	17
SAN			75	75
Hit Points			11	10
Damage Bonus			+1D4	+1D4

Note: Multiply 1889 skills by 10 to get the equivalent skill percentages.

Gunnery

(Base 0%.) **Space: 1889** offers four classes of gunnery skill: breech-loading field gun, muzzle-loading cannon, machinegun, and exotic weaponry (such as rockets). These skills must be taken separately, since they refer to very different types of weapon. All machineguns use the *Call of Cthulhu* machinegun rules for multiple shots, etc.

Read/Write Alien Language Speak Alien Language

(Base 0% for nonnatives.) Both these skills work like normal Terran language skills; they only apply to one language. For example, Speak Martian isn't acceptable, but Speak Koline (Canal Martian trade-talk) is allowed. Natives automatically speak their own languages with normal fluency, and they read and write if their culture allows it. See the **Space: 1889** rules for Martian languages (pages 176, 181). Venus only has one language, with no written form, so Speak Venusian is acceptable. See various adventures for the languages of the Moon, etc. (For more information on Martian languages, see **Conklin's Atlas of the Worlds**, pages 68-69. Also, while Venusians—Lizardmen—all speak one language, it does have some regional accents and dialects, the effects of which a referee can adjudicate.)

Read Skin Pattern

(Base INT×2% for Venusians, 0% for others.) Venusians get this skill automatically; anyone else can buy it at normal point costs. A Venusian's skin pattern reveals a lot about his likely behavior. Since all Venusians believe these patterns shape their destiny, they tend to live their lives as predicted. This skill may be used as an alternative to psychology when dealing with Venusians. Most Venusian shamans have this skill at very high levels. (This is a new skill; within the **Space: 1889** rules, it's an Intellect-based default skill for Venusians, an Intellect-based skill (but not a default skill) for all others.)

Pilot Aerial Flyer/ Cloudship/Zeppelin/Ether Flyer Pilot Sailing Vessel/ Steam Vessel/Submarine

All pilot skills start off separately at base 0%, regardless of any other pilot-

ing skills known. Pilot Zeppelin replaces and includes the *Gaslight* skill Pilot Balloon. Most editions of the *Cthulhu* rules contain rules for boating skills to be used for all surface vessels.

Ride

(Base variable, -10% for alien mounts.) You can ride animals native to your own world, but you probably have trouble riding the animals of other worlds. For example, *Cthulhu By Gaslight* gives an upper-class character 25% ride skill; this drops to 15% when riding an animal from another world.

Trimsman

(Base 0%.) The ability to control the altitude and attitude of cloudships and other flyers, depth of submarines, etc.

Other Skills and Social Class

All other **Space: 1889** skills have near or exact *Gaslight* equivalents. All skills that are normally available in *Gaslight* should be available in *Cthulhu: 1889*.

Gaslight and **Space: 1889** both attach considerable significance to social class; this characteristic can be selected by players or randomly generated by a D6 roll as in the Social Class Table.

SOCIAL CLASS TABLE

Die	Class
1-2	Lower class
3-4	Middle class
5-6	Upper class

One last point about character generation—when developing statistics, don't forget the Sanity rating. This is a hybrid system, and there are *things* out there in the void of space—the sort of *things* that tend to have a rather damaging effect on this particular characteristic.

COMBAT

For all melee and small arms combat, use the normal *Cthulhu* rules. All the hand weapons in **Space: 1889** can be found in *Cthulhu*. See below for how to convert NPC weapon skills and animal attacks.

For airborne combat use the **Space: 1889/Sky Galleons of Mars** rules; however, shots are fired and either hit or miss using normal *Cthulhu* skill rolls.

To relate **Space: 1889** artillery dam-



age to *Cthulhu* rules, divide the burst indicated in the **Space: 1889** field gun and cannon firing tables by two to give the explosion radius; damage is 1D6 per burst, also divided by two. For example, a 5" howitzer has a burst value of 14 in **1889**. For *Cthulhu* this is reduced to seven yards in radius, damage 7D6. This "quick and dirty" conversion may not suit every referee. In practice, you are probably dead if you are anywhere near an exploding shell, so precision isn't too important.

SPACE TRAVEL

Use the **Space: 1889** rules for ether flight. Some creatures of the Mythos may present additional hazards for space travellers.

NPC CONVERSION

It may occasionally be useful to convert characters from published **Space: 1889** material to *Cthulhu: 1889* rules. Don't worry about exact conversion of NPC skills and characteristics; this is a game, not a bookkeeping exercise! As a rough guide, multiply **Space: 1889** characteristics by two and then add six to get their *Cthulhu* equivalents, or use a combination of two characteristics as in the Conversion Table on page 46. SAN and other figured characteristics (such as hit points and damage bonuses) are generated normally. The examples are for Colonel Caruthers, the sample character in the **Space: 1889** rule book, and Baron Hasso von Gruber, a notorious **Space: 1889** NPC.

ALIEN ANIMALS

Alien animals should be run as the nearest possible *Cthulhu* equivalent. If the nearest equivalent is a Mythos creature, use the statistics for it, but there will be no SAN effect; it will not be intelligent; and it will have no magic or supernatural powers. For example, a rumet breehr uses the characteristics of a rhinoceros. A great kommot uses the characteristics of a hunting horror but has no spells, is not affected by daylight, and is not intelligent.

MYTHOS CREATURES

Almost all creatures capable of flying through the ether are faster and much more maneuverable than any human-built ether flyer.

Azathoth is surrounded by vast whirlpools of ether turbulence which are thousands of miles in diameter. Any ether flyer caught in the turbulence will be inexorably sucked toward the god; the only escape is to dismiss *Azathoth* before it's too late. Travellers are strongly advised to avoid *Azathoth*.

Byakhee and *shantaks* are among the creatures most likely to be encountered in space. *Star vampires* are encountered less frequently. Fortunately, all seem to be repelled by the radiation of ether screws. Any ship which is forced to cut engine power may have some unwelcome visitors.

The colour out of space (see *Cthulhu Now*) is another infrequent visitor to our system. It may possibly attack ether flyers and may be attracted by (or able to feed on) the radiation of ether screws.

Cthulhu is still confined in R'lyeh, but R'lyeh itself may be mobile; it may be an asteroid, moon, or comet. If *Cthulhu* is freed, he undoubtedly has the ability to fly between the planets, using his wings to harness the ether. *Cthulhu* is massive and comparatively slow moving, cruising at about one to two million miles per day.

Deep Ones are very common on Venus and unknown on Mars. Many Venusians are probably tainted with their blood.

Fire vampires infest the bright side of Mercury and may be attracted to the bright ether drives and solar boilers of spacecraft. They try to steal magic points from passengers and crew; unfortunately, the fire vampires usually burn their way through the hull to reach their targets! Such incidents are usually reported as meteorite damage.

Flying polyps are known to have colonized several worlds in the Solar System. If you see a mysterious well covered with stone anywhere in the Solar System, don't be tempted to lift the lid!

The Great Race of Yith undoubtedly explored much of the Solar System and may even have reached the stars. A base or ether flyer built by this race would be the archaeological find of the century—and would probably also be

unbelievably dangerous.

Mi-Go, the fungi from *Yuggoth*, are disinclined to have anything to do with the "primitives" of the inner worlds, although they occasionally visit to mine rare ores. They are occasionally sighted by ether flyer crewmembers, who usually know better than to report their observations. *Yuggoth* (Pluto) hasn't yet been discovered by Terran astronomers.

Nightguants probably inhabit the more hellish corners of most worlds.

Yog-Sothoth is another outer god that occasionally visits the inner planets. The last log entry of the freighter mentioned under Background (page 46) described a sighting of "iridescent bubbles."

ALIEN RELIGIONS

Most alien races have at least one religion inspired by creatures of the Mythos. On Mars, for example, the Cult of the Worm is the most likely suspect, and Nyarlathotep the most likely deity behind the scenes.

However, the cults of the Mythos tend to be extremely secretive. It is entirely possible that there is another cult concealed behind the facade of the Worm, and that the Worm Cultists themselves (although murderous) aren't actually Mythos-inspired.

SCENARIO: A SOUVENIR OF MARS

Professor Philbeam, a noted NPC archaeologist, is travelling to Earth from Mars on the same liner as the player characters. He seems remarkably unfriendly and rarely leaves his cabin.

It's soon common gossip that he spends a lot of time writing but is occasionally seen staring into a metal box, a cube approximately six inches to a side. He closes the box if anyone enters the cabin.

On the fourth or fifth night out, he is found dead with his left hand amputated. The hand is missing, and no papers are found in the cabin. A knife is clutched in the corpse's right hand.

Somehow the box falls into the hands of the PCs. It is empty, although curiously heavy. It is also a little bigger than they remember others saying it to be—about seven inches to a side. The outside is a uniform, plain, metallic gray and is slightly bloodstained, but the inner surfaces are clean and seem to be

mottled with moiré patterns that never appear the same twice. Although they are never seen to move, they are different every time the box is opened or every time anyone even blinks while looking inside. The lid isn't hinged to the box in any normal manner; it pivots on concealed pins, but it fits so closely that there is no obvious way to inspect the pins short of smashing the box.

Sooner or later someone should put something in the box and shut the lid; if it is opened again, the object that was inside is gone. If something living (such as a mouse or a canary, or even a leaf or a piece of fruit) is put inside, the box seems to expand slightly. It gets about two-thirds of an inch bigger in all dimensions every time this occurs. Expansion is slow, and no seams or joints can be seen. Even the bloodstains on the outside of the box seem to expand.

Even if the adventurers don't investigate the box, whoever is looking after it will start to feel very possessive and must make a SAN roll once every 1D6 hours. If the roll is failed, the adventurer will put something living in the box and then lose 1-2 SAN. Alternatively, small living creatures (such as spiders, cockroaches, and other vermin) will start to find their own way into the box and somehow push the lid closed.

If the PCs try to throw the box off the ship, it will be found inside again a few hours later. No one can explain this.

When the box becomes a 10-inch cube, or if anyone tries to smash it, it abruptly folds. First the lid opens, then the edges of the box split, and finally it flattens out into a cross shape. The entire flat cross seems to twist and writhe without actually moving. A second later, in a multidimensional rotation that is impossible to describe, the cross becomes a peculiar structure that mathematically minded adventures will recognize as a three-dimensional representation of a hypercube. Anyone witnessing this must make a SAN roll or lose 1-3 SAN.

The whole object collapses again to form a cube which seems to fold in upon itself and then disappears. A second later bells ring, and the entire ether flyer shakes; if the teammembers look out any porthole, they'll find that the ship is floating inside an eye-wrenching structure of straight lines and planes that seem to meet at impossible angles—it

is inside the hypercube! The internal structure glows without any obvious light source. There is no air. Everyone must make a SAN roll or lose 1D6 SAN (lose 1 SAN if the roll is successful).

The ship remains trapped for several days or weeks—long enough for several passengers and crewmembers to go insane, but not long enough for food to run short. Anyone venturing outside soon finds that it's impossible to get near the walls of this strange space, let alone damage them. Anyone or anything moving toward the walls suddenly reappears on the far side of the space, moving back toward the ship. The ether screws don't work, and there isn't enough light to run the solar boiler properly.

Two other objects are floating in this space besides the ship: a sheaf of papers and Philbeam's hand. The papers are Philbeam's manuscript, which reveals that he bought the box from a Hill Martian tribesman who swore that it had fallen from the skies. At that time it was only two inches on a side. The notes describe the effects of putting small Martian animals inside. At first Philbeam thought this was just interesting; later he found it harder and harder to disobey the compulsion to "feed" the box. The last bloodstained entry reads "I can't find anything else alive, not even a cockroach. It must be fed. It needs to be fed. The kni...."

At the referee's discretion there might be other things floating in this space—

corpses of the missing crew of the *Marie Celeste*, a boot made of a mysterious silvery material bearing the cryptic logo "NASA," one or two Things That Man Was Not Meant To Know, a few lost pages from the *Necronomicon*, and so forth. Don't try to explain them; leave that for the players.

Eventually the hypercube disappears. The ship is floating in space again—in orbit around one of the Moons of Saturn!

A few simple calculations reveal that the ship will run out of food many months before it can reach any of the inner planets, even if it heads back immediately. More seriously, the solar boiler is unable to be run at all now to provide heat and power for the return trip, due to Saturn's distance from the Sun. The ether flyer the PCs were on is not the only ship present; there are two or three others in similar orbits, all of wholly alien design, meteor-pitted, lifeless, and extremely old. When these ships are investigated, the PCs will learn that none of them seem to have been built with a liftwood hull; all have the remnants of gas bags, which would be useless for a landing on the airless Moon the ship is orbiting.

There's a gigantic building on the Moon, a cube about 200 feet on a side. Scattered around it are the wrecks of more ships. Think big; remember *Alien*, *Forbidden Planet*, etc.

Anyone venturing inside the building (wearing spacesuits that trail oxygen lines and telephone cables) finds the en-



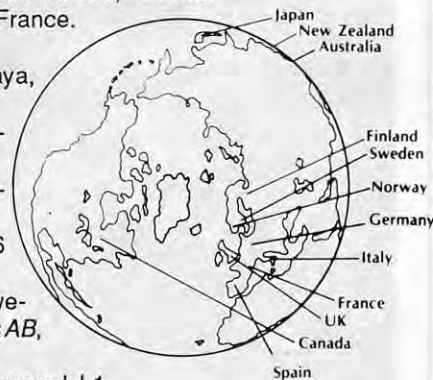
trance to a gigantic, three-dimensional maze. After anyone proceeds a few yards inside the building, it suddenly floods with air, and a guillotine-bladed door slams down, severing the space suit lines and anyone unlucky enough to be standing in the entrance. The only way out is to press on into the maze, which is littered with deadly traps and the desiccated corpses of failed explorers, in hope of locating the exit. Ultimately the maze proves to be a gigantic alien test; its purpose is to find someone worthy to become a god! Eventually someone qualifies. Luck, self-sacrifice, or massive SAN loss might be suitable criteria for selection.

The new god quickly transforms into something beyond human comprehension, losing all remaining SAN in the process. As a last act of compassion, it returns all the remaining adventurers, passengers, crewmembers, and the ship itself to the space-time they disappeared from, midway between Mars and Earth. The cubic building collapses into dust, but the derelict ships remain in orbit. A mad god flies off into the endless void to seek out its fellows. If the survivors are lucky, they'll never meet it again. If they are unlucky.... Ω

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Windsinger Saga

Van Siegling

Tack. Beat to starboard." The senior topman passed the order on to the foremast crew. First Officer Seebok Winiipaas didn't bother giving details. They had beat to starboard, beat to port, beat to starboard over 50 times since leaving Fadath, bound for Crocea. If the topmen didn't know which lines to loosen and which to draw tight, they should have fallen overboard by now.

Seebok watched as the helmsman aimed the bow of the

Windsinger across the grand canal. So long as Gluumen followed the canal by day and the stars by night they would not get lost. No good reason to take sightings. Just keep track of the last village passed. He stifled a yawn and inhaled deeply. It sure was nice having the authority without the back-breaking labor!

The lanky mariner leaned over the railing and gazed down on the lush Martian landscape. "I wonder if Captain Paayuun will press on to make up lost time, or stop at a village for the night," Seebok thought. "Hope he stops at Chabees. They have a good market for fresh fruits and vegetables. It's the season for good *pheeshi* melons." He could taste the succulent meat, the tart tang of the juice as it slid slowly down his throat. "With luck, Alecki

is still the melon seller." He rubbed his lips and chin in anticipation.

Zaalmar Cimatii climbed up the ladder from the hold, gazed around the quarterdeck, and approached Seebok. "When will we quit shifting from side to side," he moaned. "It could ruin my cargo."

"I'm sure Captain Paayuun realizes this might hurt your wine, but you wanted speed to beat your competitors. This is the best speed we can make, until the wind changes.

We haven't seen an-

other ship headed for Crocea since we left Fadath. You should be happy we've gained a day over anyone following. And we realize that the earlier your *Hobokii* blend is drunk, the better it is. It does not store well when compared to *Saardaari* spice wine."

"But what about my competitors who'll fly cross-country?" bleated Zaalmar.

"Remember, the captain sets the course. Even if I was in command, I'd rather tack all the way along the canal than risk a landing in the Swamp of Gorklimsk. How good are you at fighting swamp pirates?"

Zaalmar shuddered.

"Ship ahoy," shouted the lookout. "Screw galley. Headed back along the canal."

The *Morning Breeze* had passed them under full canvas, even spinnakers, earlier in the day. That had been a beautiful sight. A large merchant kite can carry almost an acre of sail headed downwind. Now, another sky galleon was going to Fadath. Seebok wished that he had business in Crocea instead.

"Who is she?" yelled Seebok.

"I don't know sir. Looks like a *Hullcutter* class, but different. She is flying an Oenotrian squad-

devils from the third planet.

"Sadaak, go wake the captain. Maybe we can get a military escort." While Zaalmar visibly brightened, the sailor ran to obey the order.

The warship finally pulled even with the *Windsinger*. Using the glasses, Seebok inspected the new vessel. Yes, the bow certainly showed the sleek running lines of a hunter. The prow obviously was made in the Crocean shipyards. But there were signs of major rebuilding and extra gunnery outriggers.

Suddenly, she turned bow on and surged closer. Seebok noticed the



ron pennant from the jib."

"Where away?"

"Off the lower port bow and climbing."

Seebok grabbed his binoculars and sauntered to the front of the quarterdeck with Zaalmar trailing behind. "Maybe this new ship is the replacement for the *Storm Rider*," he wondered. That Oenotrian warship had patrolled this stretch of canal for years and had gone on to Astrapsk recently.

Rumor had it an Oenotrian battle squadron was sailing north, possibly to meet the British.

Ever since the red-skinned off-worlders had raided the High Martian kraag of King Hattabranx, the Oenotrians had been worried about the

signal flags flying. "Prepare to stop," he muttered. His eyes wandered to the top of the flag staff. A new pennant had just been unfurled. Black field with red skull and cross-bones. "May the Worm Priests take them," exclaimed Seebok. "Pirates! Gunmen! Hard to starboard. Run with the wind! Sound the alarm!"

Three smoke puffs erupted from the pirate ship. Seebok grabbed the surprised wine merchant and slammed him to the deck. Most of the crew instinctively ducked as the shells fell, fortuitously short. The first officer knelt behind the railing and scanned the approaching predator once more. The range was getting shorter. *Sussex Pride* was printed on the side of the

ship's bow. Seebok focused on a rotund man decorated with medals standing on the bow. The color wasn't right. Instead of the usual golden hue, this man was pink and fat. He did not look like any Martian Seebok knew.

As the off-duty crew piled out of the forecabin, Captain Paayuun finally arrived on the quarterdeck, sleep still in his eyes. "Who is the slime, Seebok?" he spat through gritted teeth.

"The ship is flying a red pirate flag, and its name is not Martian. I think this is a Red Captain's ship. If we run out of luck, we will be meeting our first Earthman soon."

"I see we've completed jibbing. If we can avoid the first rush while we gain speed, and if the wind holds, we'll outrun her," growled Paayuun. "Mr. Cimatii, if you would please go down to your cabin until the battle is over. Seebok, here is the key to the arms locker. Get some weapons for the crew while I organize them to repel boarders."

SUSSEX PRIDE

This Red Captain's ship was constructed from the remains of a captured *Hullcuter*-class warship. She was extensively remodeled in the Parhooni shipyards prior to sailing for the Shistomik Mountains. The captain already has a letter of marque, pending the start of hostilities between the Oenotrian Empire and Syrtis Major.

The ship is about 170 feet long. The bow-mounted ram is metal and wood, and ends in a solid wooden keel.

The *Sussex Pride* is equipped with two small cannons and two sweeper guns mounted in the outriggers. It has two heavy cannons and a power grapnel.

The crew totals 46, with 10 gunners, 24 turncranks,

six bridge crew, and six deckhands. The ship also carries 16 marines, one of whom is an officer. The *Sussex Pride* can reach Very High altitude, has a top speed of 4 (20 knots), and costs £42,120.

Constructing the *Sussex Pride*

This conversion requires the hull of a large screw galley and two pairs of outriggers from large kites. (You should have the outriggers in your parts box if you have previously constructed a *Glory Sled* and a *Warm Winds*.) First, cut the small engine mounts off the sides of the screw galley. Sand the two guns off the quarterdeck, then sand a curve into the plank ends of one pair of outriggers. Glue them to the sides of the quarterdeck, where the engine mounts were. Glue the other pair of outriggers so the planks make one continuous long board. Once this has dried, glue it to the neck of the hull, just behind the forecabin.

For added detail, use a gangplank (from a *Bloodrunner* or *Small Bird*) or a small piece of sprue to make a single aft gun mount. Sheet styrene can be used for a more elaborate ram.

WINDSINGER

The *Windsinger* represents the standard large merchant kite built in the southern kingdoms of Mars in the late 1840s. The ship's papers have been forged several times to hide "forcible changes in ownership." Her hull is not in good shape, both to discourage pirates and to reflect the owner's miserly habits. She is a typical tramp sailing vessel presently offering passenger and cargo service along the great canals of the Oenotrian Empire.

BASIC WIND SPEED

Roll	BWS
1	Decrease by 1
2-5	No change
6	Increase by 1

SHIP TRIM TABLE

BWS	Maintain Ship Trim On
8	Die roll of 1-5
9	Die roll of 1-3
10	Die roll of 1
11	All ships suffer automatic trim loss

WIND DIRECTION (BWS=1)

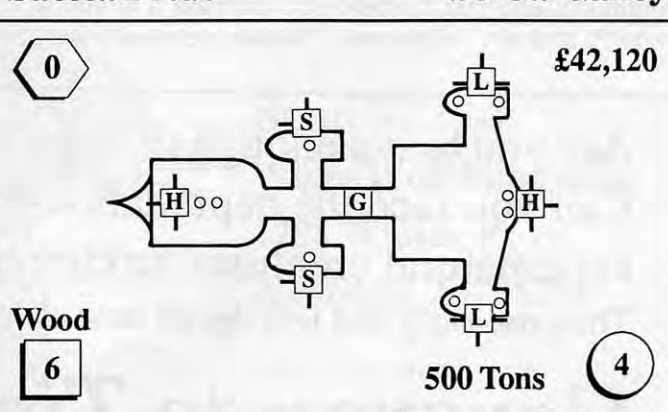
Roll	Direction
1-2	Left (counterclockwise)
3-4	No change
5-6	Right (clockwise)

WIND DIRECTION (BWS≥1)

Roll	Direction
1	Left (counterclockwise)
2-5	No change
6	Right (clockwise)

Sussex Pride

Screw Galley



Bridge	C H T S O O
Deck	□ □ □ □ □
Maneuver	□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Screw	4 3 2 1
-------	------------------

Hull Hits	VH □ □ □ □ □ H □ □ □ □ □ M □ □ □ □ □ L □ □ □ □ □ VL □ □ □ □ □
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Marines	□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
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Measuring 475 feet long by 78 feet high, the *Windsinger* is smaller than the *Warm Winds* but larger than most Martian warships. She is outfitted to carry 25 passengers and up to 1600 tons of cargo. The ship always has 800 tons of cargo and is capable of flying at Medium height. The 38-person crew consists of 16 rigging crewmembers, 16 deckhands, and six bridge crewmembers. The ship costs £90,100.

Constructing the *Windsinger*

This large cargo vessel is very similar to the *Warm Winds* produced using the directions given in **Martian Cloudships**. You will need two large kites and the sails from two small kites.

Cut the two outriggers off one of the large kite hulls. Next, cut the stern off flat slightly behind the two gun mounts on the quarterdeck. Sand the guns off both the forecastle and quarterdeck mounts, and remove the ram.

Cut across the mast mounting hole in the forecastle down to a depth equal to the top of the neck. Now cut parallel to the neck from the neck to the remnant of the mast mounting hole. These last two incisions form a L-shaped seat. Take the second large kite and cut the quarterdeck off immediately behind the stairs. Sand the guns flat on the two mounts and glue this piece to the back of the first hull.

Now the hull is ready for the masts to be attached. Glue a small kite's mast into the L-shaped seat. Fill in the gaps with putty. Drill two holes in the expanded quarterdeck, one immediately behind the stairs and one between the aft gun mounts. Glue one of the large kite masts in each hole. You should cut one-eighth of an inch off the bottom of the mizzenmast (the one to the rear) before gluing it in place so it is shorter than the mainmast.

To create a foremast, cut the second small kite mast in

half. Glue the mast upright in the middle of the forecastle, angling the sail along the vertical mast.

OPTIONAL RULES

In the battlefield area represented in *Sky Galleons of Mars*, the wind should be fairly stable for all ships. Roll the basic wind speed (BWS) at the beginning of the battle. All kites will use this same BWS, as modified by direction of heading and battle damage, for the first five turns. On every fifth turn, roll 1D6 on the Basic Wind Speed Table to determine if the BWS changes. The effects of the rolls are cumulative. The BWS never goes below zero. If the BWS reaches 8 (or higher), all ships (including engine-powered types and screw galleys) are moved one hex with the wind every other turn. (This can make flying interesting for ships in mountainous terrain.) Also, when the BWS reaches 8 (or higher), all ships must roll to

prevent emergency trim loss (see table) every fifth turn.

The exception to the above rules is BWS 4, which indicates gusty wind. Each wind-driven airship must roll a die to determine movement separately for that turn. A roll of 1 or 2 means a BWS of 3; a 3 or 4 means a BWS of 4; a 5 or 6 means a BWS of 5.

Determine the initial wind direction in the same manner as stated in the **Sky Galleons of Mars** rules. On every fifth turn, roll a die. If the wind speed is 1, then a die roll of 1 or 2 means the wind changes one hex side to the left (counterclockwise). A die roll of 3 or 4 means no change, and a result of 5 or 6 means the wind changes one hex side to the right (clockwise).

If the wind speed is greater than 1, then a die roll result of 1 means the wind changes one hex side to the left (counterclockwise). A die result of 2, 3, 4, or 5 means no change, and 6 means the wind changes one hex side to the right (clockwise). ♠

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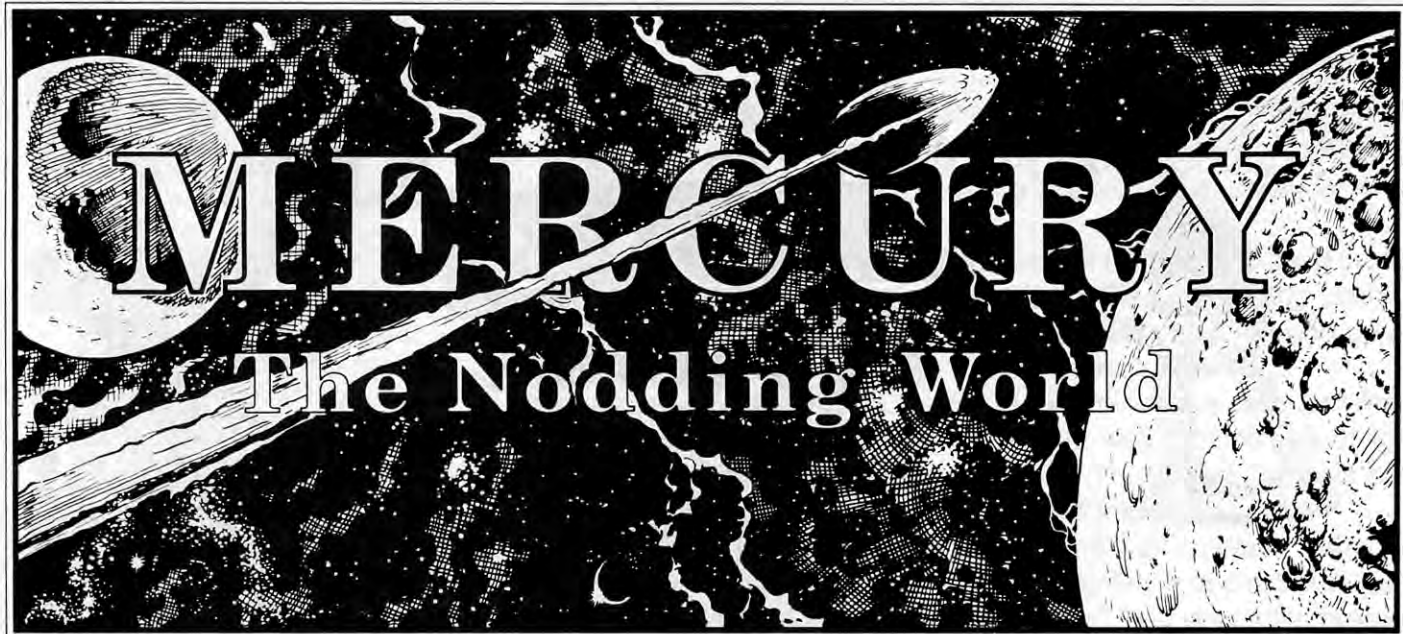
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David S. F. Portree

Mercury is a tidally locked world—one of many in the solar system as a whole, though only the second found in the part of the Sun’s domain bounded by the belt of minor planets between Mars and Jupiter. Tidally locked worlds appear to rigidly hold the same hemisphere toward whatever body they orbit (their “primary”). However, this is not strictly correct for either Mercury or that other well known tidally locked world, Luna.

In the early 17th century, only a few years before René Descartes first postulated the existence of the all-pervasive ether we now use to reach the planets, Johannes Kepler determined that the planets and moons of the Solar System do not move in precisely circular paths about their primaries. Rather, their paths are to a greater or lesser

degree elliptical. When their orbital paths take them close to their primary, they move quickly; when they are far from their primary, they slow down.

Tidally locked worlds appear to have no rotation—no “spin”—but in fact they do. They spin once in the same amount of time it takes for them to complete one orbit. The spin rate remains constant—but as we have seen, the orbital speed changes, depending on where in its orbit the tidally locked world is.

As a result, when a tidally locked world is near its primary, the spin loses ground to fast orbital motion, and when it is far from its primary the spin gains ground upon orbital motion. The net result is that, viewed from the primary, the tidally locked world “nods.”

First it nods east, as the spin gains on orbital motion, then it nods west, as the spin loses. This reveals to an observer stationed on the primary rather more of the surface of the tidally locked satellite world than the 50% one might expect.

From Earth, about 59% of Luna may be observed over time. Even before ether flyers passed over Luna’s far side, patient earthly scientists armed with powerful telescopes were able to map tiny parts of the “hidden” face as Luna nodded back and forth.

To an observer on the Sun (were such a thing possible), Mercury would also appear to nod. However, Mercury’s orbit about the Sun is far less oval than Luna’s orbit about Earth. As a result, the hypothetical Sun-based observer of

Mercury would see only about 54% of its surface over time.

Mercury’s nods are exceptionally difficult to forecast as they are heavily influenced by the complex interplay of gravitational forces of the cisasteroidal worlds superior to it—Venus (especially, as it passes so near), Earth-Luna, and Mars. In addition, turbulent solar storms and the passage of comets by the Sun place subtle pressures on the planet which must be taken into account when calculating its movements.

Under normal circumstances, the nodding of Mercury means little to humans exploring the planet. By recording the positions of shadows cast by poles erected for that purpose, scientists at Britain’s Princess Christiana Station at Mercury’s north pole have noted that the Sun appears to “roll” a short distance back and forth along the horizon over a period ranging from hours to weeks. However, for all intents and purposes, the Sun remains still at Princess Christiana Station, and it is only through such precise measurements that the nodding of Mercury can be detected.

Such is not the case all over Mercury, however. In four places, the nodding of the planet can produce spectacular local effects: Throckmorton Lake, Lake Plim-soll, Sterling Bay, and Mt. Edison.

**THE SLOSHING
OF THE WORLD RIVER**

Mercury is, of course, unique for having an endless river. It crosses the

north pole near Princess Christiana Station, flows southward to the antipodes, then winds northward to rejoin itself. It constitutes the endlessly flowing lifeblood of Mercury's temperate Twilight Zone, supplying water to the planet's paleozoic animal and plant life.

Coriolis force, rather than gravity, drives the World River. Just as Coriolis force stands in for gravity, the slight nodding of the planet replaces the tides which Mercury, with no Moon, cannot have. The planet nods and the water sloshes, just as does water in a rocked washbasin.

NOD SURGES

The net effect is barely measurable along 98% of the World River's meandering course. However, in three places natural landforms conspire with the nod to concentrate the shifting waters, producing dangerous "nod surges." Just as the Dominion of Canada's Bay of Fundy funnels tides to produce tidal bores as high as 60 feet, Throckmorton Lake, Lake Plimsoll, and Sterling Bay on Mercury gather the waters to produce sudden surges more than 80 feet high.

The violence of these irregularly occurring floods destroys large stands of fast-growing Mercurian ferns and primitive trees. The floods also kill thousands of animals, in spite of their aquatic or semiaquatic nature. They are rent by currents, dashed against rocks and trees, or left stranded too far from water to escape the predators and scavengers which move into the area after the water drains back to the World River.

Parties exploring the areas often immersed by nod surges will note several unique characteristics. Nod surge lowlands are spongy with the rotting remains of crushed trees and ferns. Species of trees and ferns especially adapted for holding tight to the loose soil during inundations populate the lowlands. These species are squat and have deep roots, and some have parts which close up when submerged. Others are streamlined to reduce the pressure of moving water on their trunks. They are oriented toward where the flood originates (thus providing a handy direction-finding device).

Some animals can ride out the nod surges by exploiting these plants. Some insinuate themselves into the parts that close up when immersed. Some simply

hold onto branches and fronds, while others burrow into trunks and stalks. Adventurers who decide to poke into these burrows will be unpleasantly surprised to find them occupied by all manner of gnashing, nipping creatures. Using the burrows as stair steps to climb the trees, as one might be tempted to do to get above an approaching wall of nod surge water, may result in damaged boots—and missing toes.

Certain plants use the surges to spread seeds, spores, or "cuttings." The post-surge lowland landscape is soggy and deeply littered with debris, with only a few specially adapted trees left standing. Thus, it presents a colonization opportunity for young plants. Species adapted to using the surges to trigger their reproduction come out on top in the race to colonize after a nod surge.

Animals also use the nod surges in their reproduction. Some creatures plant eggs high in the trees. The eggs develop to a larval stage there, then go dormant until a surge immerses them, causing them to hatch. The eggs thereby are prevented from being eaten half-formed in the dangerous environment of the World River. Other creatures plant their eggs in pits on land. Nod surge currents scoop out the pits, freeing the eggs contained therein to hatch into turbulent waters. The larvae find their environment rich in food in the form of carrion and pulverized plant matter, as well as other, weaker larvae and injured animals. The newly hatched, long-dormant creatures go into a feeding frenzy, not hesitating to attack beleaguered animals many times their size.

Adventurers travelling by air in these regions are advised to remain close by their flyer should they decide to land. Those travelling by boat must take their chances. On the whole, they are best off moving as rapidly as possible through these areas, making few stops. Adventurers exploring the aftermath of a nod surge should beware of quicksand and savage creatures attracted for miles around by the surfeit of carrion produced by the flood.

MT. EDISON AND THE FALLS OF ICE

In 1879 Sir Basil Throckmorton's third expedition circumnavigated Mercury along its Twilight Zone, making occa-



sional forays into the lands of darkness bordering the Ice Sheath. One such foray was inspired by a glimpse of a mountain silhouetted against the stars just inside the land of eternal night. According to Throckmorton, it looked like a "great fang" forming a partial rampart against the encroaching dark side Ice Sheath.

To reach it, Throckmorton steered his flyer between the looming walls of a deep canyon which opened out until it ended at the foot of the mountain. Cold winds from the snow-clad peak high overhead whistled past his flyer, making control difficult. The desolate scene was lit only by the twinkling stars and, low over the mountain's shoulder, the brilliant beacon of Venus and twin lights of Earth and Luna.

Throckmorton guided his flyer up past enormous icicles hanging from the sheer wall of the mountain's lower canyonside face.

Some appeared more than a dozen feet in diameter midway between their roots, high overhead, and their tips, lost in darkness far below. Apparently, there had once been a great waterfall here, now frozen solid.

Eager to more easily observe the splendor of the frozen fall, Throckmorton ordered the crew to light the electric lamp atop the flyer's pilothouse. The lamp drew on a stored charge and focused its light by means of a concave mirror and one of the largest lenses made up to that time. It produced a great deal of heat while operating, so Throckmorton knew he would have to content himself with only a few moments of observation.

The rainbow patterns and diamond-like sparkles of the mighty icefall took Throckmorton's breath away. Then the flyer was shoved sharply to port by a fierce cold gust, so the beam of light fell on the bare face of the mountain itself. The blackness of the rock seemed to drink the light, so for a moment Throckmorton thought it had gone out. What happened next is recorded in Throckmorton's log:

I turned to shout to Sidebotham (the sailor whose job it was to operate the lamp) to turn the lamp back toward the ice. Then I realized it was still functioning and saw from the corner of my eye a straight line in the rock. I realized suddenly that the mountain (at least where I could see it) comprised what seemed to be flat plates of black stone arrayed like bricks, as though the mountain were the work of a giant mason.

I cried out and made to move the flyer closer to see more clearly. Then from above, I heard a terrible crash and a cry of pain. The light was extinguished, and my eyes, unaccustomed now to the pervasive gloom, were as though blind.

I feared the flyer might strike the mountain, so I made to halt our forward motion. Amidst the shouting behind me I heard the cry "fire!" and I realized then that the roof above me was ablaze. When I observed that the flames allowed me to see my way clear of the rocks and hanging icicles, I ordered them to let the fire burn. Then, when we were free of the buffeting winds of the mountain, I had them doused.

The hot lamp filament and the cold winds from the top of the mountain had set up too great a temperature differential in the lens used to focus the lamp's light. It had exploded, mortally wounding the sailor Sidebotham, destroying the filament, and setting fire to the flyer. Throckmorton would never again venture into the land of darkness.

What Throckmorton saw just before his lamp was destroyed remains a mystery. Mt. Edison lies some 2000 miles beyond Princess Christiana Station (it is more than two-thirds of the way to the south pole), so to date no new expeditions have travelled there. However, the great exploring clubs, universities, and governments of the spacefaring empires have taken an increasing interest in the "apparent artificial nature" of Mt. Edison, so it is only a matter of time before an expedition is mounted to explore it.

Mt. Edison is included in this discussion of the nodding of Mercury because some calculations indicate that rare periodic nods cause the Sun to rise at the narrow sunward end of the canyon leading to the great mountain.

Dr. Jacques Le Durieux in 1887 con-

structed an analytical engine which he claims demonstrates that such alignments occur only about once every three centuries, and that one may be expected in mid-1890.

When such alignments occur, he claims, the peak of the mountain is lit "as by a giant spotlight." While the validity of Le Durieux's conclusions is disputed, this has not stopped some from seizing on them as further proof of Mt. Edison's "constructed" nature. They contend that the unusual arrangement of the local landforms could not have occurred merely by chance. Le Durieux is the leading proponent of the exploration of Mt. Edison, and has for the past two years been touring Europe, presenting magic lantern shows and amusing crowds with his flamboyant manner of dress and half-crazed speaking style.

OTHER PRODUCTS

Certain plants on Mercury appear to have a growth cycle tied to the nods. Apparently they can sense the slight change in the angle of the Sun's light as the planet rocks back and forth, and they use this to determine when to expel spores or shed leaves and fronds. None have as yet been determined to be of commercial value. However, by no means have all such plants been discovered, let alone catalogued or tested for practical benefit when a nod triggers certain secretions or changes in coloration which last only a short time thereafter. Such products would be rare luxuries, indeed, and would make heavier the purse of any explorer lucky enough to discover them.

In the Lead and Tin zones, liquid metal may slosh just as water does in the Twilight Zone. Any future expeditions using vehicles like Wisniewski's Tin Juggernaut will have to consider this and attempt to avoid landforms which might focus a nod surge of molten lead or tin. However, the likelihood of a nod occurring which would endanger the crew of such a craft is quite small when reckoned alongside the many other dangers such an expedition would face.

FUTURE IMPORTANCE

Though smaller than any cisasteroidal world save Luna, Mercury's many unique aspects make it ripe for profitable endeavors. Dark, frigid Kelvin's Land hints at the exotic wonders which

can be expected among the giant worlds of the transasteroidal Solar System, so far from the warming rays of the Sun. The hellish Lead Zone is a natural smelter, rich in resources which will fuel the continued progress of science and industry in the coming 20th century. Admittedly, both places are located out of reach of the limitations of our technology, but experience in the past two decades of etheric space voyaging has made it abundantly clear that such limitations are ephemeral. In the coming decades, we will conquer all parts of Mercury, just as we will conquer all parts of Sol's domain. The spacefaring empires of Earth will come to realize the importance of Mercury's abundant resources and will begin to jockey for preeminence there—just as they do now in Africa, and on Mars and Venus.

Le Durieux's Mad Journey

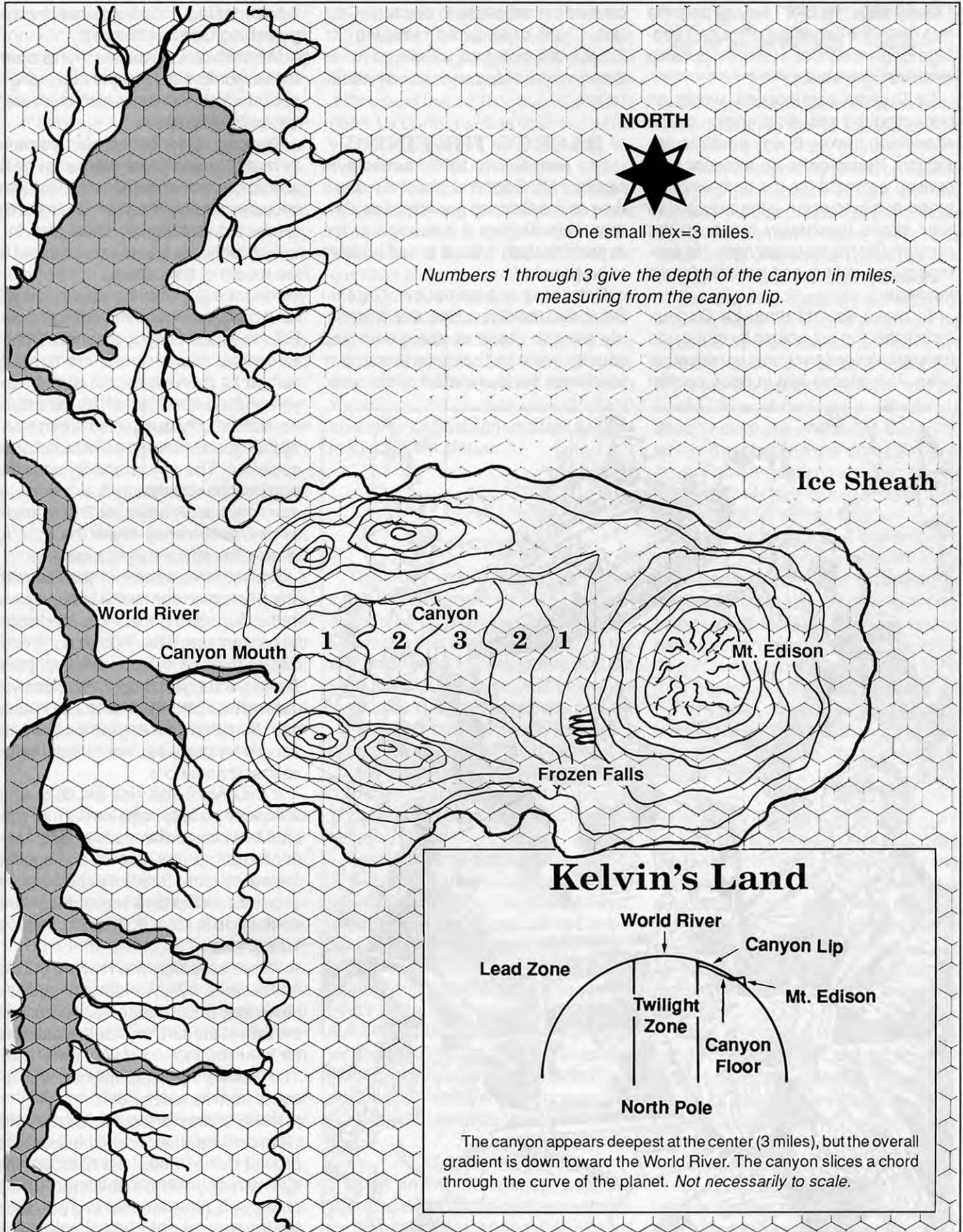
The eccentric Dr. Jacques Le Durieux, his assistant, and a one-ton analytical engine for predicting Mercury's nods have come to Princess Christiana Station. Le Durieux's intention is to travel along the Twilight Zone by specially equipped flyer to Mt. Edison, where he will confirm its artificiality and witness its illumination by what he terms "le grand nod." He enlists the expertise of the player characters in order to bring his quest to a successful conclusion.

Another NPC is the flyer's pilot, Welsh-born merchant marine Captain Benjamin David, hired for his flying skill and unmuddled mind by one of the expedition's backers. Captain David makes no secret of his opinion that Le Durieux is a charlatan. He complains that the analytical engine constitutes a concentrated mass which makes it difficult for him to keep the flyer in trim, and he is eager to find an excuse to dump it.

SABOTAGE

Unbeknownst to all aboard save one, the Mt. Edison expedition has become the center of a swirling maelstrom of international intrigue. The German government has determined that a failure at this juncture to reassert its 1878 claim to the territory containing Mt. Edison will mean a grievous loss of

Mercury



prestige. In response, the Germans put a spy aboard in the form of Le Durieux's recently acquired assistant (whom Le Durieux calls "my idiot"), whose purpose is to delay the expedition through sabotage long enough for a German gunship to arrive from Venus.

Le Durieux continuously works on perfecting the analytical engine as the expedition makes it way south to Mt. Edison. Periodically, he announces a revised estimate for the time when le grand nod is to occur—the anticipated time slides inexorably closer to the present. But the spy's attempts at sabotage cause delays and periodic forced landings.

To make up lost time, Le Durieux insists that the expedition fly during the frequent Mercurian storms or take other risks. This places him in open conflict

with Captain David, whose only concern is the ship. Meanwhile, the spy attempts to convince the PCs that Le Durieux caused the sabotage to discredit Captain David or to avoid reaching Mr. Edison (as doing so will disprove his theories about Mercury's former inhabitation).

RACE TO THE FINISH

The expedition's lightly armed flyer reaches Mt. Edison at about the same time as the German gunship. The German ship flashes a message at the expedition flyer, "Heave to and prepare to be boarded."

Retreat is not an option. Captain David and the player characters probably want to stand up for queen and country, while Le Durieux wants to stay to witness the illumination of the peak.

At this point, the German spy reveals himself by producing a revolver and holding the party at gunpoint to prevent it from taking action against the approaching German borders.

Meanwhile, Le Durieux counts down to the moment of le grand nod using a pocket watch. Finally, he calls out "zero!" but nothing happens.

The spy, seeking revenge, threatens to hoist the analytical engine on deck and throw it over the side. Le Durieux becomes nearly hysterical, and must be restrained, lest the spy shoot him.

Suddenly, the Sun bursts into view at the mouth of the canyon.

After the gloom of the dark side it will be flashbulb-bright. The snows of Mt. Edison is lit "as by a giant spotlight." Everyone experiences momentary vertigo as the vast depths of the canyon and the enormity of the mountain, heretofore only suggested when seen by the light of stars and planets, become apparent. The spy, standing near the edge of the expedition flyer's deck, is most profoundly affected. The moment of distraction may allow the PCs to disarm the spy, if they act quickly.

From the viewpoint of the German ship, the expedition flyer is suddenly lost in the Sun, giving it a short-lived combat advantage. If the PCs do not immediately think of it themselves, Captain David will suggest dropping the analytical engine on the Germans. Le Durieux satisfied that the engine has at last served its purpose, will remain much calmer than before.

If the engine hits (roll a 4, 5, or 6), it will cause an automatic loss of trim critical hit similar to that caused by a Martian lob gun, plus whatever damage the impact causes. Suddenly relieving the expedition ship of a ton of mass will destabilize it; roll a 4, 5, or 6 to avoid a loss of trim.

The referee may wish to help out the characters by providing a sudden downdraft (the sudden appearance of the Sun at the canyon mouth makes the air near the mountain very unsettled). The German gunship might never recover from its loss of trim.

If the characters fail to destroy the German ship, they are either boarded or shot down. If they are boarded, the German spy will be collected (if the characters have left him in a condition worthy of collection). Characters who



resist are treated roughly, if not savagely, by the German boarders, and characters who shoot are shot at. Survivors are stranded on the canyon bottom with (they will be told), "just enough lantern fuel and food to reach the World River—after that you may find your own way out of German territory!"

If they are stranded, the characters may be able to hitch a ride on an icicle. The ferocity of the Mercurian Sun rapidly melts Mt. Edison's snows, creating torrents of water, which converge at the frozen falls. The icicles seen by Throckmorton break loose and crash amid an ear-bursting din to the canyon floor, then are borne by the water until they form a jam in the narrowing canyon. A temporary lake backs up behind the jam—when it breaks, water and giant icicle fragments rush all the way to the World River. The characters then have an adventure-packed 2000-mile trek back to Princess Christiana Station ahead of them.

However, it is probable they may be rescued before they can travel very far along the World River. The German Empire's assertion of its claims on Mercury will be useless if it remains a secret, and when the British Empire learns of it, it immediately sends a heavily armed ether flyer to counter the German move. The characters are doubtless recovered by it and then have a new opportunity to engage in aerial combat—this time with weapons more equal to those of their opponent.

FACE OF THE PAST

The illumination of Mt. Edison persists for about an hour, after which time the Sun sinks away, putting the mighty mountain back into the realm of darkness for three centuries. This is sufficient time to completely denude it of snow. Using a field glass, Le Durieux (either on the canyon floor with the other characters, bruised and battered, or aloft in the expedition flyer, with the smoking wreckage of the German ship far below) determines that the brickwork pattern viewed by Throckmorton is confined to only a few small areas and is largely illusory. It is his opinion—confirmed by PCs of scientific bent, once they get a chance at the field glass—that the pattern is merely a product of the crystallization of cooling basalt. Terrestrial examples include the hexagonal col-

umns making up Devil's Tower, Wyoming Territory, or the Hogar Mountains of the Sahara Desert. Le Durieux is dejected and depressed.

However, just before the Sun drops from view enough snow melts to unveil what appears to be a carved human face a thousand feet high on the mountain's peak. Le Durieux seizes upon this as his vindication; further, he states that Mt. Edison, while not artificial, was at least taken advantage of by some lost Mercurian civilization to create this unique monument. But Captain David insists the face is at best ill defined, and the question of the face remains open.

Le Durieux plans to return to Mt. Edison with a powerful source of artificial illumination in order to light the face and prove its artificiality. He invites the PCs along for his second Mt. Edison Expedition and plans to return to Earth to raise funds through more lectures and magic lantern shows.

Supply Ship Rescue

The twice-yearly supply flyer from Earth is late. A month goes by, then an exhausted traveller reaches Princess Christiana Station. He claims to be the single survivor of a party of five sent out from the crashed flyer. Just before he succumbs to a giant centipede bite, he will describe how the supply flyer, after being damaged in the ether wake of an uncharted passing comet, crashed in the nod surge lowlands around Throckmorton Lake, 160 miles from the station.

A party is immediately assembled to recover survivors and supplies from the wreck. Calculations, doubtless flawed, indicate that a nod surge will sweep the Throckmorton Lake lowlands in about three weeks. The party must race against time, travelling by three small boats to the area and collecting what survivors and supplies it can. No flyers will be available, as all are out on exploratory forays along the World River and into the Forbidding Desert, and are not expected back for weeks.

CRASH SITE

Upon arrival at the crash site, the characters will have to decide how to put as many supplies as possible aboard

their three small boats, while at the same time recovering the 15 injured and 12 able-bodied survivors. Leaving behind survivors intentionally would be neither sporting nor properly British. But the supplies include medicinal tonics, nutritional supplements, spare parts, and other items vital to the continued survival of Princess Christiana Station.

The nod may catch the adventurers running out of time, and they may be forced to ride out the surge. The heavily laden boats will at best make five miles per day against the current of the World River; at that rate it will take six days to clear the nod surge lowlands, which is probably more time than they have. Parties marching with supplies on their backs and the injured and supplies in litters will take even longer.

To ride out the surge, the characters can bury the supplies or build rafts anchored to deep-rooted trees by ropes fashioned from some clinging native vines (which the PCs will have had to hack through to reach the crash site). The PCs and crash survivors can hoist their boats high into the trees to avoid being thrown against things while the surge builds, then anchor them with vine-ropes to avoid being thrown willy-nilly by the flood.

JOURNEY HOME

Once the surge has subsided (about five to seven hours) the rescue party and ambulatory survivors can retrieve what supplies they can, all the while dodging vicious carrion-eaters and frenzied, feeding larvae. They can then set out for Princess Christiana Station, returning to the crash site for more supplies if need be.

A few NPCs may insist on walking rather than riding out the surge. They cannot possibly survive, and their remains or possibly a distinctive bit of clothing or equipment will be found stuck high in a tree. ☐

*For more information about Mercury, refer to **Space: 1889**, **Conklin's Atlas**, and **Tales From the Ether**.*

Special Horror Issue

CHALLENGE 46

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MEGATRAVELLER

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Charles E. Gannon

TWILIGHT: 2000

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Mud Men**

Loren K. Wiseman

SHADOWRUN

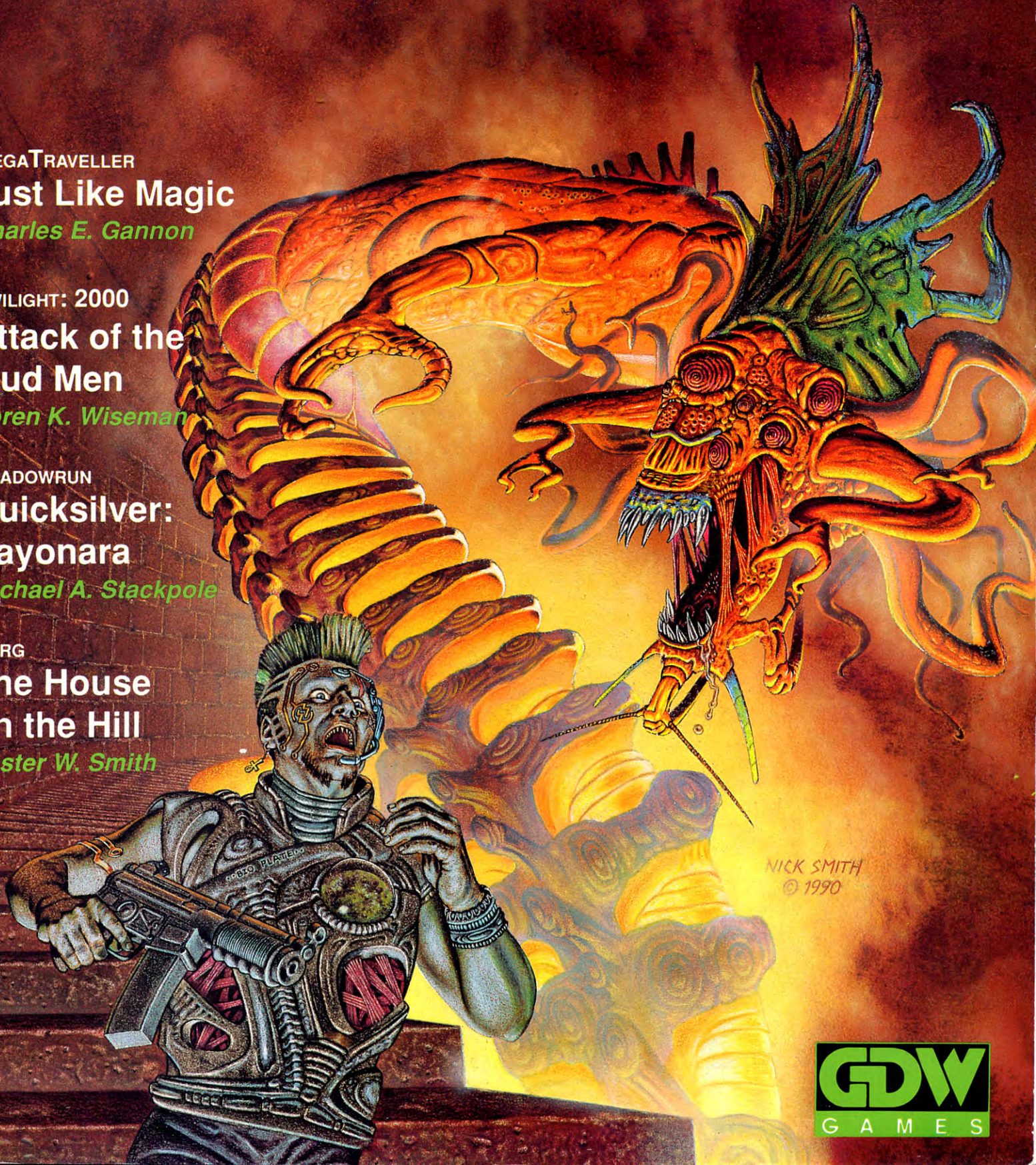
**Quicksilver:
Sayonara**

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TORG

**The House
on the Hill**

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The Tree of Souls

Eric W.
Haddock

A group of Belgians is planning to ransack the ancient Martian temple of Torisna and loot it of the riches rumored to be stored there. A Martian priest, Linwaik, asks the PCs to rid the temple of the Belgians and prevent any treasures from being taken. The temple is guarded by a terrible curse, Linwaik says, and the Belgians must be stopped before they die like other greedy temple robbers before them.

When the characters arrive at Torisnak, they find that the Belgians have been taken captive by the same Martian mercenary force they hired to do their temple-robbing dirty work. The PCs and Linwaik are also taken captive and ordered to empty the temple's vault—the mercenaries fear that whoever disturbs the vault will die of the curse.

Before play begins, one of the players whose character is a scientist or inventor should read the information contained in the Background section regarding Iyairis and his fame.

BACKGROUND

To aid the referee, some background information is detailed here:

Torisna: Torisna is an ancient Martian religion whose seat is at Torisnak (the main temple of Torisna). The church of Toris, originally a religion based on the worship of

a god of mountain fastnesses and their dangers and benefits, was reformed years ago by one of its high priests, Marlyr, who reshaped it into a quasimilitaristic force bent on acquiring power and wealth through strong-arm tactics. Marlyr and the corrupt priests who followed him all died from an unknown wasting disease.

Those priests who did not wholeheartedly follow Marlyr's self-serving doctrinal reforms decided to return to worshipping their god, Toris. They reformed their church a second time with honest virtues as its founding principles so that the corruption which fostered Marlyr would not rise in the church again.

Torisnak: This temple of Torisna was constructed thousands of years ago on a high mountain north of Copratia. Heavy fogs and mists hang about the temple year round, attracting bilairs, rarely seen predatory flyers. Nearly all of the temple was carved out of the mountain. The only structure of note is the 50'-high wall which surrounds the central courtyard.

The temple has enough staterooms and facilities to house 28 priests. Near the temple is a small farm used to grow all the temple's food. In addition to the staterooms and farm, Torisnak has an enclosed worshipping and meditation area, and a vault to store collections gained thousands of years ago. A small docking area houses the church's screw galley.

Ageless Paper: Ageless paper was created in the Seldon Empire to resist decay. Material on scrolls made of this paper will never fade, nor will the paper disintegrate.

Iyrais: Iyrais was one of the most famous Martian shipbuilders of the Seldon Empire. His designs are much sought after by archaeologists as such plans offer clues as to how advanced the ancient Martian empire really was. Iyrais' plans represent the pinnacle of Martian technological advancement and are priceless treasures.

PROPOSAL

Linwaik, a priest of Torisna, will contact the PCs, who should ideally be somewhere near the Belgian Coprates when they are approached (to minimize overland trek time) but not in Melas or Copratia (unless little or no wilderness travel time is desired). Ophir, New Amsterdam, Nectar, Protei, Aurora, Erythria, and Baetis are possible sites for the meeting.

Arranging the Meeting: Linwaik can contact the player characters in any number of ways. An ideal place for him to look for help is in the British military, for it has the necessary armament and is known to be generally opposed to the Belgians. If one of the player characters is a military officer, the priest could contact him. If none of the characters have any connection with the military, the priest could approach a scientist or inventor who is known to have an interest in Martian religion, history, archaeology or technology. If the player characters don't have a scientist or officer in the party, perhaps the characters will overhear the priest complaining about how he cannot find anyone willing to assist his church.

A Plea for Help: Linwaik addresses the PCs:

The church of Torisna is in trouble, and I, Linwaik, have been sent to get help. The Belgians are going to attack our temple and throw us all out. We've had some trouble with the Belgians before. Often they've tried to buy our temple from us or take it from us by claiming the mountain it's built on as their territory. But now they've grown tired of our resistance and are going to assault us with their weapons and kill us all. They've boasted about it! We don't know when they plan to attack, but it will be soon. There's nothing we can do against their rifles and airships. We have a ship of our own, but it's a screw galley and is no match for their airship. We only have one thing that could help us, and that is the curse of the Tree of Souls.

The Legend Told: If the PCs ask why he is seeking help from humans, rather than Martians, or what the curse of the Tree of Souls is, Linwaik will relate the legend of the Tree of Souls.

Centuries ago, when our culture was at its highest, a terrible event forever changed the nature of Torisnak. The great temple of Torisnak had been built on a mountain within the range of mountains north of Copratia. At first, the temple was typical of others that devoted themselves to the god Toris. But one of the high priests of that temple, Marilyr, became corrupt.

He started to covet the donations given to



the temple by the villages near the mountain. Soon he asked the villages to increase

Linwaik (Experienced NPC)



Born on the mountain Torisnak is built on, Linwaik seemed destined to become a priest of Torisna. Offered to the temple because he was an orphan, the Hill Martian youth was ushered into the church at one year of age. From the first time he saw the Tree of Souls, he was fascinated by the legend, mystery, and danger inherent in the tree.

Because of his great charisma, Linwaik rose quickly through the ranks of the church and at one time was a nominee to become high priest. Unfortunately, his rambunctious nature prevented him from settling down enough to take on the administrative responsibilities of the office. Instead, Linwaik's wanderlust spurred him to travel across Mars to see if he could find any other trees like the one at Torisnak.

After years of searching, he concluded that the Tree of Souls must be unique and returned to Torisnak. What he found when he returned was a temple nearly under siege by Belgians. The Belgians had tried political force and bribery to oust the priests from Torisnak, but the priests had thus far resisted their efforts. Nonetheless, the priests knew the humans would eventually use force of arms and brutally assault the temple, as they had no fear of the legend of the Tree of Souls (as most Martians do).

Since Linwaik's devotion is so high, he will not allow the player characters to remove anything from the vault, for any reason. If they do, he will make every attempt to destroy whatever the characters remove.

Linwaik's native tongue is Thaumasian.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 1	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 3 (bashing weapon)
Agil: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 2 (throwing net)
End: 6	Wilderness Travel 6 (mountaineering), Fieldcraft 2, Swimming 3
Int: 4	Observation 4, Science 3 (geology)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Bargaining 4, Linguistics 5 (English, French, Memnite, Koline, Alaanawaak)
Soc: 3	Leadership 3, Medicine 1

Motives: Adventuresome, Honest, Loyal.

Appearance: Although he is quite old, Linwaik's extraordinary endurance has enabled him to weather his global trips quite well. Rarely does any work fatigue him, and his health has always been near perfect despite the fact that age has ebbed most of the strength from his limbs. He carries a gnarled walking stick which has served him well in his travels (and can serve as a club in a pinch).

Perhaps the most striking feature of Linwaik is his incredible willpower. He has a fierce loyalty to his church, and this manifests in his eyes and expression whenever he talks about his church or the Tree of Souls.

their donations. As time went on, he insisted the donations become larger and larger. In addition to gold, objects of great value were given (sometimes unwillingly), including a set of scrolls drawn by lyrairis, the great airship builder.

Eventually, the villages could give no more. Marlyr, not believing the villages' claims of poverty, had the airship in the lyrairisian scrolls built.

It was a fantastic warship, and Marlyr wanted to use it to raid the villages that resisted him and to extend the range of his greed to cities as far away as Protei and Po-Poo-Hanna-Kitai.

The day the ship was completed, a terrible sickness fell on the temple. Nearly all the priests were stricken with pain and sores. Marlyr was the most sick, but he insisted on planning a raid using the warship he had built. But on the day he was supposed to leave on the raid, he fell to the ground and died.

On the spot in the central square where Marlyr fell, a tree began to grow. As it matured, it grew to become a tall twisted mass of slick, black branches. All around the trunk were knots which bore the likeness of Marlyr and his loyal priests (those who had also fallen ill and eventually died). Everyone who died of the sickness appeared on the tree, which we named the Tree of Souls.

The remaining priests of Toris reformed the church, and throughout the centuries have honored the power that killed the greedy and malicious Marlyr and his priests. Our church at Torisnak protects the wealth stored in the mountain temple, for we believe that anyone who has the greed to try to remove anything from the vaults which have remained sealed for centuries will die a horrible death from the curse of the Tree of Souls. And we do not want to see anyone, even the Belgians, die that way.

lyrairis' Ship: If asked, Linwaik will explain that the ship was taken apart and stored in the temple's main vault. If questioned further, he will say that all of the parts of the ship should still be intact and that the ship could be reconstructed and restored to its original condition.

ACCEPTANCE

If the player characters agree to help the church of Torisna, Linwaik will promise to allow them access to the vault for research purposes if they, in turn, agree not to take anything from it.

Linwaik will offer the characters the use of the church's screw galley (similar to the Small Bird class), which is unarmed. If the characters have a ship of their own and want to use it instead, Linwaik will ride with them, leaving the screw galley in the city

where he met the characters. He will ask if his acolytes can travel with him.

JOURNEY

Torisnak is located about 400 miles north of Copratia. If the characters take the church's screw galley, the trip will take about two days after the group reaches Copratia (or Melas). The referee should calculate the travel time to Copratia based on the city from which he begins the adventure (the ship's best speed is 200 miles a day).

Until the character's ship reaches the mountain Torisnak is built on, there will only be the standard hazards of air travel as described in the **Space: 1889** rule book (page 119). The referee may wish to run a diversionary encounter if a longer playing time for this scenario is desired.

ARRIVAL

The characters see the mountain Torisnak is built on from many miles away. But thick fog and clouds prevent a clear picture.

As the characters close with the mountain, examining it with binoculars will reveal the following:

The temple hugs the top of a tall, steep mountain. Much of the temple seems to have been carved out of the mountain, with little outside construction visible through the clinging vapors which oddly seem to persist in this area of Mars.

The only temple structure which is clearly visible is a large wall, which probably surrounds an open air courtyard of some sort. Further down the mountain, an airship flying the flag of Belgium can be seen, anchored to docks set into the mountain.

From a distance, it's difficult to determine whether any people remain on board the Belgian airship. To see if anyone is on board is a Formidable Observation task. If successful, the character will conclude that the ship appears to be empty.

As the characters' vessel closes on the temple, Linwaik will comment that no one is at the watch towers, nor is there any of the usual activity along the courtyard wall. This worries him. If the characters listen, they will not hear any gunfire or sounds of an attack (which they would in all likelihood be able to hear from this distance, if a firefight were occurring).

DOCKING

Three mooring spaces are set into the mountain. The Belgian ship is docked in the middle one. Four people are needed to dock the ship (at least two on the ship and two on the dock). It is possible to steer the ship close enough to a dock for some player characters to jump off and tie up the ship. As the ship docks, there will be no interference from the temple. No one is on board the Belgian ship.

Falling: The temple is surrounded by mist which makes its every surface wet and slick. Any characters participating in combat or making other sudden moves along the dock risk slipping. To avoid slipping is a Moderate Agility task. If a character slips off the docks, he will fall about 10 feet to the mountain below the docks, then slide a few feet, coming to rest 15 feet below the docks. The fall will not seriously injure a healthy character, but he will have to make his way back up. The other characters can lower ropes to the stranded character, but none are available (the ship's mooring lines are being used to hold the ship to the dock). Extra rope can be found if a character succeeds in a quick roll against his Intellect (he remembers seeing where some is stored).

If no rope is available, the character who fell can climb back up the mountain face (a Moderate Wilderness Travel (mountaineering) task or a Difficult Agility task). Failure means the character has slipped—have him make a quick roll against Agility. Failure here indicates that the character falls back to where he started climbing, taking one wound in the process.

SURPRISE PARTY

Waiting for the characters in the room beyond the docking courtyard is a group of six Hill Martians, each hiding behind stone chests. These Martians will surprise the PCs unless the characters have been taking sufficient precautions. The chests serve as hard cover (+3 to missile saving throws while behind them). When the characters enter the room, the Martians will attempt to take them prisoner. Two of the Martians speak choppy English. They are all armed with bolt-action rifles.

To capture the player characters without wounding them, the Martians will throw three large nets which are 10 feet in diameter. To entangle the characters is a Moderate Throwing task. To dodge the net requires a successful Moderate Observation task at -1 to Observation skill level (to notice in time to dodge) combined with a dodge action (quick roll against Agility). Success at both rolls means the character has thrown himself out of the way of the net. To break free of the net once it entangles a character requires success at an Impossible Strength task. Characters who are entangled can still try to fire (but not melee). It will take them 1D6 turns after making a successful quick roll against their Agility to ready a pistol (if they don't have one drawn); no rifles may be drawn now.

They will then be at -1 to their skill level for purposes of firing, in addition to other modifiers. The referee may require entangled characters who are firing make rolls to maintain balance, avoid further penalties to hit, etc. as the Martians holding the nets will

spend actions yanking on the nets to reduce the characters' combat effectiveness. If circumstances dictate that a firing character is jerked off his feet while entangled and firing, he may fire no longer—he is too off-balance, and his weapon is too snarled in rope.

If the player characters choose to resist and shoot at the Martians, the resulting gunfire will attract seven Martians standing by in the courtyard at the top of the stairs, one of whom speaks English.

They will concentrate their fire first on the characters who are wearing military uniforms; failing that, they will base their target selection on who has the largest gun.

For the plot to proceed apace, the PCs need to be taken prisoner, but the conclusion should not be a forgone one. The mercenaries have numbers on their side and are ruthless. They will not hesitate to sneak up on noncombatants and use them as hostages to force others in a firefight to throw down their weapons. They are also not above threatening to shoot entangled characters unless fighting ones put down their weapons. This is a good place in the scenario to allow PCs to behave heroically, giving up the fight to save their friends or an NPC. The mercenaries will not fall for any obvious ploys.

GUESTS OF THE TEMPLE

Once the player characters are captured, they will be taken to one of the rooms overlooking the central courtyard. If there are too many (more than eight) characters to fit into one room, they will be split up at random and placed in adjacent rooms. Medical attention will not be provided by any of the mercenaries, but they will not interfere with characters who treat others or themselves. The characters will be held until morning.

Courtyard: As the characters are taken to the staterooms, they pass through the courtyard. The first thing they will notice when they enter the courtyard is the Tree of Souls. It is a 100-foot-tall, slick, black tree which does not seem to have any bark. As the characters look more closely at the tree, they will notice the many large knots scattered over its oily-looking surface. The tree's branches are thin and grotesquely twisted. Toward the top of the tree, the branches look distinctly like Martian arms and forearms. The mist about the temple coats the tree with moisture, making it as wet as the mountainside below the docks. No wind stirs the mist inside the courtyard, so the tree stands absolutely still. The mist carries with it the hint of a sickeningly sweet scent—old incense or, perhaps, disease and decay.

If the characters get close enough to the tree to examine it in detail, they will notice that each of the knots is in fact an imprint of a face which looks as if it were pressing itself outward from inside the tree. Each face is

twisted in agony, captured as if in the midst of a scream or groan.

The characters' footsteps echo loudly in the courtyard as they pass near or under the tree. In the southwest corner of the courtyard is a large structure which Linwaik will say leads to

the temple vault. Four mercenary guards are posted there, two on each side of the door.

Staterooms: The six-inch-thick doors are made of a specially fired ceramic that is quite strong. They are barred with two iron rods in addition to being secured by a lever-

Martian Mercenaries (Experienced NPCs)

These mercenaries were hired to aid the Belgians in taking over the temple. When they got to it they decided to take the temple, and the riches inside, for themselves. The 20 mercenaries are completely ruthless and did not hesitate to kill the priests. Only some of the mercenaries believe in the legends concerning the Tree of Souls. However, when the bilairs attack, all are afraid enough to be persuaded to let their prisoners go free. The mercenaries' native language is Thaumasian.

<i>Attributes</i>	<i>Skills</i>
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 4, Close Combat 3 (edged weapons)
Agil: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 2 (throwing net)
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 5 (mountaineering), Fieldcraft 4, Tracking 4, Swimming 2
Int: 3	Observation 3
Chr: 1	Linguistics 2 (English or French, Memnite)
Soc: 2	Riding 2 (gashant), Medicine 2

Motivation: Greed.

Appearance: The mercenaries are practically dressed to allow for unrestricted movement (nothing too close-fitting or binding). They wear no decoration on any of their clothes. The only unique items of clothing they possess are their boots (whose special qualities are not visible to casual observation). These boots have special soles designed to allow the mercenaries to walk on the slick surfaces of the temple without fear of slipping. The mercenaries are armed with knives and bolt-action rifles (part of their pay for the job from the Belgians).

Bilairs

Bilairs are flying predatory creatures which have never been seen before by any human. They seem to be evolutionary remnants of a wetter Martian age. Their seven-foot-long bodies are coal black, as are their eyes and talons, while their wingspan is only about two feet. A bilair's primary mode of attack is to bite its prey and hold it down while rending the flesh from the bones with its talons. A bilair's wings are used to supplement the lift generated by its lifting gland, which is slightly undersized. The wings produce a low, humming noise similar to the hummingbird of Earth. However, the humming is faint—the wings are much larger and have no need to flap quite as fast since they are only necessary to supplement the bilair's basic lift.



Bilairs require a great deal of moisture compared to other Martian animals, so they never fly beyond the mist-shrouded mountains north of Copratia. They usually travel in family groups of three to 18, but under certain peculiar circumstances swarm in groups of 200 to 1200 (such as when attracted by the Tree of Souls). During a massive swarm of 500 or more, the humming and screeches can be deafening.

<i># App.</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Move</i>	<i>Wnds</i>	<i>Save</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Weapons</i>
3-18 (200-1200)	2x3	F50	6	1	600	Fangs (2, 2, 0, 1) Talons (3, 2, 1, 2)

type latch. If the characters want to break the doors down, it will require a total Strength of 8 and a successful Impossible Strength task. Unfortunately, the door is only three feet wide, so only two characters can put their shoulders to the door at once.

Small, three-inch-diameter holes are cut at eye level into all of the doors. The windows are rectangular, measuring only three inches high and four feet wide. The rooms the characters and Linwaik are placed in have been cleared of all objects. Other rooms contain only a bed, table, chair, and tapestry depicting the Tree of Souls (a dif-

ferent view in each room). The beds are too fragile to make useful battering rams.

Company: In addition to their party, the PCs will discover that Belgian prisoners are being held as well. The Belgian prisoners' voices will carry from the opposite end of the hall facing the courtyard. If any of the characters speak French, they may overhear enough conversation and, after one or two successful Linguistics rolls, deduce the following:

- All the priests who occupied the temple were killed by the Belgians and the Martian mercenary force.
- After the priests were killed, the merce-

naries betrayed the Belgians, killing half of them (nine are left).

- These mercenaries plan to raid the temple for themselves and use the monies to fight the humans on Mars.

- Some of the Martians believe in the curse of the Tree of Souls.

- The Belgians do not have a plan of escape.

MORNING

The characters will be rudely awakened when five Martian mercenaries, each armed with rifles, enter the room and drag out two of the strongest looking characters. Those two characters will be taken to the courtyard, given axes, and instructed in broken English to chop down the Tree of Souls. If no one has previously noticed the disturbing knots on the tree, they will see them now.

When the characters try to chop down the tree, their efforts will have no effect on the surface of the tree—as if they were chopping into iron or rock. The mercenaries will not seem deterred by this and will make the characters continue their efforts. This is tiring and bone-jarring work (not to mention being irritatingly and eerily futile), but the mercenaries will force the characters to continue until they are obviously exhausted.

The entire spectacle can be observed by the remaining PCs in their room through its narrow window.

MIDDAY

By the time the two PCs are finally allowed to cease hacking at the Tree, it will be midday. Just as they stop, they will hear a terrible moaning sound throughout the temple, creaking up almost through its foundation and the courtyard's flagstones. The Martian mercenaries look slightly concerned (and a couple are obviously afraid), but as a group, they will remain calm.

Linwaik (in the room with the characters) will turn white at the noise, and with some agitation, he will relate the following.

The tree is mourning for those who have tried to harm it. Its wail will call the bilairs down to the temple from the surrounding mountains. The bilairs serve the tree. No one knows how, but they know to kill anyone who's not a priest. I—I don't think you humans are in danger.

The bilairs are merciless and, according to legend, impossible to kill.

They'll come in a huge swarm. Legends tell of a time in ancient days when the bilairs appeared just as the Sun was rising. The sound of their wings could be heard long before they were seen. The hum was so loud that the priests of the temple could not hear each other speak.

When they appeared, there were hundreds of thousands of them—so many that

Marllyr Reborn (Elite NPC)



From the beginning of his career in the old church of Toris, Marllyr planned to rule. Every move he made was calculated to bring him the power he craved. Eventually, through several deals and "arrangements," both aboveboard and underhanded, he acquired the position of high priest.

Using the position, he changed church doctrine and managed to turn the church into a small quasimilitaristic force. With this force, he was able to compel more and more villages to donate to his church. At its height, Marllyr's reformed church had extended its influence to a 500-mile radius. One of the treasures his priest/troops "acquired" was a plan for a war-

ship designed by Iyairis. Seizing the opportunity, Marllyr built the ship, hoping to radically extend his influence to the point that it might rival a prince of Mars.

At about this time, Marllyr suddenly succumbed to a terrible sickness which also affected his immediate council of corrupted priests. Realizing that he might be dying, he rushed the construction of the warship. During that time he prepared for his death using magics that only high priests knew about. Using those mysteries in ways in which they were never originally intended, he ensured that his body would be preserved for ages to come. On the day he was supposed to depart with the ship on its maiden flight, Marllyr died while walking toward it. Marllyr's native language is Thaumasian.

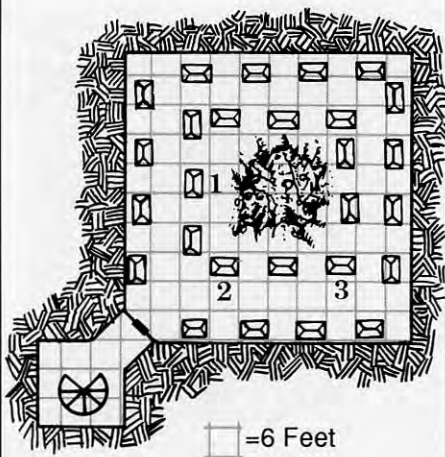
Attributes	Skills
Str: 1	Fisticuffs 1, Close Combat 5 (edged weapon)
Agil: 1	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 1 (throwing net)
End: 1	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping), Swimming 1
Int: 4	Observation 4, Science 4 (biology), Engineering 2 (naval architecture)
Chr: 6	Eloquence 6, Bargaining 6, Linguistics 4 (Memnite, Alaanawaak, Son-Gaaryani, Koline)
Soc: 5	Riding 4 (gashant), Pilot 6 (screw galley), Leadership 6

Motives: Greed, Ruthless, Arrogant.

Appearance: To look at Marllyr is to be sucked into his dark and sunken eyes, which glint feverishly and intensely. Even as a corpse, his eyes are obscenely alive with evil and ruthless ambition, for even after his death Marllyr has found a way to attempt to regain his hold over Torisnak.

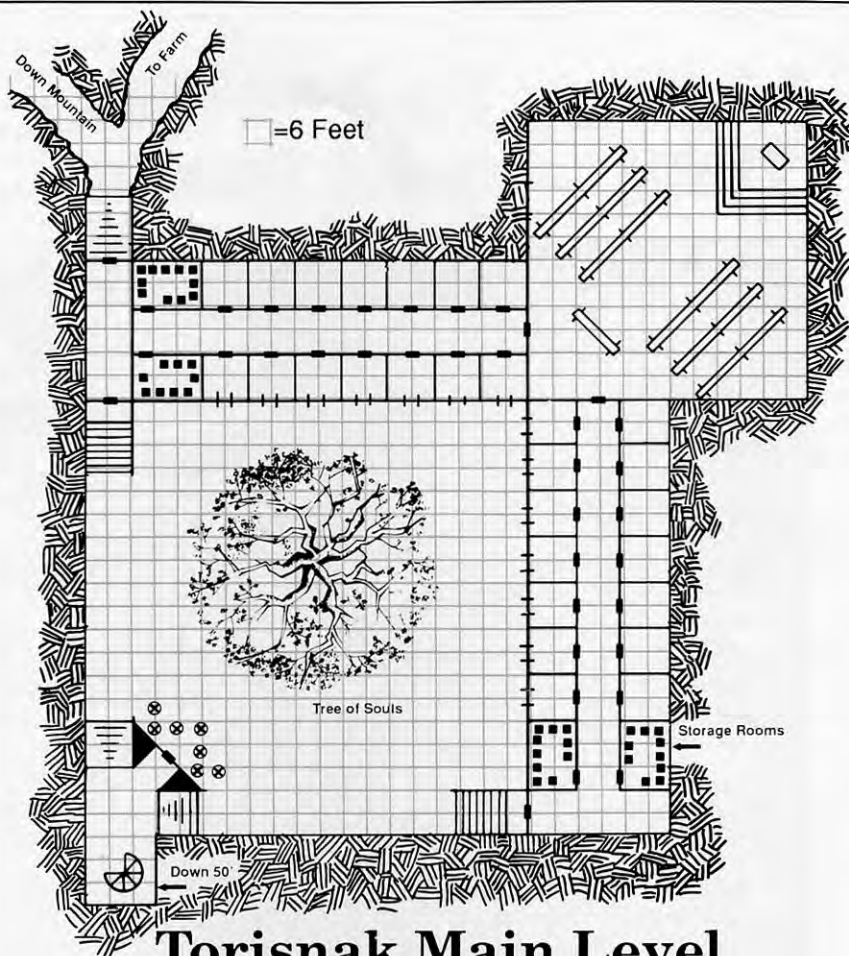
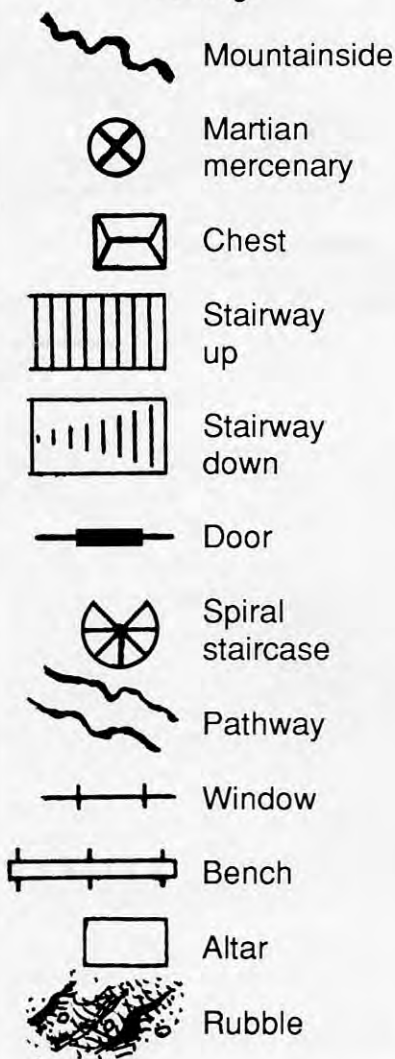
Although his body is little more than a skeleton with loose flesh hanging on it, Marllyr retains his powerful charismatic influence. Much of the damage of the sickness can be easily seen. Marllyr's twisted limbs, scarred skin, and malformed skull serve as visible and constant reminders of the cause of his death.

Marllyr is dressed in his burial robes, which have grayed and frayed with age. Carried at his side is a large, jewel-encrusted dagger in a red scabbard.

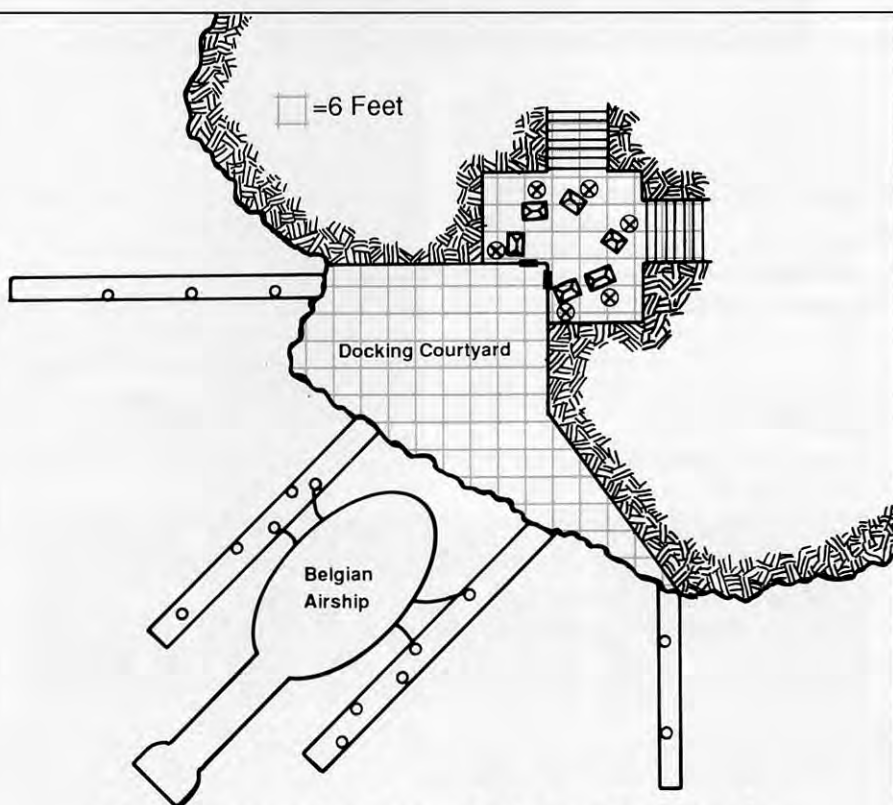


Torisnak Vault Level

Key



Torisnak Main Level



Torisnak Docking Level

they blotted out the Sun, casting a moving shadow over the entire mountain. They swarmed around the temple, their screeching and the hum of their wings producing a deafness which persisted for hours after they had finished their grisly task.

BILAIRES

Shortly after Linwaik stops talking, the characters will hear a low humming noise which is getting louder. The mercenaries' fear is much more visible when they hear the humming, although they do stay relatively calm and turn their eyes to the sky. One mercenary begins shaking, starting with his hands, then arms, then his whole body. Finally, as the humming slowly, but steadily, increases, he breaks and runs for a courtyard door, throwing it open and bolting inside. The PCs can hear his footsteps pounding in counterpoint to the humming, which has grown to a throbbing and seems to almost occupy the PCs' skulls.

In five minutes, the bilairs appear. At that point, all the Martians will panic. The ones in the courtyard with rifles begin shooting wildly until their ammo runs out or they are killed. Martians without rifles will run out of the courtyard and onto the docks, where they try to take refuge in the Belgians' ship, hoping the armor will protect them. One of the Martian mercenaries will let the Belgians free, knowing that only the Belgians can pilot their airship away from the temple.

During the attack, the characters in the courtyard will miraculously not be harmed. If they make their way back into the temple, opening doors other than the ones the panicked Martian has already left gaping will allow more bilairs into the temple, where they will attack the Martians inside. As one of the PCs fleeing the courtyard turns an interior corner, he will encounter the remains of the merc being worried by two bilairs, one of which will look up and almost through the PC, as if dismissing him as inconsequential, before returning to its meal.

AFTERMATH

It will take the bilairs about 10 minutes to kill all the Martian mercenaries.

Presumably, the characters will be using the attack to escape the mercenaries and free their friends. After the mercenaries have been killed, the bilairs will fly off, leaving the humans and Linwaik.

If the player characters want to leave the temple, Linwaik will remind them that the vault is now unguarded and can be opened for the research he promised the characters they could perform.

Belgians Return: The Belgians left the temple when freed by the mercenary, and as the bilairs fly away, the Belgian airship leaves the docks. But when the Belgians see that the bilairs have left, they will return, thinking the player characters have also been killed.

If the player characters notice their return from the courtyard, they will have 10 minutes to prepare.

The Belgians will dock hurriedly, tying only one line to the dock. They will then go to the courtyard and to the vault, thinking it unguarded. Because of their haste, only five of the Belgians will take their weapons with them. The Belgian force is composed of four Experienced and five Trained soldier stock NPCs armed with light revolvers and cutlasses.

If the player characters do not offer any resistance, the Belgians will open the vault themselves. If the player characters ambush the Belgians, the five with pistols will fight while the other Belgians run back to the ship to get their forgotten weapons (light revolvers and cutlasses).

If the Belgians defeat the characters, they will place them in an undamaged stateroom; the referee will have to improvise a "prison break" episode. If the Belgians badly fail a morale roll, they will retreat onto the airship (a Small Bird type), cast off, and leave. However, at least four must be alive for them to control the ship very well. If fewer than four are left, they may surrender to anyone who makes them the offer (especially military officers), or run down the mountain to the farm.

VAULT

The door to the vault, made of the same material as the stateroom doors, is not locked. However, it is a foot thick, six feet wide, heavy, slippery, and stuck! Opening it will take a combined Strength of 15. Luckily, the handle to the door is large, enabling four characters to work at once.

When the door opens, a loud cracking sound, like a sharp gun report, comes from the tree behind the characters, but nothing about the tree appears to have changed.

The walls of the antechamber beyond the vault door are lined with tapestries depicting previous high priests of Torisna. In the dim light, their slightly dusty countenances seem ghostly. Just inside and beside the doorway are five lanterns. Covered urns of oil sit next to them, along with slightly damp lighting materials (a PC's matches might work better). Along the floor are several urns containing incense sticks.

The stairway in the antechamber descends 50 feet.

LOWER LEVEL

The door at the bottom of the spiral staircase is like the door to the staterooms, but is not equipped with any kind of latch and will swing open easily. When the characters open the door, cold air will pour from the room beyond. The air inside is just above freezing. The mist which persists around (and within) Torisnak will thicken perceptibly as the door is opened.



Inside the vault, the characters see the chests. The center holds a pile of disintegrated wood, and amidst the pile are a few metal instruments which have survived the ages. Curled into a tube on top of the pile is a large scroll of ageless paper, held together with a brittle ribbon, which details the construction of Iyairis' ship.

The metal instruments are largely unassembled and are essentially without value unless reassembled using the ageless scroll as a guide. If the characters reassemble the ship, they will find that the instruments are navigational instruments for space travel (if they succeed at a Formidable Science task roll due to the weird configuration of the instruments). This is an astonishing discovery, as it had been previously thought that Martians did not have the technology to travel in space. (The instruments were actually a mystery to even Iyairis, as they are an artifact which was uncountably ancient when even he was alive. They are a remnant of the intelligent humanoid race which existed on Mars previous to the current Martian races. For more information on this race, see **Beastmen of Mars**.)

The chests sitting along the wall are full of Martian gold, minted in hundreds of places, the heads of long-dead princes adorning each coin. The chests around the wood pile are full of scrolls and texts, all made of ageless paper. Linwaik will point out three chests containing artifacts made of precious metals (on Mars any metal is precious). There are equal amounts of brass, copper, tin and even lead, along with gold and silver, plus a variety of gems.

The chest marked 1 on the map contains written histories of the Seldon Empire which will answer many unanswered questions historians have. Chest 2 contains maps showing locations of ancient water pumping stations, which are complete mysteries to human technology. Chest 3 contains several books detailing Martian religions across the globe.

All of the chests weigh 200 pounds without their contents. The chests with gold and artifacts are extremely heavy, weighing about 500 pounds.

UNINVITED

When the characters open chest 3, a faintly glowing mist will rise out of the chest. As they watch, it slowly takes the form of a Martian high priest of Torisna. Linwaik, making motions with his hands obviously intended to avert evil, will identify it as the likeness of the cursed Marlylry.

Marlyr will coalesce until he takes on a relatively solid form. At that time he will speak the following:

Thank you for freeing my body. It's been contained in this chest for centuries, waiting to be let out. Tell me what manner of creature you are.

After the PCs have explained who they are, Marlyr will identify himself and continue:

Now that my body is free, I must ask you for another favor so that it can be joined with my soul. I would ask that one of you surrender your body to me, so that I can use it to perform a ceremony to free myself from the Tree of Souls. It is a painless matter, and will last only an hour. I need a healthy body to perform the ceremony."

Actually, Marlyr needs any body that has a soul. (His doesn't at the moment—it's in the Tree. Or at least, he believes it's in the Tree.) If one of the characters decides to "lend" Marlyr his body, Marlyr will tell him to lie down. Marlyr will then attempt to kill the selected character by stabbing him through the heart with the dagger he carries at his side, but since Marlyr's body is so fragile, he will not be able to persist in the face of any physical resistance. If he is shot, the bullet will do no damage other than to knock him back—he can't be killed as he is dead already.

After being thwarted from killing one of the player characters, or if no one accepts his request for a loaner body, Marlyr will speak the following:

It is foolish not to submit to my demands. I command forces which could kill you all if I wanted. I'll take one of your bodies now by force!

At this point Marlyr will start to speak an incantation. Linwaik cannot identify it other than to say it's a ritual involving the dead. The incantation is short—only one sentence—and Marlyr will repeat it as many times as he can. If the characters want to prevent him from accomplishing whatever it is he is trying to do, they will have to do it before he completes the first sentence. They probably won't be able to succeed, as by the time they ask Linwaik what Marlyr is doing, he will have spoken the incantation at least once.

DARK CAVALRY

The incantation is a spell to animate the dead Martian mercenaries. After he speaks the first sentence of the incantation, the dead Martians will begin to move. The more times he repeats the incantation, the quicker the results will be. It will take 10 minutes for the bodies to become partially animated (they can crawl and grab at nearby characters) and 20 minutes for them to become totally animated. Until then, they will squirm

and moan loudly. If the characters pounce on Marlyr and destroy his body (hauling him out into the stairway, holding him down, and setting him on fire is one possibility), the powers he evoked in the incantation will still take effect, although his evil presence will have exited the scene. The characters may then have time to complete their inspection of the vault before fleeing or being attacked.

Science Deserves to Know: Since Linwaik will not allow anything to be taken from the vault, the characters will have to copy any of the scrolls they want to keep. Getting to the airship from the lower level of the vault will take a few minutes—how many depends on how burdened the characters are (with equipment or fallen companions). At least five minutes is recommended; add to this as is seen fit. Copying one scroll will take at least 30 minutes (for a poor copy in optimal time).

Dead Rise: If the characters get to the courtyard before the first 10 minutes have passed, they will notice that all of the Martians are squirming and moaning, even the ones that were horribly mutilated during the bilair attack. There isn't anything they can do to stop this (other than further mutilating the Martian bodies so they are unable to moan or squirm—a messy and squeamish business). After 10 minutes (but before 20), the zombies will actively fight back against anyone trying to "lay them to rest," and will also try to grab onto PCs to pull themselves upright. The Martian zombies will not attack the PCs.

Once the 20 minutes have passed, the reborn Martians will march down to the lower level of the vault as if drawn by an irresistible force. As they walk, what is left of their faces bear a lonely, lost look. Their eyes are dull and sunken, and they moan softly as they shuffle toward the vault.

Traffic Jam: The circular stairway presents a problem for the Martian zombies. As they go down (stumble, shuffle, creep), it becomes progressively difficult for them to stay on their feet. Eventually, some of them fall. This blocks the other Martians trying to get down. Not really knowing what to do, the obstructed Martians just stand where they are (unless provoked from the rear) and moan loudly until something happens to clear the way.

It will be impossible for any of the player characters to get up or down the stairs while the Martian zombies are on the staircase. The best thing they can do is help the ones who have fallen to clear the path. If the player characters allow all the zombies to collect in the vault, the stairway will be clear, and they can leave.

Dilemma: The characters will have to make some choices. If they want to copy the scrolls, they will not have time to do so before the zombies start down the stairway and block it. If they decide to take the scrolls, Linwaik will protest. If the player characters insist, Linwaik will make every effort to de-

stroy all the scrolls he can, either right there or later. If the zombies get to the vault's final chamber and hear Marlyr's orders (see below), the characters will have to leave the temple to avoid death.

The best option the characters can pursue is to delay the zombies while they copy the scrolls. Some delay can be created by having some PCs exit to the courtyard and put some zombies to rest early on. The biggest benefit could come from strategic use of (or creation of) the traffic jam on the stairway. When the scrolls are copied, the PCs can let the zombies into the vault and leave the temple while the undead shuffle by.

Further Complication: When the Martian zombies arrive at the final chamber, Marlyr (if his body has not been destroyed) will command them to kill the humans, and they will attack. The reborn Martians are easy to defeat—their threat lies in their numbers. The zombies could conceivably wear the PCs out, especially if some of them have been wounded previously.

Like before they died, the Martians are ruthless and will fight until they can fight no more. (They can take three wounds before they cease fighting. At the referee's option, a shot to the head—for a reduced chance to hit—may immediately take one out.) All their attributes and skills are reduced by two. (While in the zombie state, they cannot think at a high level and can just barely comprehend language. They cannot form any words, but instead only moan ceaselessly and unintelligibly.)

THWARTED

If Marlyr's body was previously destroyed (or when the zombies are destroyed), a howling noise rises through the stones of the temple and up through the courtyard. Wind whips briefly around the courtyard (or through the halls of the temple, if the PCs are still there), tearing at loose clothing and items of equipment (like scrolls). Then the sound abruptly ceases. An uncanny quiet reigns. If Marlyr was not previously destroyed, his body glows briefly, seeming to swell, then explodes soundlessly into blackness, leaving the air full of foul-smelling dust.

If the PCs carry anything out of the vault, the referee will have to decide whether the curse of the Tree of Souls carries its legendary weight, and what form it might take.

The PCs should receive two to three experience points, and one close combat point if appropriate. Linwaik will allow them to take (or arrange to come back for) the Belgians' airship as a partial reward for helping him (if it is still here). The characters may gain renown points in Heroism, Scientific Achievement (especially if they recovered a copy of the Iyraisian scroll), and/or Exploration. Although the PCs might sell their story to a newspaper, most would not believe the more fantastic aspects of the experience. However, good money might be made in turning the experience into a novel. ☐

US \$3.50

CHALLENGE 47

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Can you unravel the mystery that threatens all of Europe?

Theodore J. Kocot
and H. Michael Lybarger

The characters have received a telegram from the French government, summoning them as experts in their field (at least one adventurer should be a scientist or inventor with magnetic or electronic skills). They are informed that tickets to Tangiers are waiting for them at Portsmouth, and that they are urgently needed to solve a mystery which threatens all of Europe!

After a relatively uneventful trip, they will be met by Lieutenant Guy d'Allard of the French Foreign Legion. After they reach his office, Lt. d'Allard will explain to the characters that two weeks ago a British aerial gunboat was destroyed in Cairo. Five days later a powerful explosion rocked Alexandria destroying the British aerial mail ship *Transitory*.

"A foreign legion officer was in Alexandria at the time, and he recovered these items," Lt. d'Allard explains. He shows the characters a piece of wood and a brass uniform button. "As you can see, these items have been affected quite oddly. The wood is teak, part of the *Transitory's* deck, yet it is now flexible and stretchy, like India rubber. And the brass button," he illustrates with his steel knife, "is now magnetic—a most unusual condition for brass."

Next Lt. d'Allard shows the characters a map and tells them that four days ago a French gunboat, the *Hallebarde*, and its 20-man crew disappeared in Southeast Algeria—uncomfortably near the border of the Mahdist Empire. "It is within the realm of possibility that the *Hallebarde* suffered a fate similar to that of the British vessels. If that is so, scientists such as yourselves will be invaluable to our investigation. The government of France needs your help." If the chance to save all of Europe is not enough, the lieutenant can offer the PCs a cash reward of £500, along with the thanks of the French government. How can they refuse?

Having offered their assistance, the characters will be assigned to accompany a discrete armed force into Southeast Algeria, following the *Hallebarde's* assigned patrol route. Their flyer, the

steam launch *Marie*, is one of the few liftwood vessels crewed by the legion in Africa. It is, of course, considerably smaller than the *Hallebarde*, a *Gloire*-class vessel, but it can comfortably accommodate the characters and a force of 10 legionnaires.

A GRISLY ENCOUNTER

The expedition will follow the route the earlier flyer took, up to a point near the *Hallebarde's* last reported position. After that, the commander of the legion detachment, Sergeant Blaeu, will suggest that for safety's sake they continue on foot.

The land approach will be uneventful, but soon the characters will spot carrion birds circling a short distance ahead—an ominous sign.

Crash Site: The legionnaires hasten forward and soon find the wreckage of the *Hallebarde*. The iron hull has been crumpled by some fierce pressure, as if made of paper, and the teakwood decks have been splintered. Fragments of liftwood rollers are scattered for hundreds of yards around the wreck.

The carrion birds take flight when the characters' party arrives, leaving the remains of the crew. There seem to be 20 or so bodies. Most obviously died from injuries suffered during the crash, but several show bullet and spear wounds—and even more shocking, two have been tied to stakes, tortured to death and then left for the birds.

If the PCs search the wreckage, they will find that the liftwood panels have no lift—they have decayed utterly. Buttons and other brass objects show strong magnetism, and the wooden parts of the flier are soft as butter. Even the fragments of glass have been strangely altered, becoming milky and frosted. Within the twisted hulk, the characters will make their most important discovery: a delirious French airman. If they give him water and let him rest for a bit, he will haltingly tell them about the crash.

The Airman's Story: "First the compass became deranged. The captain was not sure that we were on course. Then we lost trim control and were hit by a powerful blast of air. It was icy cold, yet it burned! The air crackled with green fire and then the boiler exploded. Only seven of us survived the crash. We were sorting through the wreckage, getting ready to bury the dead and set up some sort of shelter, when a band of mounted Arabs swept down upon us. I took cover inside the wreck, but most of the others were shot or cut down in that first few seconds of the attack. The Arabs

strung up Commander Beauxiche and Phillippe, one of the ship's engineers. The Arabs tortured them, but I couldn't hear what they were saying. Phillippe spit in the Arab leader's face. The Arab started hacking him with his sword. Commander Beauxiche never said a word to any of them. Finally, they cut his throat."

The telling of this story has exhausted the man, and he will rapidly lapse into unconsciousness. If the PCs persist in their questioning he can tell them only that the Arabs rode off toward the south, leaving the dead for the vultures.

Sgt. Blaeu will tell two of his men to take the injured airman back to the *Marie* and let him rest.

The Band Returns: If the characters spend much time near the crash site, they will spot (or possibly be spotted by) a mounted band of tribesmen, bearing a black Mahdist banner. The player characters will either be forced to evade capture, or they will have the opportunity to surreptitiously follow the troop.

If the party chooses to covertly follow the band, at the end of the day, the group will enter into a bowl-shaped valley from which four small tower tops emerge. When the characters reach the edge, they will see that these hastily constructed minarets, little more than poles with crow's nests and rope ladders, surround a huge obsidian-like pyramid which glows with a faint, green light. They also see a ramp leading up to an oval doorway in the pyramid's side.

What the characters also notice is that there are about 75 soldiers, both Sudanese Jahadia and Fuzzy-Wuzzies, camped in the valley. Most of them seem to be ill. Many look malnourished, and some have blisters, scabs, or patches where their hair has fallen out. Even so, they are a considerably stronger force than the characters' squad of legionnaires.

GETTING INTO THE PYRAMID

If the characters and their foreign legion allies have arrived at the Black Pyramid unnoticed, they may attempt to investigate "undercover." Men enter and leave the camp regularly to answer calls of nature, tend the camels, etc. Stealthy characters might be able to ambush a lone Mahdist and take his *djellabah* and turban as a disguise.

If the characters have been captured by the Mahdists, they will find themselves under guard in the center of the camp, awaiting an audience with "He Who Smites the Enemies of Allah" a.k.a. Rahman abd Fashood, who will grace them with a tour of his temple before their execution.

If the characters can think of no other course of action, Sgt. Blaeu will suggest that they sneak into the pyramid, and after giving them some time to explore, the legionnaires will act as a diversion, allowing the player characters to escape. The legionnaires, utilizing the *Marie*, could attack the camp as a distraction, then try to draw off as many of the tribesmen as possible.

INSIDE THE BLACK PYRAMID

When the characters enter the pyramid, they will see that it is in fact an octohedron which has been half buried. Ahead of them is a huge, black dodecahedron emanating the same green light as the peak of the pyramid. From this dodecahedron a huge rod extends both up and down as far as can be seen in the web of cables and machinery which fills most of the space inside the structure. If the characters succeed at a Moderate Observation roll, they will notice that there are in fact two different sets of feeds coming from this "cell." One set is made of a slick, black material, while the other is made of more earthly substances. The short walkway the PCs entered on leads to a spiral ramp going both up and down around the huge column.

Going Down: If the characters descend the ramp, they will find that the lower portion of the chamber is filled with a jungle of hydraulics which disappear into a buttress on each wall. The central column is dotted with gauges lettered in a strange language and

frosted glass windows which are dark. Below this is a room in which the column ends. A ladder leads down to a catwalk which surrounds a huge copper coil

wound around a six-foot, black spindle which glows with the same green light as the center cell. Below the spindle is a huge crystal which also emits the green glow. A scientist character may want to take a sample of the crystal. If so, a Moderate Dexterity roll is required to climb down to the crystal.

Going Up: The ramp going up has several of the recently installed cables haphazardly wound around its guard rail. The level above the entrance is filled with cabinets and counters. It has many strange devices in it, some of which anyone with any scientific skill would recognize as Victorian electrical equipment, and others which defy description. Reams of paper covered with mathematic equations and sprawling notations in Arabic litter the room. Characters with skill in Science (Physics) or Linguistics (Arabic) should be allowed a Moderate Observation roll to determine that the papers have something to do with magnetism and its effects on ether. If the characters search thoroughly, they will find a space suit which would scarcely fit a human and some odd tools.

Above the cabinet-filled room is a pyramidal chamber containing another coil, spindle, and crystal, which hangs above the spindle. Three chairs also occupy the room. Assuming that Fashood is not



SGT. BLAEU (TRAINED NPC)

Attributes	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 4
Agil: 5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 3 (rifle)
End: 6	Wilderness Travel 5 (foraging, mapping), Fieldcraft 3
Int: 3	Observation 2
Chr: 1	Linguistics 1 (English)
Soc: 2	Riding 1 (camel), Leadership 2

Motives: Steady, Loyal (to the legion).

Appearance: The sergeant is a compact, sturdy man, with dark brown hair and skin weathered by his years in Algeria. He maintains a pencil-thin moustache, which is always carefully groomed and waxed. His native language is French. He carries a bolt-action rifle.

leading the characters on a tour of his pyramid, he will be sleeping restlessly in the center chair. Flanking him in the other seats are two misshapen skeletons. Their heads are oversized in comparison to the childlike proportion of their bodies. Fashood is wearing a turban and has somehow managed to force himself into one of the odd space suits. The skeletons are dressed in similar suits and have been adorned with turbans and scimitars.

Surrounding the black shaft are several tripods atop which are



RAHMAN ABD FASHOOD, PH. D. (EXPERIENCED NPC)

Doctor Rahman spent much of his youth as a student in Europe, ultimately obtaining his Ph. D. in physics while also pursuing studies in chemistry and engineering. He never uses the infidel "doctor" as part of his name and is angered by its use.

Toward the end of his studies, Rahman developed a fierce hatred of all things European and felt that he must do something to end the "rape" of his homeland. To this end, he returned to Egypt and soon became a loyal servant of the Mahdi, building explosives and other complex weapons for use against the British and French in the Sudan. When the pyramid was discovered, he was the obvious choice to investigate it. His anger became mania after the many weeks he spent in the alien vessel's strange radiations.

His native language is Arabic.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 5	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 3, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl: 4	Stealth 3
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (foraging)
Int: 6	Observation 5, Science 5 (physics, chemistry, geology), Engineering 1 (explosives), Mechanics 2 (electricity, machinist)
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2, Linguistics 2 (English, French)
Soc: 1	Leadership 1

Motives: Mad, Ruthless, Hatred (Europeans).

Appearance: Fashood is tall, cadaverously thin, and slightly stooped, as if from long hours over a lab bench. His hair is dark, and his beard is a tangled rat's nest, uncombed and unwashed. His eyes have a feral gleam, peering out from his swarthy face. He will be wearing a combination of traditional Arab dress and alien clothing.

mounted dark metal rods wrapped in innumerable layers of fine wire. There are several calipers, plumb-bobs and other measuring devices attached to these subsidiary coils. A map of Egypt and the Sudan, along with reams of calculations, sit on a small table. Standing prominently alongside this is a large globe with map pins embedded in various European locations.

SECRETS OF THE BLACK PYRAMID

What the characters have run across is a spacecraft built by the inhabitants of Vulcan before the planet exploded. It is propelled by directed magnetic force and powered by the atom! The ship has been discovered by Rahman abd Fashood, a thoroughly mad Arab, who is focusing the power of the ship's drive to hammer his targets with currents of ether. He is using electromagnets to aim his blasts; the long delay between attacks is due to the incredible difficulty in targeting these forces. Days of complex calculations and adjustments are required to aim the magnetic fields, and the more distant the target, the more involved the calculations become.

Even when correctly aimed, such an attack will fall on whatever object is highest in the air over the target point: a flyer, a tower, or perhaps even a flock of birds. The attack on the *Hallebarde* came only after careful analysis of the flyer's course and speed. Fashood realized that the French survey ship's course would take it almost directly over his pyramid—he had to attack the vessel before it discovered his secret. He aimed his weapon, which he calls the Fist of Allah, at a point in the desert near which the *Hallebarde* would have to pass and sent troops to monitor the vessel's progress. A single throw of a switch sent the flyer's crewmembers to their deaths.

THE MADMAN AWAKES

The moment the characters touch any of the equipment or the controls in the chamber, Fashood will awaken, the gleam of madness in his eyes. "Infidels! Interlopers! Stay away from that which is sacred to Allah! You know not what forces you tamper with, here within my sanctum!" With those words, he will grab at one of the scimitars borne by his long-dead "companions" and brandish it at the PCs. "For years have I searched—for years I have toiled in the universities of your infidel nations. I sought power—a force with which to strike back at Britain and the scourge of her imperialism. Fool that I was, I knew not that such a power lay here, in my own land! The Fist of Allah, to strike from the heart of the desert, and drive Britain to its knees!"

If the characters do nothing, Fashood will regale them with the exact workings of his masterpiece, going into loving detail as he describes its ability to strike at a vast distance using the ether as a giant fist. He will display his preliminary calculations for targets within Britain, the first one being Buckingham Palace!

Fashood, armed only with his scimitar, seems inattentive to the actions of the characters as he rants. It would seem easy enough for one (or more) of the PCs to attempt to jump and disarm him. Undoubtedly, a struggle will ensue, a fistfight at first, but perhaps escalating to the use of swords or even guns. Fashood will attempt, with the strength of madness, to wrest a firearm from one of the characters.

No matter what the outcome of the fight, a control panel will be damaged. A character or Fashood might slip or be knocked back, catching himself on a prominent lever, or more likely, a bullet fired during the struggle will strike a panel, sending sparks flying—you get the picture.

Instantly, the console will begin to make sounds, speaking an unknown language! A few brief sentences will be uttered, along with a number of distinct beeps and clicks. Various creaking noises will be heard from below, as if ancient machines were haltingly coming to life.

A Magnetic Encounter: After a few turns of this, the green glow which illuminates the pyramid will begin to brighten, and any ferrous metal the characters have will be drawn toward the black drive

spindle in the center of the room. At first this will be a gentle pull, but after three combat turns pass, the effect will increase, and anyone standing between Fashood's tools and the spindle will be hit by one to three of the flying implements. (The tools will cause one wound each if they hit. The characters should make a Moderate Agility roll to avoid them. The Dodge combat maneuver is not applicable due to the two-way pull involved in this action.)

At this point the pull will make armed combat almost impossible. After two more combat turns, Fashood's scimitar will pull him across the room and become thoroughly stuck to the spindle. Any weapons held by the characters will do likewise.

After two further turns, buttons and belt buckles will be affected similarly, pinning any characters who are wearing some sort of metal to the column. They must make a Difficult Strength roll to tear these pieces free from their garments. (As comic relief, the referee may require gentlemen to remove their belts to escape. If a female is present, they must be careful to hold up their pants during their departure.)

Countdown to Launch: After three more turns the computer will begin to make distinct, regularly spaced sounds. (The referee should go to no efforts to disguise the fact that this is indeed a countdown. Slowly reciting single words of gibberish at even intervals should make all the PCs aware of the danger they are in. The characters will have plenty of time to make good their escape, unless they ignore these warning signs.)

Suddenly, the deck will tilt wildly, causing even more confusion. Observers outside will see four hydraulic legs extend from the base of the pyramid. The legs will begin to move slowly as the vessel clammers up out of the sand and takes a squatting stance on the surface.

EXIT, STAGE LEFT

By now the characters should have realized that the control room is no longer a healthy place to be. Even through the haze of his insanity, Rahman abd Fashood will also realize this and attempt to make a break for the entryway. (If the characters can find no better

reason to leave the pyramid, chasing Fashood will certainly save their lives at this point.)

When the characters begin to descend the spiral ramp, they will see that additional pipes and wires have sprouted from the dodecahedron at the core of the ship. Broken wires—Fashood's additions to the ancient system—are strewn across the ramp. Characters should make a quick Dexterity check to avoid a tumble into the shifting bowels of the vessel. (Such a tumble will cause two wounds to anyone unfortunate enough to be thus precipitated. Saving rolls are made normally.)

A fall into the bowels of the ship is an ideal way for the referee to dispose of Rahman abd Fashood, especially if he prefers Rahman's uncertain demise rather than his capture.

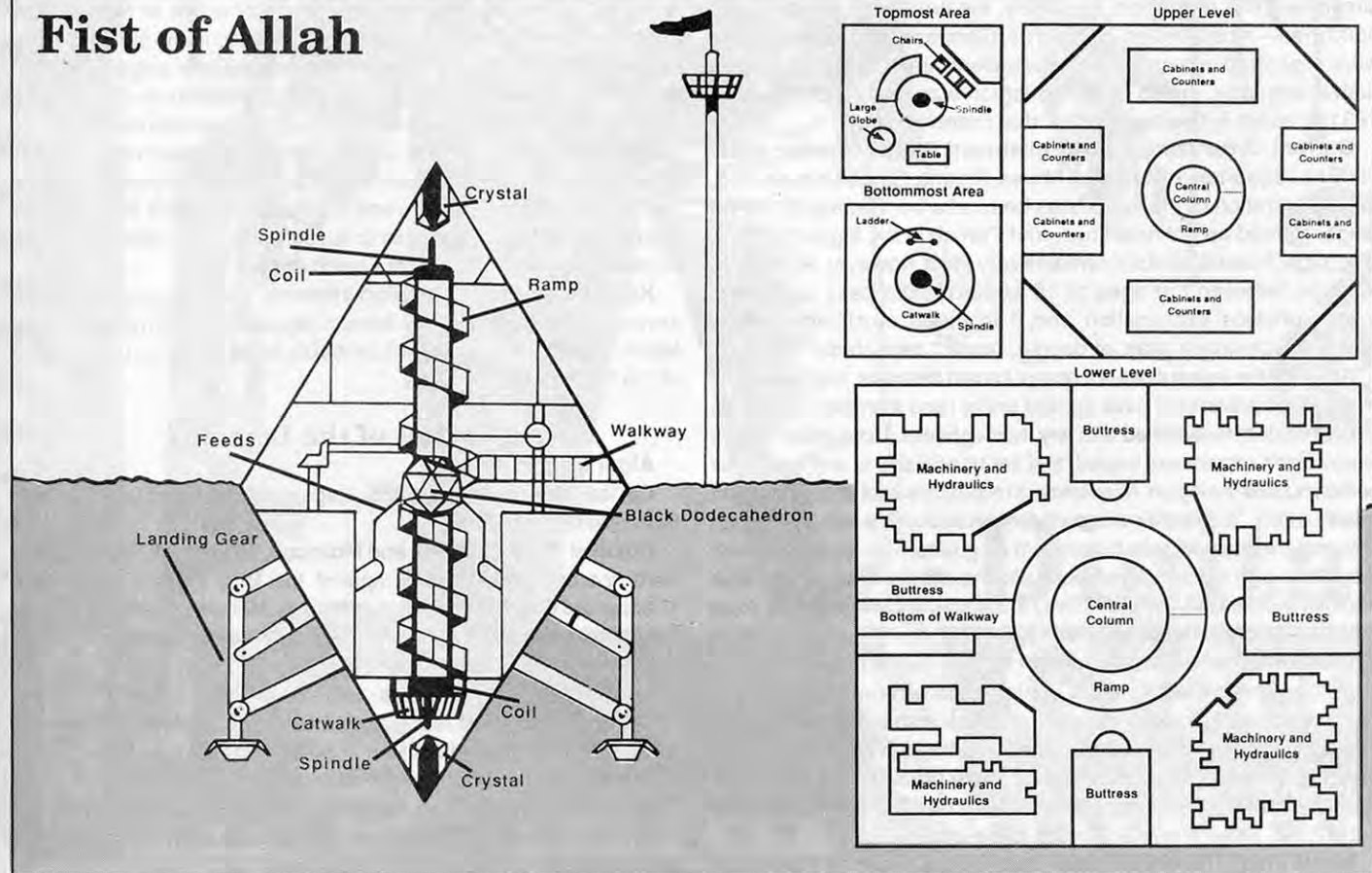
Moments after the characters leave the pyramid, the green glow will intensify to an unearthly brightness. A column of green light will descend from the skies down upon the vessel, crackling with ethereal lightning. With a loud humming whine, the vessel will begin to rise. It moves slowly at first, as the legs retract, but accelerates with every inch of altitude gained. Shortly, it is out of sight, leaving only a single, distant thunderclap, high above, to mark its passing.

IN THE WAKE OF THE STORM

Should the characters fail to leave the ship, they will quickly find themselves beyond the bounds of Earth's gravity, on a course into the unknown. At this point, it is up to the referee's individual preferences to select their destination. Perhaps they will adventure on another world or be marooned on a decrepit Vulcan base, now a squalid, hollowed-out asteroid with only enough air, fungus and rodents for the PCs to eke out a pale existence as they devise a way



Fist of Allah



to signal for rescue.

Round 'Em Up: It should be no difficulty for the legionnaires to round up the now-disillusioned Mahdist forces, especially in their weakened condition (minus superweapon and fanatic leader). In any case, many of the Fuzzy-Wuzzy troops will have headed for the high desert the minute the pyramid rises from the sand. They will no doubt carry tales of the PCs' prowess back to their chieftains—and the Mahdi.

Rewards: Lt. d'Allard will be delighted to hear of the end of the threat and will bestow upon the PCs a cash reward of £500, along with the thanks of the French government. The characters may have earned renown points for their Heroic Acts or Service to the Crown. Any individual character who earns more than four renown points for this adventure stands a chance of being knighted for his exemplary deeds.

Players who participated in Close Combat will earn one Close Combat experience point. All players who survive the adventure will earn at least one general experience point (more at the referee's discretion or for superlative roleplaying).

It is possible to play out the battle between the Mahdist forces and the foreign legionnaires using the **Soldier's Companion** miniatures rules. All of the forces are detailed in the sourcebook section. Fashood's troops are at a -1 morale due to their poor health.

THE FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION

No military unit possesses the aura and mystique of the French Foreign Legion. The fame of these men comes less from what they have done than from who they are. The legion's honors were not won in glorious battles, but in a thousand nameless fights. Their commanders have seldom become legendary, and the individual soldiers, never—as a whole, the foreign legion has earned its place in history.

The legion was created in 1831 by King Louis Philippe for service outside France. It was his intention that the legion draw foreign mercenaries into French service. Frenchmen were forbidden to join its ranks, but many legionnaires have claimed false nationalities to circumvent this regulation. Originally, the force was composed of 4000 men—mostly Poles, Spaniards, Germans, and Italians. They were organized into nationalistic battalions, each speaking its own native language. In this form, the legion was posted to Algeria in 1831 to assist in the conquest of that French colony.

Current Organization and Enlistment Requirements: In AD 1889 headquarters is in Sidi bel Abbes, Algeria. Since its beginning, the organization of the legion has been altered. Battalions are no longer formed on national lines, and French is the legion's official language. Recruitment still remains very strict, however. Applicants must be between the ages of 18 and 40, must pass a rigorous military physical examination, and, if accepted, must serve for five years. A legionnaire may, of course, reenlist repeatedly.

Although the legion does not accept known criminals, many persons of dubious background have applied under false identities. A recruit's story is seldom researched with any thoroughness. Upon enlistment, a legionnaire's records are sealed, and are unavailable to any agency or person outside the legion. All enlistment records are kept at foreign legion headquarters. To maintain this confidential relationship with the French government many recruits take a *nom de guerre*—an alias—by which they are known to their companions and the officers in the legion. After a soldier musters out, there is no way to identify his civilian identity, even with his individual *nom de guerre*.

Uniform: The traditional uniform of the French Foreign Legion consists of baggy red trousers, a high-collared blue coat, and the legion trademark, a white kepi with a cloth sunshield over the neck. The legion insignia is a red grenade, spouting seven flames. More recently, the legion has adopted the white trousers worn by other French infantry units. A khaki or camel-colored jacket is sometimes substituted when a unit is serving in the tropics.

Battle Flag: The foreign legion battle flag is based on the French

tricolor, on which is superimposed a globe, labeled "France," and the legend, "The King of the French to the foreign legion." Esprit de corps is very high in the legion, and the battle flag is accorded great respect and reverence.

The legion's spirit and morale can best be illustrated by the events of the Battle of Camerone. While fighting in support of the Mexican Emperor Maximilian, a handful of legionnaires withstood the charges of 2000 enemy soldiers. Refusing to surrender, the last six legionnaires made a final bayonet charge. Only three were taken alive. The legion celebrates April 30, the anniversary of the battle, as a time of remembrance. It is without a doubt the most sacred date to the French Foreign Legion.

The Legion in Space: 1889

Any player character who wishes to have a career in the foreign legion must first pass the physical examination. In practice, this means he must have Str 2+, Agl 2+, and End 4+. Social Level is, of course, not considered.

Skills: The foreign legion provides the following skills to all recruits: Close Combat 2, Fieldcraft 2, Marksmanship 1 (rifle), Linguistics 1 (French), Wilderness Travel 1 (foraging). Eloquence or Crime (any type) are appropriate additional skills for a character who is running from a "past." (Eloquence could be, in this case, synonymous with "con artistry.")

Second Career: Alternately, the foreign legion makes a good second career for anyone whose first career was a criminal one. Of course, the past a given character may be running from need not have been actively illegal. Broken hearts, failed love affairs, and accusations of cowardice have all caused men to join the French Foreign Legion.

Length of Term: A character with one career in the legion will have served one or perhaps two five-year enlistments. A character with two careers in the legion will have spent at least 15 years with the corps.

Rank: A character's rank in the foreign legion will depend upon his years of service, assuming general competence. A player may of course choose a rank lower than that listed, if he wishes. This may represent a character with a discipline problem, or simply a lack of motivation. A character who has served more than five years in the legion may be ranked a corporal. A 10-year man may be ranked a sergeant. Fifteen years service allows a maximum rank of sergeant-major. A character who has the skill Linguistics 3+ (French) may have been an officer if he has served more than one term in the legion. The lowest officer rank is lieutenant. Promotion to captain follows at the end of 10 years of service, and promotion to major at the end of 20 years of service. Ranks higher than major are never available to legionnaires, being filled by French citizen-officers from the regular French Army.

Knowledge and Campaign History: Any character who has served terms of duty in the foreign legion will be familiar with the legion's battle history, and will probably have served in one or more of the following campaigns.

Battles of the Legion

Algeria, 1831

Carlist War in Spain, 1835: Legion reduced to 500 men after three years of fighting.

Colonial Wars in Algeria and Morocco, 1835-1885: These actions were sporadic, being mainly against the local tribes. Combat was interspersed with bouts of construction work. Most of the early, European-style buildings in North Africa were built by the foreign legion.

Crimean War, 1854: Two regiments. 450 men killed.

Italy, 1859: Two regiments. 150 men killed.

Mexico, 1863: 470 men killed. This was Napoleon III's attempt to aid the Emperor Maximilian in holding Mexico.

France, 1870: Serving against the German invasion.

Indochina, 1885: Four battalions. These troops served to put down local uprisings. They were reorganized as the 5th Regiment and stationed permanently in Indochina. Ω

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CHALLENGE 48

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Time Voyager

By James L. Cambias

My friend has vanished, and the police think I killed him! He was showing me his latest invention—he called it a fourth-dimensional velocipede—when he disappeared! Please, help me.



T

he PCs are contacted by a young journalist named George Wells. Mr. Wells is greatly agitated because the police suspect him of having murdered his good friend, Averell Merritt. According to Wells, Merritt was demonstrating the use of his latest invention and mysteriously disappeared! The police have a more prosaic explanation: Wells killed Merritt (the two of them had recently quarrelled over money) and has hidden the body someplace. Wells begs the player characters to investigate and help to clear his name before he is put on trial for murder.

MERRITT'S HOUSE

Merritt's house is a large brick structure in the London suburb of Woking. The place is comfortably furnished, as Merritt had an income from some property in London. Merritt conducted his research in a small workshop behind the main house. The workshop is a one-room brick structure filled with complex scientific apparatus and tools. In the center of the room is a strange machine of metal and crystal, with some parts that shimmer as if partially unreal.

According to Wells, Merritt claimed that his newest invention was a fourth-dimensional velocipede that could move about as easily in the fourth dimension as an ether flyer moves about in three. On the day Merritt disappeared, Merritt mounted the machine with Wells present. Merritt and the machine then vanished into thin air. A second later the machine reappeared, minus Merritt. Wells very sensibly did not touch the device, and the police have left all the "evidence" undisturbed.

Merritt's Notes: On a workbench in the workshop is a notebook full of Merritt's research data. It requires an Easy Physics task to read the book at all. Most of it deals with some rather arcane consequences of current ether theories, involving "dimensional stability" and the "principle of extra-chronic existence." The notes seem to point toward the design of a machine intended to move through time, rather than space. A Formidable Physics task roll will indicate that Merritt had actually constructed such a device and that some preliminary tests had verified Merritt's theories.

If a player character now or subsequently wants to try inventing a time machine, he should be informed that the feat requires an ether knowledge of 44, with a reliability modifier of 5. A time machine can travel many years into the past or future equal to 10 to the power of its reliability—reliability 2 gives a range of 100 years; reliability 4 permits travel of 10,000 years, and so on. The cost of a time machine is £15,000.

TIME MACHINE

Merritt's machine is a large device shaped vaguely like a sleigh, with odd crystal tubes running along the sides, and a peculiar assemblage of gyroscopes at the front and back. The device has room for four people (five in a pinch) and has a set of controls in front of the pilot's seat.

Controls: The controls are simple: two levers, a button, a row of switches, and four dials. Unfortunately, none of them are labeled, and Wells doesn't remember which ones Merritt touched before disappearing. Study of the controls along with Merritt's notes may help, but it takes a Difficult Physics task to decipher the controls even with the notes.

The switches control the time machine's power supply (a collection of powerful batteries beneath the chassis); the levers move the machine forward and backward in time; and the button returns the machine to its time of origin. The dials register: local time, time from origin, remaining power, and speed through the time stream (in years per second).

The time-from-origin dial has not reset itself to zero, so it is still indicating the time Merritt had reached when the button was pressed, returning it to the present. According to the dial, Merritt is lost in March AD 802889.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Obviously, the player characters must use the machine to pursue Merritt. The referee should allow them the opportunity to gather equipment and weapons if they like. However, the police are keeping Merritt's house under observation, and a party of heavily armed adventurers is certain to attract attention.

With its batteries charged, the machine quickly reaches a time speed of 10,000 years per second—obviously, it is very difficult to control. The pilot must roll an Impossible Agility feat to hit the proper time. The party arrives a number of months late equal to one plus the amount by which the pilot missed his roll.



George Wells (Green NPC)

Herbert George Wells is a young journalist and writer of fiction who is especially interested in the marvels of science that are so changing the world. He looks forward to a day when the clumsy social systems of the present will be replaced by more rational behaviors. He is very friendly and can be quite charming, but he has a journalist's curiosity and inquisitiveness.

Motives: Friendly, Knowledge.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 1 (bashing weapon)
Agil: 2	Stealth 1
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 3 (mapping), Swimming 1
Int: 6	Observation 6, Engineering 2 (naval architecture), Science 6 (physics)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Theatrics 2, Linguistics 2 (French, German)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 2

Averell Merritt (Trained NPC)

Averell is an extremely brilliant young scientist whose work is known throughout Europe. He is a very private man, however, and detests publicity of any sort because he is utterly without personal charm. Consequently, his most recent researches have been conducted in near-total secrecy. Merritt, like many fine scientists, is driven by the search for knowledge, and his time machine has opened up vast new frontiers to the human mind.

Merritt has on his person a pair of binoculars, a jackknife, a box of matches, some torn and tattered exploring clothes, and his watch. He did not bring along any weapons.

Motives: Knowledge, Frugal.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agil: 3	Stealth 2, Mechanics 5 (electricity)
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 4 (mountaineering), Swimming 2
Int: 6	Observation 6, Engineering 3 (naval architecture), Science 6 (physics)
Chr: 1	Linguistics 2 (German, French)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse)

Worker Ants (Trained NPCs)

All worker ants have effectively the same attributes and skills. They are just under six feet tall, walk on their two hind legs, and use their four arms for manipulation. Though ants have vestigial stingers and powerful mandibles, they will use ordinary weapons in combat. All ants are fanatically loyal to their queen and will cheerfully sacrifice their lives to save her. In most other respects they are cautious and nonaggressive, fighting only for self-defense.

Ants will usually be armed with a spear when away from the village.

Motives: Loyal, Cautious.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (pole arm)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4
End: 6	Wilderness Travel 7 (foraging), Fieldcraft 6, Tracking 4, Swimming 3
Int: 3	Observation 2, Engineering 1 (earthworks)
Chr: 1	
Soc: 2	Riding 2 (ostrich)

Queen Ant (Green NPC)

The queen ant has a nearly atrophied upper body and a huge, distended abdomen. She is completely immobile and depends on the workers to keep her alive. She and the males rule the village. The queen ant wants human aid against the plants, but fears expending any of her subjects/children in some risky venture. The queen somehow behaves in a manner very reminiscent of Queen Victoria.

Motives: Leader, Cautious.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 2	Close Combat 1 (pole arm)
Agl: 1	
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mapping)
Int: 5	Observation 6, Engineering 4 (earthworks)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 5, Linguistics 4 (High Human, Plant, Squid, Machine), Bargaining 3
Soc: 6	Leadership 4

Male Ants (Green NPCs)

The males are smaller and frailer than the workers, but are much more intelligent. Their heads are larger, and they are more talkative.

They are the experts of the community and rule the village along with the queen. There is competition among the males for prestige and authority, but no amount of personal ambition can come before their loyalty to the queen.

Males always carry a dagger and wear beautifully adorned robes to further distinguish themselves from the workers.

Motives: Loyal, Proud.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 1 (edged weapon)
Agl: 3	Stealth 2
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping), Fieldcraft 2, Swimming 1
Int: 6	Observation 5, Engineering 5 (earthworks)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 3 (Plant, Machine, High Human)
Soc: 5	Riding 4 (ostrich), Leadership 2, Medicine 4

AD 802889: The machine materializes upon a grassy plain. The air is cool. Nearby stand a couple of extremely bizarre creatures—they are about the size of an elephant, with eight legs ending in dainty hooves. The creatures have huge udders between their rear pairs of legs, and their heads are recognizably those of cattle. A Formidable task of Biology will allow the characters to determine that the creatures are cattle, but bred and mutated scientifically into a much more productive form. Like cows, the creatures are placid and harmless.

A few miles to the south the PCs can see a river, and on the horizon, some 20 miles away, looms a vast building. To be visible from such a distance, the structure must be miles tall. A half mile to the north is a small village of strange mud houses. No people are about.

ANTS

No matter which way the PCs decide to travel, they will soon come across a pair of natives. The natives are human-sized insects, obviously descended from ants. They walk upright and carry tools in their multiple hands. Upon observing the PCs, the ants will begin making excited chittering noises and gesturing animatedly. They will make no violent moves unless the player characters do so, and even then they will only fight to escape. The ants are armed with spears, and have mandibles and stingers.

A PC accomplishing a Moderate Linguistics task will be able to understand that the ants wish the player characters to accompany them, though their intentions are unknown. If the PCs decline to go with the ants, the ants will follow the party for a time, chittering and gesturing, and eventually give up and go home. But if the PCs do follow the ants, the two natives will lead the party north, to the village of mud huts.

Ant Village: The village is home to 50 ants—one queen, five males, 10 warriors, and 34 workers. They live in domed huts made of mud and have some larger mud structures filled with grain and dried beef. A corral outside the village holds 20 birds resembling ostriches, which are used as beasts of burden. The arrival of the adventurers will spark great interest in the community, and a crowd of ants will emerge from the huts and gather about the party. The player characters will notice that the ants are careful to maintain a respectful distance from them. The crowd will urge the PCs along toward the largest hut, located in the center of the village.

Queen: Within the large hut sits a huge ant, her body bloated and far too large for her spindly limbs to move. This is the queen of the colony. Around her are the five males. They are smaller than the workers but have bigger heads. A pair of warriors flank the queen; they will cross their spears to prevent anyone from approaching the queen too closely.

As soon as the players have entered, a male will stand and begin speaking in a language quite unlike the chittering noises of the other ants. A Formidable task of Linguistics will identify the tongue as vaguely related to Chinese, but with distinct influences drawn from Russian, English, Spanish, and Parhooni. It is utterly unintelligible to the PCs.

When the ants realize that the player characters cannot understand them, the males and the queen will confer together. Then one of the males will produce a small glass box from a recess in the wall, take from it a little yellow pill, and offer the pill to the PCs.

The pill is a perfect sphere, with tiny writing on it in no known alphabet. If the player characters decline to take the pill, the ants will give them food and water, and a hut to sleep in, and will allow them to stay in the village as long as they like. But they will be unable to communicate anything significant.

If a PC takes the pill, he will feel very confused for a moment, as if he has lost the power of speech. Then, with a shock, he will realize that he can now understand the mysterious language the ants are speaking. The PC can now speak and understand a strange tongue

from the far future, in addition to his other languages. An Easy Intelligence task will allow the player character to realize that the language seems better suited to a human mouth and vocal chords than it is to the ants.

Now equipped with a common language, the PCs can communicate with the ants. The male repeats his speech of welcome to the party.

"Welcome, great High Humans. It has been many long years since last your folk have graced this humble colony with your presence. Yet as you can see, we ants have faithfully continued in our duties: the herds grow fat and ever more numerous. What is the reason for this visit, High Ones?"

The players probably will want to ask many questions, so appropriate information on the history and culture of the far future is given below. If the player characters ask about Merritt, the males will tell them that two workers encountered a High Human three weeks ago, near where the adventurers were found. The workers attempted to speak with him, but he threw stones at them and fled. They examined his vehicle, but it suddenly disappeared. According to the workers, the High Human ran off toward the city.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

During the time of the Great Ice, the High Humans built the great city buildings and created four races to serve them and maintain the Earth: the ants to tend the herds and rule the plains; the walking plants to control the forests and grow the crops; the squids to dominate the oceans; and the machines to mine and make things underground. But in recent centuries, the Great Ice has retreated, and as the weather changed, the plants and the ants have gone to war often. The plants desire to expand their forests now that there is more rain, but the ants prefer to keep the plains and forests as they are. In the old times the High Humans would have given orders to settle such disputes, but they have not come out of their cities in hundreds of years. Attempts by the ants and plants to reach the High Humans have all failed; the cities will only open their doors to High Humans.

The ants have a map of the area. It looks like England, except that the oceans have receded so that Great Britain and the continent are joined. Most of the land is open plains, but the river valleys are covered by forest. From the map it is apparent that the huge city to the south is built on the site of London. The forest begins just beyond the city.

The ants will help the player characters as much as they can by providing food, water, blankets, and ostriches for them to ride. But the ants absolutely will not follow the adventurers into the city or into the domain of the plants or squids. If the PCs request it, the queen will send a pair of warriors to escort the party as far as the city.

CITY OF THE HIGH HUMANS

The city is a vast pyramidal structure about five miles square, towering two miles high. The surface appears to be glass but is completely unbreakable. At ground level are huge doors every 100 yards along the base of the structure. The doors open automatically when any human approaches within 10 yards.

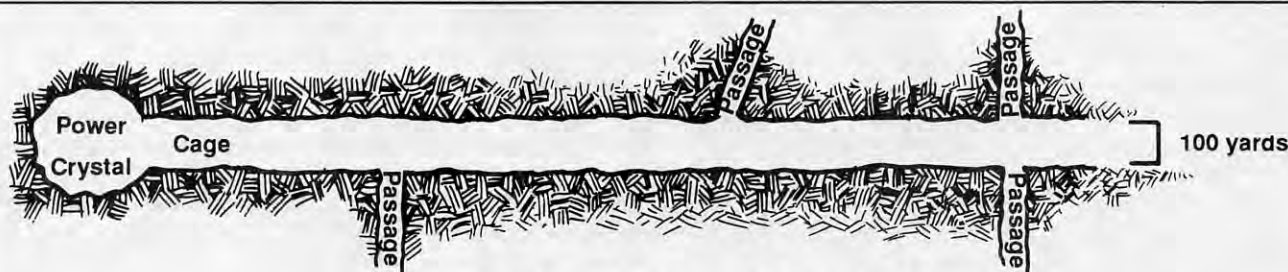
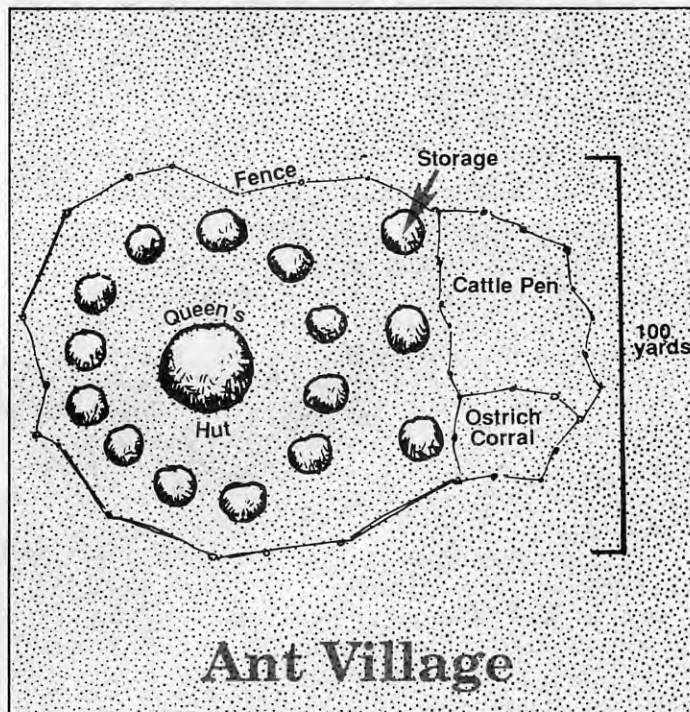
The city is a bewildering maze of softly lit passages and huge domed chambers. Offices, workshops, laboratories, commercial establishments and living quarters open off the corridors. They vary almost infinitely, so the details are left to the referee's imagination. The entire city is spotlessly clean and perfectly maintained. Personal items are still neatly placed in the living quarters; the libraries are filled with books (unfortunately, the language pill does not bestow reading ability); and the large gardens are carefully kept up.

The PCs will never see any of the clever machinery that maintains the city; the devices only operate when no human is around. The utter silence and emptiness of the city will be unnerving to the adventurers, and the referee should continually emphasize how alone the player characters are.

Message From Merritt: After some hours spent wandering in the city, the PCs will find a chamber that apparently served as an artist's studio. The room contains numerous abstract sculptures in a variety of materials (some unknown) and some soothing paintings. But one large canvas has been scrawled on in white paint:

"Is anyone left alive here? I am Averell Merritt. I was here—the last human on Earth. If you can read this, for God's sake, come to the observatory. I am all alone on Earth."

Observatory: The observatory is on the very highest point of the



Cavern of the Machines

city. It consists of a large, pyramidal room underneath a huge reflecting telescope. A simple control panel aims and focuses the telescope, and the images from it are displayed on a wall screen. Merritt was using it to search for signs of human life. But though his small travelling bag and canteen are still by the control panel, Merritt is nowhere about.

Alert characters will notice an odd scattering of peculiar feathers on the floor near a door. The door is unlocked and opens onto a small terrace, where there are more of the strange feathers. An

Easy Biology task will reveal that the feathers are not feathers at all, but leaves from a plant that almost perfectly mimic the structure of bird feathers. There are no plants anywhere nearby. Only a flying creature could have reached the terrace. The logical conclusion is that Merritt was carried off by some sort of flying plant—possibly one of the sentient plants mentioned by the ants in the village. (If the PCs do not realize this themselves, the referee may wish to allow one character to make the deduction following a successful Intelligence quick roll.)

Plants (Trained NPCs)

The plants are large bushes equipped with tendrils for manipulation and four trunks for locomotion. While they subsist partially by photosynthesis, the plants must also eat food to remain active. They live in the deep forests, which they tend and maintain. The plants have gradually begun to expand the forests and systematically exclude animal life that preys on the vegetation. The plants all look forward to the day when all the land on Earth is a vast forest under their control. Older plants take root in one spot and are effectively immobile.

Plants are usually armed with a spear.

Motives: Ambitious, Greedy.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (pole arm)
Agl: 2	Stealth 5
End: 6	Wilderness Travel 4 (foraging), Fieldcraft 4, Tracking 4, Swimming 3
Int: 5	Observation 4
Chr: 1	Linguistics 2 (Ant, High Human)
Soc: 3	

High Humans (Experienced NPCs)

The High Humans of the distant future are all small and slender, with little or no hair. They only wear clothes in very cold weather. They are a peaceful race, devoting most of their time to science and philosophy. But they can act swiftly and with great determination once a problem has been identified. They are light-hearted and enjoy music and dance. Decisions are generally made with the unanimous consent of the community, but since everyone thinks logically, there is little disagreement.

Though they generally go naked, the High Humans frequently will wear a vest or belt with pockets for tools and apparatus. The nature of most of their devices is completely incomprehensible to the PCs. None of the High Humans carries a weapon unless absolutely necessary—and most of their weapons simply stun the target.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 3 (bashing weapon)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Mechanics 2 (electricity)
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 5 (mapping) Swimming 2
Int: 6	Observation 6, Engineering 2 (structural), Science 4 (physics)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Linguistics 6 (Machine, Ant, Plant, Squid, Venusian, Lunarian)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (ostrich), Piloting 1 (ether flyer), Medicine 2

FOREST

The adventurers will have little difficulty travelling to the edge of the forest to search for the sentient plants and Merritt. The nearest forest is about five miles from the city, and the dividing line between plain and forest is very distinct. The forest is guarded by a wall of sharp thorn bushes, which keep away the ants and their animals. To hack a passage into the forest is a Difficult feat of Strength.

Beyond the thorns, the forest is not a dense tangle of underbrush, but is surprisingly tidy. The great canopy of trees blocks out nearly all the sunlight, and the ground is covered by a thick layer of moss. Vines link all the trees, and there are bushes scattered about the forest floor. One strange thing that the adventurers may notice is the complete absence of animal life other than worms. The forest is utterly silent and utterly still—the only sound is the faint rustling of leaves in the wind.

Sentient Plants: After travelling about a mile into the forest, the PCs will be startled when one bush moves to block their way. The bush is a sentient plant. The plant walks on four jointed trunks and has five tentacle-like tendrils, one of which holds a spear. It sees with numerous eyes and communicates by rubbing its branches together to approximate speech. The PCs will be able to understand its speech due to the pill the ants gave them.

The plant is arrogant and threatening—totally unlike the subservient ants. It will demand to know what the player characters are doing in the forest and will order them to follow it to see the leaders. Any opposition will be met by violence, and 1D6 additional plants will arrive as reinforcements in the event of a fight.

The plant community is a clearing about an acre in size. The plants have no fires and do not have shelters, but they do store their weapons and tools under roofs. In the center of the community stands the plant leader—a very old plant, immobile now and much taller than the others. Gathered around the leader are 10 plants armed with spears.

The plant leader will address the player characters.

"Peace, High Humans. It has been long since any of your kind have entered the green lands. We plants rule here now, and no animals are welcome—even yourselves. Out of respect for your wisdom and power, we will give you safe conduct out of the green lands, but this place is ours now, not yours. Go in peace."

If the player characters ask about Merritt, it will require a Difficult task of Eloquence to get an answer out of the plants. A successful task roll will get the plant leader to admit that one community further into the forest has been advocating more aggressive expansion of the forest lands. That community may possibly know more. The leader will allow the PCs to visit the other village, but warns the adventurers that they proceed at their own risk.

Second Village: The other village is six miles away through the forest. But when the PCs reach it, they will discover that it has been almost completely destroyed. The splintered bodies of plants lie scattered about, and huge holes have been gouged in the earth. Several dead plants are still smoldering—including some that appear to have wings sporting the strange, feather-like leaves. The leader of the town is dying, but can still communicate. It is utterly terrified of the PCs.

"Forgive us, terrible High Humans! We did not mean harm to the lone High Human! We only wished to help him! Do not send your war machines against the green lands!"

The PCs can get little from the dying plant except frantic pleas for mercy. Apparently the village did send a flying plant to the city to bring Merritt back. But the plants were subsequently attacked by huge machines from underground that carried Merritt off.

CAPTIVES

While the adventurers are trying to get some information from the dying plant, a faint rumbling sound will come from underfoot. Suddenly, four huge, three-legged machines will rear up from under the ground and fire nets at the PCs. To avoid being tangled in the nets requires success at an Impossible Agility task. If the PCs can reach their weapons, they will soon discover that neither gunfire nor bare hands can do anything against the machines. (If a player character has dynamite and can avoid blowing up the party while using it, then six sticks used together can cripple a single machine.)

The machines will gather up the player characters trapped in nets and burrow back underground. They will travel downward through roughly dug tunnels for awhile, then enter a complex of electrically lit passages, which extend for miles in all directions. The machines take the adventurers to a huge chamber and deposit them in a metal cage, then depart.

Chamber: The chamber is a 100 yards across, 50 yards high, and nearly a mile long. At one end it widens to a large sphere 200 yards across, in the center of which is a brightly glowing blue crystal. Huge conduits or cables lead from the crystal to the walls of the sphere. The walls of the main room are lined with about 50,000 crystal coffins, each containing a human being who is either dead or asleep. The humans are all very small and slender, almost entirely hairless. Scandalously, they are all naked. A successful Difficult Observation task roll will allow the characters to notice that one of the nearer coffins contains an ordinary-looking Englishman of the 1890s.

Cage: The cage is at the junction of the main room and the spherical section. It was built to hold humans less physically strong than 19th-century Englishmen. To bend the bars requires a Formidable Strength task, but up to four players may combine their Strengths in the attempt. The machines are not monitoring the cage, so an escape will not be discovered until somebody moves a control or a machine passes through the room after six to 12 minutes (roll randomly).

Freeing the Humans: The coffins can be opened one by one;

this requires a Formidable Strength roll (PCs can combine their Strengths). Opening a coffin immediately summons a machine to investigate. The coffins can also be opened by destroying the crystal at the far end of the room. It will take five points of damage to destroy the crystal. Once it is destroyed, all the coffins will open spontaneously, and the captives will emerge.

Escape: If the PCs have destroyed the crystal, all the machines in the area will be inactive. It will take an hour for repair machines to restore it, and the player characters can reach the surface in that time.

If the player characters have only released Merritt, then the machines will pursue the PCs. Machines are invulnerable to firearms and can only be harmed by explosives, as described above. They move as fast as a running human and can keep up the pace indefinitely. The machines will attempt to recapture the player characters and put them back into the cage while sleep coffins are prepared for them. After one escape, any recaptured PCs will be guarded by a single machine that will do its best to prevent them from escaping.

HIGH HUMANS

If the PCs have freed the captive humans from the caverns, they will be fantastically grateful. According to the High Humans, the machines took them prisoner to protect them from harm. Once freed, the High Humans plan to return to the city and there readjust the controlling orders of the machines to prevent the same problem from happening again.

The High Humans will reward the PCs, but will not allow them to take anything back in time aboard the time machine. They fear the effects on history if ancient humans like the adventurers gain access to any of the advanced technology of the High Humans.

RETURNING HOME

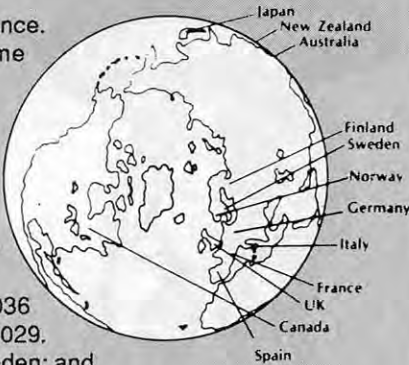
After a suitable period of celebration with the High Humans, the PCs can return back to the year 1889 with Merritt and thereby keep young Wells out of prison. Wells will find their account of the adventure highly interesting. After some months, he will write a story based on the event and will offer to share the proceeds with the player characters. Ω



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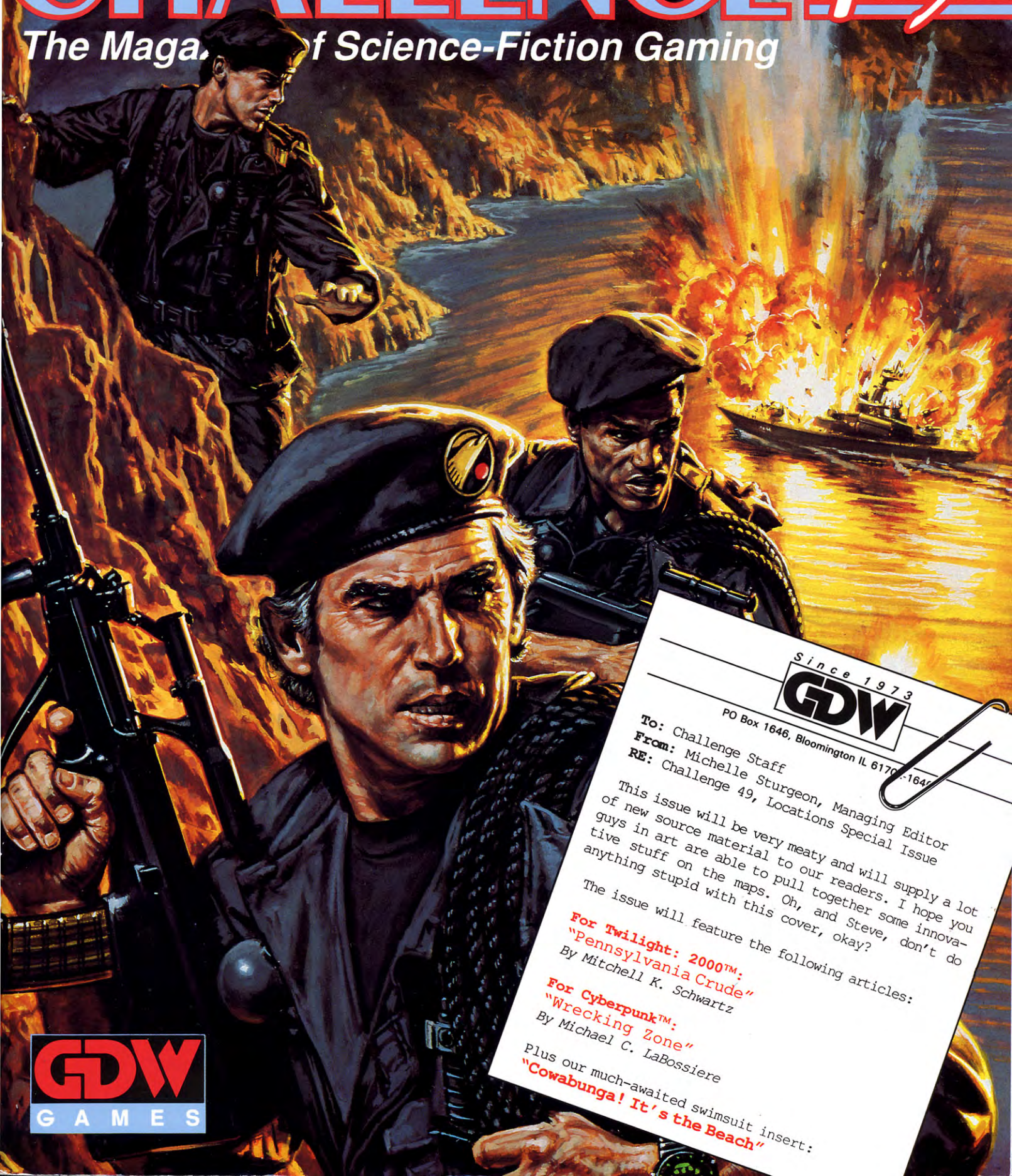
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CHALLENGE 49

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To: Challenge Staff
From: Michelle Sturgeon, Managing Editor
RE: Challenge 49, Locations Special Issue

This issue will be very meaty and will supply a lot of new source material to our readers. I hope you guys in art are able to pull together some innovative stuff on the maps. Oh, and Steve, don't do anything stupid with this cover, okay?

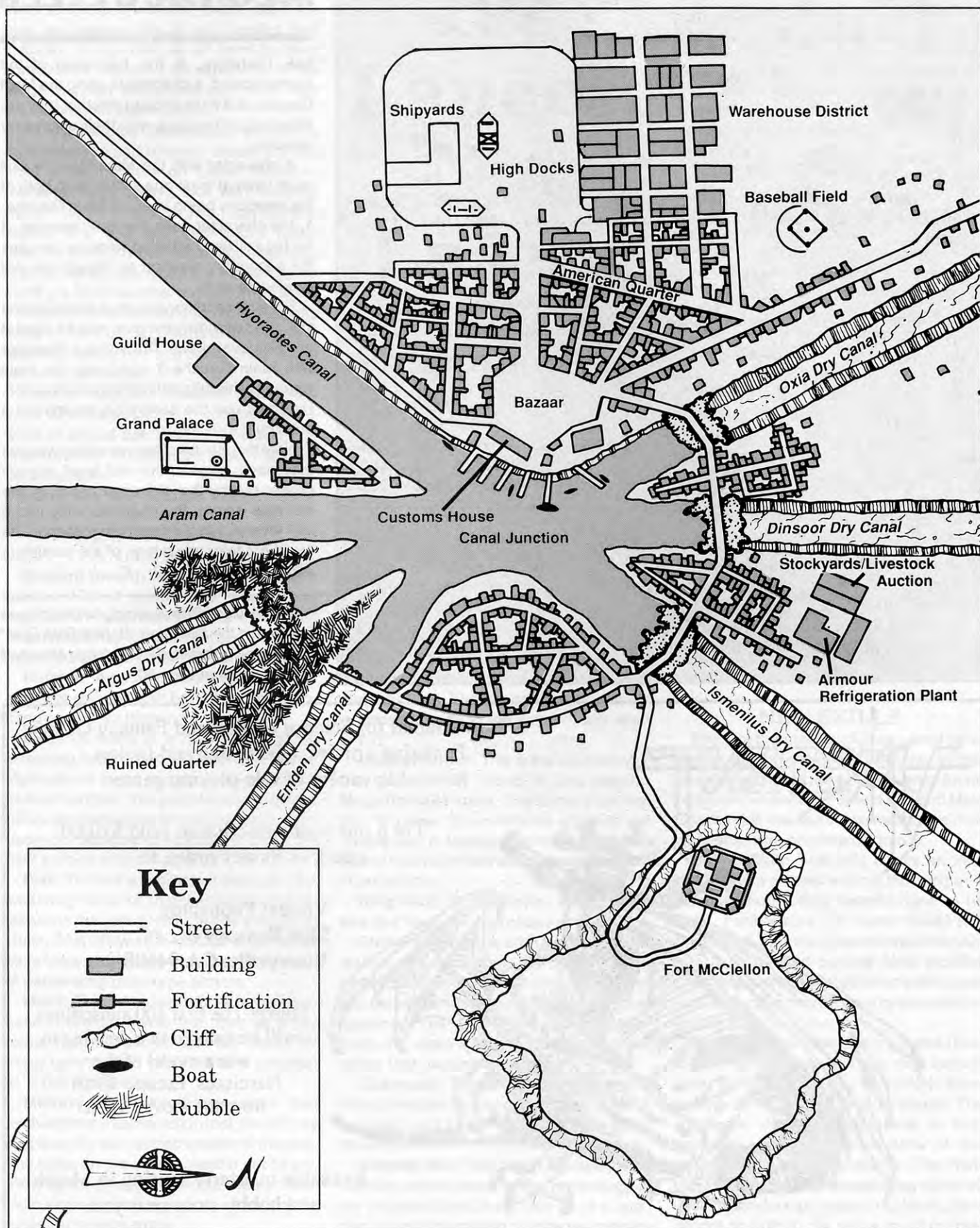
The issue will feature the following articles:

For Twilight: 2000™:
"Pennsylvania Crude"
By Mitchell K. Schwartz

For Cyberpunk™:
"Wrecking Zone"
By Michael C. LaBossier

Plus our much-awaited swimsuit insert:
"Cowabunga! It's the Beach"

Thymiamata: 1889



It has been stated by my fellow countrymen that the Yanks are rather like mice: They are everywhere you look and are always more than a bit of a nuisance. If these mice have a breeding hole, I should say it is Thymiamata. Never have I seen such an ostentatious display of capitalism gone wild—quaint native inns turned into rowdy gambling establishments, Martians walking the streets armed with modern repeater rifles imbibing harsh whiskey, and a host of other corruptions of major and minor proportions that the Yankees irresponsibly term “progress.” I fear not only for myself but for all the Red Planet if these rodents achieve any more of the glory they seem to feel they are destined for and carry their lack of values to other city-states. Unfortunately, from the look of it this may happen all too soon!

THYMIAMATA: 1889

At present, the Thymiamata is a boomtown. The demand for off-world goods is extremely high among Martians, and the city has more direct access to American goods than any other on the planet. Yankee trade policy, which is akin to Thymiamatan principles, holds nothing back, ensuring products flow wherever there is money to pay for them. Trade flows just as vigorously in the other direction—American purchasing agents will buy anything Martian for a dime if they can get a quarter for it stateside.

And as if this did not bring enough money-hungry Yanks to the city, silver was discovered in the Chryse Mountain Range. The resulting Silver Rush of 1889 has brought hundreds of hopeful prospectors and may prove to make similar “rushes” in Alaska, California, Nevada and Venezuela look like warm-up practices in comparison. Many Americans now live in Thymiamata, most of whom reside in the American Quarter. The American Quarter consists mostly of recently built brick, stone and wooden buildings and looks more like it belongs in the deserts of Arizona, Nevada or California than the Red Planet. It has an atmosphere as rowdy and untamed as any frontier town.

CITY STATISTICS

Population: 40,000 (plus 4200 humans)
Government: Strong Merchant
Corruption: Honest
Economy: Mercantile
Vitality: Wealthy
Army: Poor*
Army Size: 2*
Fleet Quality: Green*
Fleet Size: £100,000*
Attitude Toward Humans: Friendly

*Does not include the statistics for the US Army or the gunboat *Ranger*. The mercenaries of the ranking families are also not included.

IMPORTANT SECTIONS ABOUT TOWN

Refer to the Thymiamata Map to locate the areas discussed below.

American Quarter: This section of the city was built on the remains of a ruined district of the city, and thus has a disproportionately large number of recently constructed wood and brick buildings. It uses the dry bed of the former Oxia Canal as a main street. The quarter is now home to several thousand Yankees and has dozens of businesses ranging from small groceries and outfitters to the modern refrigerated warehouse of the Armour Meat Packing Company. The area is a beehive of activity during the day and boasts an extremely rowdy and dangerous nightlife.

Stockyards: A large area filled with metal and wooden corrals, the stockyards are the only major center on the planet where livestock can be bought and sold at auction. This activity takes place at the first of every month, during which time confusion is the watchword as ranchers drive their herds of gashants, eegaar and ruumet breehr through the major streets of the city. It is during this time that most citizens keep to the backroads and alleyways, though this still doesn't guarantee complete safety.

Armour Refrigeration Plant: Before his efforts on Venusstadt, Josephus Martin designed several large refrigeration warehouses for Armour Meats. One such structure was shipped out from Earth and assembled in Thymiamata, where it holds eegaar and gashant meat destined to be shipped offworld. The plant has given the company a near monopoly on fresh meat coming from the Red Planet, and plans are currently in the works for another, smaller icehouse that will store Earth meats destined for consumption on Mars. Given most resident Yanks' nostalgia for top sirloin, this could be quite a money maker.

Baseball Field: By 1889, baseball is the great American pastime. Accordingly, a baseball diamond was built on an open clearing just outside the American Quarter. Games are still between teams assembled on the spot, but the American Quarter Chamber of Commerce is trying to organize a more structured league.

Bazaar: Aside from the one at Syrtis Major, the open-air stalls of Thymiamata hold the largest selection of merchandise on the Red Planet. From forced-draught boilers to “hourglass” dresses to dime novels, it can all be found at the bazaar at one time or another.

Warehouse District: Once hangars for the great kites that comprised the city's merchant fleet, these mammoth buildings are now used to hold untold amounts of goods from all over every world in the Solar System. The ranking families own many of them, but several of these gigantic struc-



tures are now owned by American corporations as well. Some of the warehouses near Thymiamata High Port are used for their original intended purpose and hold up to three or four smaller kites, screw galleys and/or steam vessels apiece.

Fort McClellon: Named for a famous general of the American Civil War, Fort McClellon now houses the bulk of the US Army forces on Mars. The fort was originally a long-abandoned villa of some wealthy merchant prince, but has been renovated by the US Army Corps of Engineers and serves its current purpose quite well. The 12-pound guns of the fort can be positioned to cover most any section of the city as well as aerial targets, and a number of new style Maxim guns are in position to fire on any approaches to the building.

Grand Palace: The former seat for the king of Thymiamata, the impressive and beautiful Grand Palace was heavily damaged in the city's civil war. Over the years, all major damage has been repaired and the graceful structure now serves as the main government building. Offices for all factions of Thymiamata's ruling council are present in the building, and the US Embassy occupies the upper floors of the East Wing. Other nations maintain consulates in the building, including Germany, France, Russia, Japan, Canada, Great Britain and Italy.

Guild House: If not as large as the Grand Palace, the guild house is certainly as beautiful. It now serves as a meeting place for all artisan and trade guilds of the city, and each guild maintains its offices here. The guilds exercise a fair amount of influence over the government in Thymiamata. They have been known to be able to hold up proposed laws for months or even defeat them entirely, since it is their people who do the actual planning and skilled labor for every public works project in the city proper.

Canal Junction: Though only two of its original seven canals still function, Thymiamata conducts a great deal of its trade with nearby cities through the canal network. The levees that mark the dry canal beds are used to moor hundreds of boats and barges that call on Thymiamata, and berthing fees alone constitute a healthy percentage of city revenues. The dock area is, unfortunately, a natural breeding ground for the criminal elements of society, and travel after dark is quite dangerous for even a well-armed party. The residential slum around

Continued on page 50.

the docks (called "the wet docks" by the locals to avoid confusion with the high port) is home to every professional thief and murderer in the Chryse area, and many of these criminals are for hire if a prospective employer survives long enough to contact them.

High Docks: This large, open area of the city is busy day and night with cloudship and ether flyer traffic of all nationalities. The US Army maintains the gunboat *Ranger* here, and the hodgepodge mixture of patrol boats that constitute the Thymiamatan Navy calls this port home as well. Large pits of flame, fed by the gas from the city living sewers, provide illumination so bright that day or night makes no difference to the bustling port, making it as busy at 3 a.m. as it is at 12 noon.

Shipyards: While not actually capable of building aerial vessels, the shipyards of Thymiamata are able to make up to moderate repairs on just about any kind of cloudship, aerial steam vessel or ether flyer—including conversions—though the cost is about double that in the Crown Colony. Around the edges of the shipyards there are a number of inns and taverns that cater to all classes of society, with the lower-class establishments being nearer to the landing grounds. The Edison Ether Flyer Company has recently broken ground on a major repair facility, but estimates it will not be operational for some time yet.

Ruined Quarter: The remnants of a glorious past, the Ruined Quarter is a section of town far too damaged in the civil war to feasibly be repaired by the new government. Many of the structures here are still breathtakingly beautiful, though they show the cracks, chips and stains of decades of neglect. The section of the ruins by the wet docks is densely populated with the less desirable elements of society, but the vast sections inland are inhabited only by a few crazy and recluse individuals who want nothing to do with society. Rumors about hidden caches of gold and jewels abound, and given the fact that a great many pre-civil war banks were located in the quarter some of these rumors may be true, though no search has cashed in yet.

Customs Offices: These small buildings are found at every point where goods enter the city. Customs houses resemble police stations more than anything else, because platoons of Thymiamatan defense force troopers (members of Colonel Forrester's US Army detachment, see below) are stationed in them with the customs officials and conduct their random patrols from the houses. Customs fees levied on cargoes are a flat rate rather than a percentage of the cargo's value; they are generally low (to encourage trade). The main purpose of the

customs officials is to inhibit the flow of contraband goods, including arms, to the High Martians.

ANTIHUMAN UPRISINGS

While massive riots to protest the human presence in Thymiamata are always a passing fear of concerned humans, they are much less likely here than in Syrtis Lapis. There are resident Worm Cult and Ground Cleanser factions in the city, but they are nothing more than a few disorganized malcontents, responsible mostly for random acts of graffiti, the occasional assault and little else.

Mercantile Goodwill: Antihuman movements never really got any momentum going in Thymiamata. There are several reasons for this. First, and perhaps foremost, Thymiamata is a business town, and Americans mean offworld goods which are in great demand. Almost every merchant in the city realizes this trade brings the wealth and status the city so desires, and if this is accomplished by putting up with a few humans, so be it. Second, American aims are largely nonterritorial, so no resident Martians feel as though the US has any plans for annexing their homeland (or city in this case). Third, merchants from any world seem to have a natural rapport with one another, and Yankee and Thymiamatan traders are no different. Incompatible human and Martian languages were quickly overcome through the development of a mercantile pidgin tongue, and both races make money through cooperative trade: Wells Fargo loans money to Martian businesses, Sears contracts with local bargemen to carry its goods, American antiquity buyers up the price of the city's artworks, and so on. The result is a symbiosis few offworlders share with Martians.

Not So Home on the Range: Some problems have been encountered in the Chryse Plains, where American ranchers are setting up homesteads on waterholes and oases formerly used by Hill Martians. The herding of ruumet breehr and gashants for transportation and food (gashant meat for some reason has become a delicacy in some of New York's more posh restaurants) has become big business, and many ranchers are fencing off the land with that now infamous range shrinker, barbed wire. Naturally, Hill Martian tribes are resentful of this encroachment on what they see as communal land, and some are more violent about this resentment than others, but nothing large-scale has happened yet.

High Martian Problem: The real problem facing Thymiamata is not within city walls, nor is it to be found on the plains. Such danger lurks in the steep bluffs and towering peaks of the Oxia-Chryse Mountain Range, home of the dreaded High Martians.

For hundreds, more likely thousands, of years, the resident High Martians have posed a threat to trade caravans in the Chryse area. The location of the mountains enabled the beastmen to launch attacks on the cities with little difficulty, and almost all overland and canal traffic comes very close to the mountains in one area or another. When times were good and money was plentiful, guards could be hired to protect mercantile interests with minimal loss. But when times were bad, the High Martian beasts had the upper hand, plundering barge or caravan at will. High Martian income that was not derived from such piracy was brought in through the sale of liftwood from the massive groves in the plateaus. Truly it can be said that the High Martians of the Chryse area were among the richest brutes on the Red Planet.

Tribute to the Beastmen: Faced with mounting losses, the cities in the Chryse area established a habit of sending tribute directly to the High Martians in return for guarantees of safe passage, and over the generations this became an established business practice. Nobody—but nobody—would dare make a move on the liftwood groves, for to do so would bring a return to the days of High Martian piracy and terror. The High Martians were well pleased with this situation, one in which they ruled unquestionably through fear and intimidation.

Coming of the Americans: When the Yankees came to town, they followed the Martian lead of paying tribute, which pleased the savages to no end. Not only could they have a steady income from doing nothing more than looking tough, but they got all advanced offworld "toys" to boot. What the beasts did not know was that these Americans who so cowardly paid them were lobbying their congressmen for protection at the same time. President Grover Cleveland and the Congress were already fearful of antihuman uprisings, and even though the US did not have any formal jurisdiction over the Thymiamatan area, there were just too many Americans present to ignore there. So appropriations for an armed presence were made, and in 1889, the first elements of the US Army arrived in Thymiamata.

Enter the US Army: The unit's commanding officer was Colonel Robert E. Forrester, a veteran of both the Civil War and the Indian Wars who made no secrets about his desire to eradicate the High Martian terror once and for all. In a town speech, he announced that Americans citizens and their dependents were no longer, and indeed never had been, obligated to pay a ransom "to such scum and villainy as I have seen in those mountains." Likewise, he urged the Martians to cease their tribute as well. When the news of Forrester's little speech reached the High Martian kings, many a temper tantrum was thrown.

Thymiamata: A Brief Historical Perspective

By J. Alfred Shears, Dean of the School of Social Sciences, Oxford University

It has been theorized by modern scientists that Thymiamata, along with other grand canal junctions across the equator of the Red Planet, was a strategic point in the distribution of water from the polar ice caps to the rest of the dying world. Certainly its position—which is almost on the same parallel as Syrtis Major, Aubochon, Olympia and Tharsis—allowed for the best use of gravity to move literally billions of gallons of water across the equator everyday during that age when Martian society was capable of such feats.

Venice of Mars: Verifiable records trace the history of the city back some 5000 years, and depict the city as deriving great power and influence through trade and commerce, possibly rivaling Syrtis Major at one time. This has led many historians to compare Thymiamata's position to that of Earth's Venice during the later Middle Ages. Like the Medieval Italian city, Thymiamata developed a wealthy merchant class based on the extended family. These merchants each grew to control different aspects of economic and political life, and loyalty to one's family was stressed above all else. Ancient texts report violence was often used as a means to solve problems of clan rivalry, and skirmishes were once a common sight in the city streets. Even today, family palaces and townhomes in the old quarters of Thymiamata have battlements and narrow windows, an architectural influence which lingers from this period. Usually, however, interfamily violence was kept to a minimum by a king, who swore allegiance to and derived his power from the Seldons. Ironically, the later generations of Thymiamatan kings became the adversaries that unified the merchant princes.

Architectural Beauty: It was during the reign of the early Seldons that the Venice of Mars was reported to be the most beautiful city on the Red Planet, and produced some of the most exquisite architectural wonders ever accomplished at the hands of a Martian, save perhaps for the magnificent canals that give the planet life. Reminiscent of similar efforts in 14th-century Italy, tall and graceful civic centers, temples and palaces were built in community efforts that belied the hatred of the clans. Like their counterparts on a distant Earth—the Cathedral of Saint Mark, the Doges' Palace—such structures as the Grand Palace, Temporal Courts and others incorporate statues, painting, reliefs, columns, temponas, domes and arches from all over the Red Planet, fixtures which were purchased by travelling Thymiamatan merchant princes and brought to the city. Even today, the city is revered for its abundance of well-preserved art work, much of it brought to Thymiamata during this period.

Decline: As seems the case universally, all good things must come to an end. So was it with the Venice of Mars. No exact year can be given, but the beginning of the end is thought to have occurred some 1500 years ago, about five centuries after the bulk of Mars was well on the road to decadence. Thymiamata felt the breakup of Seldon's Empire, but trade with other cities continued regardless of political affiliation. In addition, the wealth stockpiled in the city's coffers and a large army kept the city out of the petty wars that fragmented the once-mighty empire.

But inevitably, the events of the outside world affected the still-prosperous city, mostly in the form of declining trade and risky travel. No longer was the army of Seldon around to protect Thymiamata's barges from bandits and those beastly High Martians. The personal army of the city's king was available, but it was hardly up to such a large-scale task, nor was it willing. Barges which came to the city's canal junction with goods grew fewer in number every year, until the activity slowed to only a trickle.

Tax Problems: As the economy fell into recession, then depression, the ruling king imposed taxes on the merchant princes for the first time in the city's history. Such a move was resented, but accepted as necessary even at first. Over the next few centuries, more taxes were levied and friction between the merchants and royalty grew. Before long these institutions became two polarized and mutually hostile camps, though sheer need for survival kept them from using their diminishing resources to fight one another.

Untrustworthy of any and all outsiders, the ruling family fell to intermarriage, and in no time produced a series of incompetent successors quite incapable of making simple decisions, let alone running a city. As a sad backdrop to these ongoing political developments, the canals Thymiamata depended on for contact with the rest of the planet dried up or fell into disrepair.

The Straw That Broke the Camel's Back: The records of the city and many private scholars point to a draconian tax, imposed some 600 years ago, as the turning point in this chaotic time (the actual name for this period in Old Chrysean is *Lashnaashak*, which translates literally as "the time of chaos" or "the chaotic years"). Sources conflict as to the exact nature of the tax (and the translation is complicated by the metaphoric nature of the phraseology), some saying it required the merchants to give up their firstborn children, others that it demanded all taxes to be paid in blood—in any case, the tax was something completely unacceptable.

The merchant families refused the tax, as well as all others then in effect, on the grounds that the family no longer had any clear authority from Seldon. The king sent in elements of his army, now weak from years of corruption, desertion and attrition, only to have it defeated in a pitched battle with the combined private armies of the merchant families. A civil war of sorts ensued for about as month, as the royal army and clan mercenaries ravaged vast portions of the city hunting each other down and laying siege to one another's fortifications. In the end, the king was defeated and bloodily butchered by a mob of angry citizens. The days of royalty in the city were at an end.

Chaos Years: A number of confusing years followed as the victorious families struggled (using political maneuvering and in-fighting) with each other for control of the city. Eventually a government was formed that represented the families, but was extended to include the artisan guilds as well when it was realized that their services would be needed to rebuild the city. The finances for the new government were provided for by "appropriating" the deposed king's treasury and reasonable taxes were implemented, but these funds were nowhere near what was needed to resurrect the five dead canals that had dried up over the centuries. As if that weren't enough, whole portions of the city were devastated by the civil war, and what artillery fire did not finish, subsequent looting and fires did.

Reconstruction: Through decades of hard work, the new government was able to put Thymiamata on its feet again to some degree. The two remaining working canals were repaired. This allowed for trade to go on with the cities of Hyoraotes and Aram. Later, other cities along the canal networks were recontacted and opened for trade. The dead canals were useless for any kind of barge traffic but were still useful as roads, so caravans began carrying Thymiamatan finished goods to the cities of Oxia, Argus and even distant Dinsoor. Damage to Thymiamata was such that complete restoration of the pre-civil war city was all but impossible, but an ambitious public works project allowed for many of the more valuable buildings to be saved.

Though only a shadow of its former self, Thymiamata has now recovered to the extent that it once again plays an important part in the economic life of Chryse area, and even in the wealthy and prosperous Mare Erythraeum basin as well. The knack for business shown by most Thymiamatans and their largely free-market economy is what made the city the perfect place for the Americans to settle when they began arriving in 1876.

The brutes had formidable numbers, and one good coordinated attack would have no doubt destroyed the small US force, but the Americans simply lucked out. The High Martian kings did not trust one another, and while they would verbally throw their support into the idea of crushing the funny red men in blue uniforms, no king was willing to commit too many warriors on a plan for fear the others would move in on him. The result was a pathetic series of uncoordinated attacks which were quite literally blown out of the air by Forrester's new Maxim machineguns and 12-pound breech-loading cannons. Witnessing these defeats, the Thymiamatans grew brave enough to refuse tribute as well, and soon the brutes were left with no terror-based income at all.

King Kurge: Perhaps the most powerful, and certainly the most verbal, of the kings was a savage named Kurge. This barbarian ruler benefited greatly from caravan traffic along the Thymiamata-Oxia dry canal, but also enjoyed the fruits of his slave-worked silver mines and liftwood groves. His attacks (anyone else might call them harassing raids) were beaten off time and again, but unlike the smaller kings, Kurge refused to stop.

The good colonel's new scout unit was able to locate Kurge's kraag, enabling the soldiers to escalate the war early on. In a night action that is sure to be written into the history books, Forrester and a group of volunteers took a pair of disassembled mountain howitzers up into the mountains undetected, assembled them within three miles of the mountain fortress and began firing shells at it. The damage was not very extensive, but it held Kurge up as weak in the eyes of his subjects, and led more than one kraag warrior to have second thoughts about attacking the US Army again.

In a poorly considered, rage-motivated attempt at self-redemption, Kurge has recently decided to attack other nearby kraags and defeat them to regain status in the eyes of his followers. The other kings have proved far stronger than Kurge thought, however, and now a massive, confusing war is ensuing as the respective High Martian warlords battle each other for control of whatever they can find as a reasonable excuse to fight. To make matters worse, many of Kurge's subchiefs have decided to rebel against the once-mighty king, further complicating the situation. To add insult to injury, the Americans have started organizing poaching parties for liftwood into Kurge's liftwood groves, and a few of the larger mining companies have started mining the once-frightening hills for silver.

State of Affairs: The current state of affairs benefits everyone but the savages: The US Army has created a positive image for itself and America in general by "defeating" the High Martians, the economy of the city has had one major barrier to prosperity removed, and kraags that once boasted of great wealth and invulnerability are disorganized, disillusioned and paranoid.

Attacks on traffic anywhere in the Chryse area are far from unheard of, but as a general rule, attacks from High Martians on merchant traffic are up, and caravans carrying or using modern weapons seem to be the favored target—perhaps indicative of the desperate situation many of the kings are in. Most large parties are usually left alone, though, if there is no evidence they have cargo (i.e., loaded wagons, crates displayed on deck and so forth). Patrols of cavalry from the Thymiamatan defense force are not as frequent as most people would like, but still provide a measure of protection to

travelers fortunate enough to run into them. Bandits of both Martian and human extraction have been reported waylaying small, lightly armed groups (but specifics and confirmation of such attacks have proved difficult to elicit or confirm).

One fact that scares out-of-towners, especially British subjects who have dealt with the High Martians of Kraag Barrovaar, is the large number of modern weapons the beastmen of the Chryse Range have acquired ("Gad, they're a bad enough lot with spears and the like, but here they have Winchesters?"). But this situation is really not as bad as it is rumored to be. True, many weapons have found their way into High Martian hands, but most are used to fight other High Martians in the ongoing chaos the beastmen refer to as the Kraag War. Perhaps as an added plus, the High Martians do not seem to have grasped the concept of preventative maintenance yet, so the breakdown rate of what modern weapons they have acquired is extremely high. Evidence of this was photographed by the well-known Clancy Silver Expedition earlier this year. Clancy and his men found no silver, but came across a pile of dozens of Winchester, Remington and Colt small arms rusting at the bottom of a steep canyon—apparently thrown there by High Martians who considered them no longer functional.

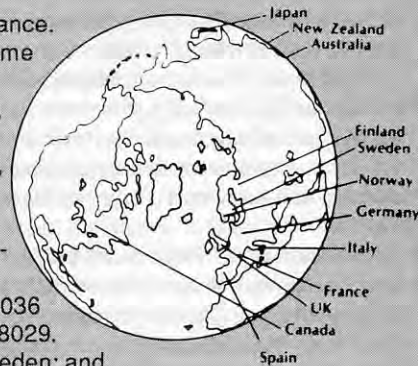
Thymiamata is dangerous, as is the surrounding countryside, but it provides the Americans a chance to expand where the frontier of the West left off. PCs need not look for trouble—sooner or later, it will find them. Ω

Don't miss part 2 of "Thymiamata: 1889" in Challenge 50. Special thanks to Damon D. Aske for his work on the design of the city map.

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Thymiamata: 1889

Each armed force in the Martian city of Thymiamata serves a different special interest, with few, if any, combatants protecting the city as a whole from outside aggression. These forces coexist in a seemingly peaceful manner to the casual observer, but are in a state of constant low-level bickering as to each one's rights over the other, and it makes for confusing politics.

Private Armies

THE MERCHANT FAMILIES that are prosperous enough hire guards to protect their lives and property, and the most powerful of the merchant clans have what can be best described as small armies at their disposal. Though hired and tailored to fit each clan's needs on an individual basis (no mercenaries are hired in any groups greater than three for fear of a large unit turning on the clans), most of these larger forces have the equivalent of one infantry company and at least one company of cavalry. The infantry units are usually divided between guarding the family manor, workshops (if the clan has any), and warehouses (as a deterrent to crime). It is highly likely that the practice of private armies developed in response to the interclan fighting that was so common hundreds of years ago, as the number of guards posted to such assignments even now are far more than needed for the relatively calm streets of modern Thymiamata. Nonetheless, a good show of force seems to be a status symbol among some powerful merchants, so the practice is maintained.

The cavalry units are the ones that warrant their excessive numbers. It is these units that accompany the caravans into the dangerous deserts and ward off High Martian and brigand alike. As a result, cavalry units tend to be more experienced, though the tactics they employ are defensive in nature.

Equipment for these private armies is as varied as their organizations, but families find it advantageous to arm their men with the best weapons available, which usually means American weapons, though French, British, German and even Belgian weapons are used by the private armies. Obviously, the richer the family the more powerful the weapons, but few if any heavy weapons (i.e., Gatlings, Hotchkisses, Nordenfelts, etc.) are in service. Those that are in service usually are mounted in guarded gates or held in storage as someone's ace in the hole. Uniforms consist of family colors and crest, and make for easy identification in practically any condition. For combat pur-

poses, consider family infantry units to be Experienced with a Fieldcraft rating of 2 (1 for **Soldier's Companion** purposes), but they rarely see combat in units greater than platoon-strength. The cavalry range from Experienced to Veteran, and have Fieldcraft ratings from 2 to 5.

Defense Force

THYMIAMATA'S MERCHANTS were never very fond of the idea of a centralized army (an understandable feeling when the only city army they ever knew came knocking at their houses to collect taxes or impose new laws), but the new government recognized the need for some armed body to keep the peace. The result was the Thymiamata Defense Force, an army which serves more as a police force than anything else.

Infantry: The TDF consists of four companies of infantry, two of cavalry, and two batteries of artillery. Infantry units are broken up into platoon- and squad-strength units and are stationed at or near important civic structures, such as the high docks, the canal junction's custom house, the guild house, the Grand Palace and the bazaar. There are several stations throughout the city that house platoons in what can best be described in Earth terms as a police precinct system, though the areas of the city each station administers seem to be loosely defined. These stations send patrols of two to five soldiers through the city streets, which can report to any TDF post. As the infantry's duties consist mostly of breaking up crowds, clearing traffic (especially during a livestock drive) and apprehending petty thieves, its combat experience is minimal. Infantry units are Trained and have no Fieldcraft skill.

Cavalry: The cavalry tends to be more seasoned than its infantry counterpart. Cavalry units are the only TDF units to see duty outside the city. They are charged with patrolling the dry beds for High Martians and robbers, but also send units into the Chryse Badlands and along the wet canals. The cavalry is stationed centrally in the lower west wing of the Grand Palace, and one company is kept on call for riot duty in the event infantry posts need backup. All units are Experienced and have a Fieldcraft of 2 (1 in **Soldier's Companion** rules).

Artillery: The artillery batteries see little, if any, use at all, and are kept in the unlikely event of a major siege, something that has never occurred in Thymiamata's history. Artillery consists of two batteries, the high battery and the mobile battery.

High Battery: The high battery, as its name would imply, is stationed near the high docks,

Encounters, Personalities and Groups

By Neil V. Young

and consists of a large tower fitted with four rod guns positioned to cover all approaches to the port by air. A pair of sweeper guns is emplaced on the roof of the tower in the advent of High Martian attack, but these guns have no official crews. The artilleryists that man the battery are a sorry lot. Most of them have had only rudimentary training on the weapons they man, and only the senior officers (of which there are two) have any combat experience whatsoever. Absenteeism is common at the battery, with only a quarter of the men on station at any given time. With things the way they are, an attack on the High Port could be devastating. The artillerymen are all Green soldiers, and their depleted ranks allow for only one gun to be fired at a time.

Mobile Battery: The mobile battery is more of a battery in storage than a functional part of the TDF. These four carriage-mounted light guns were originally intended to accompany the infantry units into the field—a place the infantry has never gone. Because of this, the battery was placed in an obscure part of the yard where it has sat for the past few decades. There are no crews for the guns anymore, and the carriages are rotted and pitted with rust from lack of care. The guns themselves are still in fair shape, but there is nothing left in the way of ammunition for them in the armory.

Limitations on the TDF: The TDF is limited in many ways by the government. For one thing, the property of the ranking merchant houses is effectively off-limits to any TDF personnel. Property, in this case, refers to guards, warehouses, family members, family estates or even interfamily quarrels. The size of the TDF is also strictly limited, as the families still fear the military, and new soldiers are recruited literally as old ones are killed. This makes replacements all but impossible to get in a crisis situation, as witnessed by the limited patrols and new recruiting announcements after a major fire or riot. Pay is not the best, and most seasoned mercenaries hire out to the family guard forces, leaving the TDF to pick through the inexperienced leftovers.

US Army

THE US ARMY arrived in early 1889 and was given permission to occupy an old fortress-villa that overlooked the city. The Army's Corps of Engineers renovated the structure into a very defensible fort and renamed it Fort McClellon, in honor of Colonel Forrester's Civil War hero and mentor. The fort now holds three companies of infantry, the company of engineers, a cavalry troop, and an artillery battery. A company of Hill Martian warriors was hired by the colonel as scouts, and serves as translators and guides for the fort. The crew and marines for the USS *Ranger* are sta-

tioned at the high docks with the ship, but are under the colonel's command as well.

Infantry: The infantry companies are all Veteran units with an effective Fieldcraft skill of 3 (2 for **Soldier's Companion** purposes) and are armed with bolt-action rifles. One company is assigned to the American Quarter and State Department offices, while the other two are kept on station at the fort.

Engineers: The engineers have been on the planet the longest. They are currently engaged in a project to link the fort to the city's sewer system, but can fight effectively if called upon to do so. Engineers are Experienced NPCs armed with breech-loading carbines. They have no Fieldcraft, but have Engineering (structural engineering) skill, which may come in handy in a combat situation.

Cavalry: The cavalry unit consists mostly of men Colonel Forrester had under his command at one time or another. Its members have seen combat in the Civil War and/or the Indian Wars. As a result, they are the most experienced the army has currently, with a Veteran troop rating and Fieldcraft skill of 5 (4 in **Soldier's Companion**). The cavalry is used in conjunction with the scouts to perform long-range patrols and mapping expeditions, but has been sent to search for and destroy rogue bands of desperadoes and brigands many a time. Like many of its counterpart units in Syrtis Lapis, the US Cavalry insisted on bringing its horses to the Red Planet. This gives US Cavalry units a distinct advantage in speed over most Martian units (horses, while not as tough as gashants, are faster in short-run sprints and pursuits) and has earned them a role as a reaction force.

Artillery: The artillery battery consists of three 12-pound breech-loading cannons emplaced to cover all approaches to the fort, and a seven-pound mountain howitzer positioned to provide indirect cover fire for the American Quarter. Colonel Forrester felt this original battery would be inadequate to serve his needs completely, and took the liberty of requisitioning two additional seven-pounders and five Maxim guns. The howitzers are kept in storage until needed (such as for the profoundly effective strike on



Kurge's kraag) and two of the Maxims are emplaced in the fort's guard tower. Mounts at many points in the fort allow the remaining guns to be brought to bear where needed, taking advantage of the guns' portability. All infantrymen have had at least basic training in the use of these new pieces, and the guns are manned by those on duty at the time.

Scouts: As was the case in the American Southwest, the US Army has brought into service natives to act as guides and translators. The scout unit attached to Fort McClellon is actually the remains of a Hill Martian tribe that was slaughtered in a violent blood feud some years ago, and subsequently hired on before the fort was completed. These warriors have been surviving for some time on the open plains and are a Veteran unit with a Fieldcraft skill of 5. Their armament consists of US-issued breech-loaders and repeaters, though pole arms and bows are still used for close combat.

Encounter Descriptions

NOTE THAT the table assumes daytime activity. For night encounters, all merchant encounters become thug.

Thug: 1D6+3 ruffians confront the players. If this is an open area they will try to coerce the group into an alleyway, where the cutthroats will shake the player characters down for money and goods. If the group is already in an alley or deserted area of town, the thugs will attack, out of ambush if they can. Such undesirables are armed with knives and clubs, but may pull a gun or two if things get hot. They will avoid any group that is not easy pickings.

Thief: One of the PCs is the victim of a pickpocket (determine the target randomly). If the player character succeeds in a difficult Observation roll, he will catch the thief in the process; otherwise, the PC will notice later on that a personal possession is gone

ENCOUNTERS IN THYMIAMATA

Terrain	Canal	High	American			City
Encounter #	Docks	Docks	Quarter	Bazaar	Ruins	Proper
Die Roll	4	3	2	4	2	3
Encounter Type						
1	Thug	Crew	Thug	Thief	Brigands	Patrol
2	Brawl	Merchant	Brawl	Merchant	Thief	Merchant
3	Crew	Patrol	US Army	Merchant	Collapse	Beggar
4	Patrol	Thief	Marshal	Merchant	Rubble	Patrol
5	Beggar	Crew	Merchant	Brawl	Animal	Brawl
6	Thief	Brawl	NPC	Patrol	Rubble	Thief

(watch, passport, derringer, etc.). If caught, the criminal will flee into the crowd or down a busy street.

Brawl: A disagreement gets out of hand. The incident could be a barroom brawl that spills into the street, a stiffed merchant, or even rival ship crews, but in 1D6 rounds the TDF will disperse the fight.

The exception will be if members of the ranking merchant families are going at it, in which case no one will interfere. Weapons are usually confined to knives, bottles, chairs and other makeshift melee weapons, but large fights may see swords or even firearms used.

Patrol: A random sweep of two to five TDF troops is encountered. These individuals are armed with swords and shields, and will most likely ignore the PCs unless the group does something outwardly violent or illegal.

Merchant: The group comes upon either an open-air stall (in the bazaar), a pushcart, or a store.

What the merchant has, as well as his price, is up to the referee.

Beggar: The PCs run into 1D6 beggars, who accost them asking for a handout. In the poorer sections of town, the party could run across a small camp of these destitutes in a vacant lot or living in a building. Such a group would number 3D6 and literally swarm the PCs with pleas for charity.

Marshal: The party encounters either the marshal or one of his men. The player characters will most likely not be bothered by the man, unless of course they are doing something suspicious.

NPC: A major NPC is encountered. Depending on what the referee wants, the NPC could be in trouble, looking for trouble, or this could be just a chance meeting. This encounter is a good way to make friends or enemies.

US Army: 1D6+1 of the colonel's men are met. They can be either off duty having fun or actively patrolling the quarter. Should any large fighting break out in the American Quarter, this automatically becomes the next encounter, as the men arrive to break up the fight and disperse bystanders. They will be armed as described above, and will most likely be infantrymen (1-4 on a D6), but could be cavalry (5-6).

Crew: The party runs across crewmembers of one of the canal or cloud vessels that frequent Thymiamata.

Most of these individuals will be from merchant ships, but a fair number of American Red Captains call at the city as well, so the choice of who the party runs across is up to the referee.

Rubble: Found in the ruined quarter only, the PCs come across a mountain of fallen stones and other debris that makes passage down the street literally impossible.

The PCs will have to find another way around.

Collapse: Either the floor of a building or a section of street gives way under the weight of one or more of the party members (roll 1D6 to determine which of the first six are in trouble) causing a fall that will result in 1D6+2 wounds. Characters successfully rolling against their Dexterity will be able to grab hold of something and avert the fall, but all equipment in their hands will have to be dumped.

PROMINENT NPCS OF THYMIAMATA

HERE ARE A FEW OF Thymiamata's more interesting and colorful personalities.

King Kurge (Veteran NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 3, Close Combat 2 (pole arm)
Agl: 1	Marksmanship 2 (bow)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 4 (foraging)
Int: 3	Observation 3
Chr: 2	Eloquence 1, Linguistics 2 (Koline, Na-Gaaryani)
Soc: 6	Leadership 2

Kurge is the king of the largest of the Chryse kraags, though he may not be for long. Kurge was humiliated in the eyes of most of his followers when the US Army successfully shelled his mountain fortress. To avoid the conflicts that come with a weak leader, Kurge stupidly tried to redeem himself by attacking the other kings, who for years were a source of rivalry. This resulted in the current war that depletes his forces daily. To make matters worse (for Kurge anyway), Thymiamata has ceased paying tribute and hordes of Americans are poaching his liftwood groves and mining his silver veins. With the war, the brute lacks the manpower to stop these incursions. His is not an enviable position.

Kurge no longer leads the attack waves personally for what he claims are reasons of age. He is, in effect, not that old, but is secretly very afraid he will be assassinated by one or more discontented subjects. He keeps a small army of bodyguards in attendance at all times, as well as several slaves to taste his food first. Kurge is now very paranoid. He speaks his region's dialect of High Martian as a native tongue.

Motives: Hatred (for the world), mad.

Appearance: Kurge looks bad, even for a High Martian. His face has very baggy eyes from lack of sleep, and he rarely has enough energy to lift his great bulk from his throne. His hair is knotted and far too long (he will not let anyone cut it), and he keeps with him at all times a rusting double-barreled shotgun, a weapon he will not hesitate to use on his own mother if he feels she is conspiring against him.

Kyle Wilkes (Experienced NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 5	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 2, Close Combat 3 (edged weapon)
Agl: 4	Stealth 3, Marksmanship 5 (pistol)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (foraging), Fieldcraft 2
Int: 2	Observation 2
Chr: 1	
Soc: 1	Riding 3 (horse)

With the many wonderful goodies the Americans have brought, along came the not-so-wonderful goodies, and of these, Kyle Wilkes is typical. Claiming to have killed more than a dozen men and about a quarter as many Martians, Kyle does little more than look for trouble with his band of toughs. He carefully avoids military patrols (too much firepower) but scoffs at the marshal and his men.

Just what Wilkes' background is, nobody knows (or cares). It is assumed he fled to Mars to escape the hangman's noose, or perhaps the closing of the frontier made it too hard for him to maintain his lifestyle; either way, Thymiamata is stuck with him.

Wilkes' native tongue is English.

Motives: Sadistic, boastful.

Appearance: Wilkes wears clothing befitting a slime bag: greasy and dirty, with dark colors prevailing. He looks like he has not bathed in a year. Kyle wears his bowie knife and six-gun proudly, but has an arsenal of concealed weapons, including a garrote, two derringers, a throwing knife, and a razor blade.

Shazjuk (Veteran NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 4 (pole arm)
Agl: 4	Stealth 3, Marksmanship 3 (bow)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (foraging), Fieldcraft 4, Tracking 3
Int: 3	Observation 2
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Linguistics 2 (English, Koline)
Soc: 5	Riding 4 (gashant)

Shazjuk is the commander of the band of Hill Martians employed by the US Army, a group that serves the fort as translators and guides. The warrior and his group are the surviving remnants of a tribe that was wiped out some years ago in a blood feud. They wandered the deserts for awhile until they came upon the construction site of the fort and were hired on almost immediately.

Like many Indians who serve in similar functions in the southwestern US, Shazjuk hopes to one day avenge himself upon the tribe that nearly wiped him out. He sees the weapons the army gives him as the key to this plan, but feels bound by honor (and, though he won't admit it, loyalty) to fulfill his

duties to the army. He makes no secret of his plans, and has discussed them with the colonel on several occasions, but does not believe he will move on the rival tribe for quite awhile yet, mostly because he feels it will give the colonel problems with antihuman activities. In the meantime, he is content to wait. After all, the longer he waits, the more proficient his men get with their new guns.

Shazjuk speaks Edenti as his native language.

Motives: Driven (to avenge his people), loyal (to his tribe and the fort).

Appearance: Shazjuk wears his long hair in braids for battle and has a long scar on his left cheek, a constant reminder of his ordeal on the plains. He dresses in what American clothes fit him, including a leather belt and holster for his Colt army revolver. In combat, the warrior uses a breech-loading carbine, but still feels more comfortable with his traditional bow.

Marshal William T. Porter (Trained NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 5	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl: 2	Marksmanship 2 (pistol), Stealth 1
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 3 (foraging), Tracking 1, Fieldcraft 1
Int: 4	Observation 3
Chr: 1	Bargaining 2
Soc: 2	Riding 1 (horse)

While Colonel Forrester is charged with keeping the American Quarter safe, Billy Porter is responsible for upholding its laws. Unlike his military counterpart, however, Porter does little to see that his job is carried out.

Porter, of English descent, has a largely unknown background. He has his job primarily because no one else wanted it. To be sure, bringing law and order to such a wild place is an uphill battle (if you consider a cliff "uphill"), but Porter does not fight in the first skirmishes, and accepts bribes for looking the other way from resident brothel madams and saloon keepers. His force of a dozen men runs the gamut from honest to corrupt, but everyone arrested is brought before Porter anyway.

Anyone in such a position stands to lose his weapons and valuables, but a large bribe will always get him released and cleared of all charges. English characters brought before Porter can expect no special treatment, as the man has no great love for his former country (or his present one, for that matter). Only a large amount of money will get a positive response from the man. So ineffective is he in his job that the army is forced to send troops in to do his job for him.

William plans on skipping town when he

socks away enough money, which at his current rate of acquisition will not be too much longer.

When this happens, his naive but otherwise honest deputy will take over; a definite improvement for Thymiamatan law enforcement.

William's native language is English.

Motives: Greedy, liar.

Appearance: Any British subjects that see Porter will be glad he left the Crown. The man is overweight, greasy, and has an almost continuous 5 o'clock shadow.

He carries a very visible desperado-style scattergun in an oversized holster on his belt, and has a Remington derringer hidden in his boot.

Governor Charles White (Trained NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 1 (pistol)
End: 1	Wilderness Travel 1 (mountain climbing)
Int: 4	Observation 4
Chr: 6	Eloquence 5, Bargaining 3, Linguistics 4 (Na-Gaaryani, Koline, French, German)
Soc: 6	Riding 5 (horse)

Governor White is actually more of a mayor. He is most concerned with the administration of an American Quarter that is growing by leaps and bounds from his office in the Grand Palace. As the ranking government official, White is also pressed into the roles of host, ambassador, and inspector general, all of which he performs quite well.

Charles began his career in government in an obscure position in the State Department, and his proficiency with paperwork earned him better assignments as the years went by. When he was offered the Mars position, he snapped it up with dreams of exotic adventure running through his mind. So far, however, the job has been nothing more than a trip to a faraway records office, with an occasional formal dinner or ball to break the monotony.

Charles' spirits are dimmed now, but his hope remains that one day he will have an opportunity to wander the Red Planet in search of adventure. White has never been in combat, but has practiced hard with his small revolver and is proficient with it. He took up mountain climbing back on Earth, but knows the mountains here are too dangerous to allow him to further participate in mountaineering as a recreational activity.

Charles' native language is English.

Motives: Responsible, adventuresome.

Appearance: Charles is a model bureaucrat, always clean and well kept. His clothing is of the finest makes, and he is



well-known for the gold pocket watch and chain that he strings from his right pocket. He keeps a light revolver in his vest pocket in the advent of an attack, but will probably never get a chance to use it because a contingent of army soldiers is always nearby.

Colonel Robert E. Forrester (Elite NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 5 (edged weapon)
Agl: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 3 (pistol)
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 4 (mapping), Fieldcraft 2
Int: 4	Observation 4
Chr: 5	Eloquence 3
Soc: 4	Riding 4 (horse), Leadership 3

An exceptional soldier, Forrester served brilliantly in the Civil War and in subsequent campaigns against the Apache in the Arizona and New Mexico territories.

Because of this sterling record and his experience with frontier warfare, the colonel was the logical choice to head up the Thymiamata force when it shipped out earlier this year.

Robert Forrester has been a soldier pretty much all of his adult life, and he has witnessed many acts of cruelty. He knows it is one thing to defeat an enemy, but quite another to rape and pillage. During the Apache campaign he saw wanton acts of cruelty as his men fell about burning and murdering Indian villages in a hyped anger the government only seemed to encourage.

He did his best to stop the actions, and he swore he would never allow such a thing to happen again.

On Mars he intends to make good on this promise, especially with the threat of antihuman riots that seems to loom over so many city-states these days.

The colonel's mission on Mars is simple: protect Thymiamata's American Quarter from antihuman movements (at least that is what he was told in Washington). Upon his arrival, he determined that the real threat came from the High Martians, not some underground network of Canal Martians, and immediately set about relieving the city of this menace.

In his now famous mountain howitzer raid, the colonel was able to turn the beast kings on one another and take the pressure off Thymiamata. This was a far cry from actually eradicating the menace, but it is more than the Canal Martians have been able to do in several

hundred years. Robert knows High Martian paranoia did most of the work, but still enjoys his popularity among the people as a savior.

Robert's native language is English.

Motives: Ambitious, just.

Appearance: The colonel is now in his late 40s, but still boasts a lean body and full head of dark hair. His piercing blue eyes seem to see right through people, and he has a very direct manner not given to small talk. Forrester keeps his Colt Peacemaker (heavy revolver) at his side day and night, and has a customized Henry rifle (treat as a lever-action rifle) prominently displayed in his quarters.

Barelaan Ashtaak (Trained NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 2 (bashing weapon)
Agl: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 2 (pistol), Crime 3 (forgery)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mapping)
Int: 5	Observation 4, Pilot 3 (sailing vessel—canal barge)
Chr: 6	Eloquence 6, Bargaining 5, Linguistics 3 (English, Koline, Parhooni)
Soc: 5	Riding 4 (gashant), Leadership 5

Barelaan is the patriarch of the Astaak Clan, one of the most powerful and influen-

tial families in Thymiamata. From his office high in the family tower, he issues orders, makes appropriations, and runs every aspect of the family holdings. From payroll and petty cash to fruit stands and barge traffic, there is not a thing the family does that doesn't get sent through Barelaan first.

The merchant king was raised for his position practically from the time he could walk. He spent the bulk of his early years commanding the family barges as they journeyed all over the Red Planet, but assumed his position as head of the family when his father died several years ago. Despite the fact he rarely leaves the tower for any reason nowadays, Barelaan knows the ways of the street well from his years on the barges.

Barelaan has been discussing a deal with Wells Fargo to obtain the capital necessary to outfit his barges with steam engines in a manner not unlike the paddlewheel steamers plying the Mississippi he saw in an edition of *Harper's Weekly*. This deal will cost a pretty penny, but he feels that the extra speed of his barges will enable his family to get a corner on Malaan fruits from the Mare Erythraeum area, a fruit that is in big demand on Earth but spoils quickly. Barelaan's mind works incredibly quick, and is always coming up with innovative ideas

like this. He reads many American magazines for relaxation, which serve as spurs for his new ideas.

Inventors or scientists in a party meeting the patriarch will be treated like royalty and asked a volley of questions about how certain inventions can be used for his mercantile needs.

Barelaan's native tongue is Na-Gaaryani.

Motives: Mercantile, knowledge (for inventions that improve business).

Appearance: Barelaan dresses in the finest clothing available when he goes out, but at home can be found in any old garment that was lying in his dresser drawers. His energy and enthusiasm about business and science belie his old age, and he no more than finishes one discussion when he starts on another.

He is accompanied by two or more Elite guards at all times, but he carries a Remington Rolling Block Pistol on his person in the advent the guards are not enough. Ω

*Fierce attacks by High Martians and an untimely labor dispute threaten a small mining community in the conclusion of the three-part Thymiamata adventure in **Challenge 51**. And for more on Thymiamata's history and geography, refer to the first segment in **Challenge 49**.*

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Episode 3: A Lode of Trouble

By Neil V. Young

Thymiamata: 1889

Shortly after their arrival in Thymiamata, the characters are contacted by Colonel Robert Forrester, who sends a number of his men to fetch them. The soldiers say the good colonel wishes to speak to the PCs about "a matter of grave consequence" and know nothing else about the matter. The PCs are to accompany the men to the fort if they are interested.

After a brief but bumpy wagon trip, the party arrives at the busy fort and is ushered in to see the colonel. Forrester invites the adventurers to sit down and share a brandy with him. He lets on that he is aware of the PCs' service to the Crown and wonders if they might be interested in doing some work for his government.

If the PCs agree, Forrester will lay out a map of the territory north of the city, near the Chryse Mountain Range, and point out a small valley, Hogshead Gulch. According to the colonel, the Colorado Mining Company discovered a large vein of silver in the gulch and began mining operations on a large scale. The vein, named the Silvertap Lode, was less than warmly received by the High Martians, but the beasts have not been able to mount a concentrated assault on the mine.

Nonetheless, High Martian warriors attack in smaller groups on an almost daily basis. Colorado has hired dozens of armed men to keep the mine safe and open, but this does not guarantee that nobody will be killed. The mine has been maintained on very shaky grounds, but the silver yield has always produced enough profit to make it worth the effort—at least until the onset of the strike.

Last month, workers apparently decided they'd had enough and staged a sit-in. Silvertap's foreman, Robert Sharp, tried to force the miners back to work, but he was too pressed with fending off the High Martians to do much of anything. The mining camp has fallen into disarray, and the lives of many US citizens are at risk, meaning federal intervention is a must. The US Army has too few resources on the planet to mount a military relief force, so Colorado has decided to meet with the miners to discuss a pay raise. That is where the PCs come in.

Forrester and Colorado Mining would like the party to assume the roles of federal representatives and mediate the dispute. Ordinarily the US has little to do with foreigners, but because the PCs are foreigners, they have no bias in the matter. Too many government officials in Thymiamata own stock in Colorado, making them somewhat less than objective in the matter. Forrester can be assured of a strictly neutral mediator with the adventurers.

The characters will be provided with legal documents, a copy of the company charter, and whatever small arms and equipment they feel is necessary for the job, and a representative from Colorado Mining will accompany the party to the camp. Transportation, assuming the characters have none of their own, will be provided aboard an ore galley belonging to the mining company. As for payment, the US government will pay 10 British pounds per day plus expenses, with a bonus of £100 upon successful completion of the mission.

MIDNIGHT MADNESS

The ship will be ready to leave at sunrise, and the colonel will put the characters up for the night in a small inn near the high port. The rooms are nothing fancy, but are clean and have a good view of the high docks.

After the PCs have bedded down for the night, the entire block is shaken by a loud explosion only a few dozen yards from the inn. From their window, the PCs can see that a large wagon is being consumed by flames, and several bystanders were injured.

Characters coming to the aid of these unfortunates will find that a large crowd of spectators has assembled around the scene, making it difficult to get back to the rooms. The injured Martians can be patched up with an Easy task roll against Medicine.

Any PCs still near or in the rooms will be attacked by four Martians (more if the party is large) armed with knives, clubs and blackjacks. The thugs will not try to harm the PCs, but will wrestle them to the floor, perhaps pointing a dagger to their throats to keep them still. Moments later, two human men in white field suits will enter the party's rooms and search for something. Any PC making a successful difficult roll against Observation will notice that the two men are speaking German. Once they find the papers the colonel gave the party, they will shuffle

through them quickly, toss them to the floor and leave, apparently dissatisfied with what they found. If forced into combat, the Germans have heavy multibarrel pistols, but they prefer to run, leaving their Martian lackeys to do the fighting. The referee should not allow either German operative to be killed.

1D6 rounds after everything calms down, a patrol of TDF soldiers shows up and disperses what hangers-on are left from the crowd. They will listen attentively to whatever the party tells them, but will take little action to find those responsible for the attack. If the PCs complain to the colonel, he will post guards around the inn—nothing further will happen that night, in any case.

IN THE AIR

The ore galley will leave early the next morning. The vessel is a surplus *Small-Bird*-class Oenotrian screw galley purchased by Colorado Mining and fitted with underslung nets to carry ore or other bulky cargo. The ship can carry up to 168 tons in weight in the nets, but its altitude is reduced to Low when it is so encumbered. On this trip, the galley only carries cargo in its internal hold, thus reducing its altitude to High. The forward rogue gun has been removed to increase the deck space, although the two aft sweeper guns were retained.

The voyage will not have much in the way of scenery or atmosphere. Everett Barrister, the company representative, will be unsociable and immersed in his own worries, and the crew will be a tedious mix of humans and Martians with no interest in anything save their own small talk. The party will be in sight of the mountains when they spot a High Martian galley (use *Clearsight* statistics) approaching fast from the opposite direction.

Whatever their ideas on how to deal with this menace, the party members should realize their ship cannot outfight or outrun the other ship, and that they will have to act quickly if they are to survive. One alternative (have the galley captain think of it if nobody else does) is to dump the cargo, thus enabling the ore galley to climb to Very High altitude, something the *Clearsight* equivalent cannot do. Barrister will loudly protest this damage to company property, but will concede when shown the alternative. It will take 1D6 rounds for everyone on board save the bridge crew and turncranks to dump the cargo, with an extra round added for each two individuals who want to trade potshots with the beasts instead. Once at the higher altitude, the PCs can proceed to the camp with no further complications.

WELCOME TO SILVERTAP, POPULATION ZERO?

The party will find the mining camp deserted. Exploring the small enclave will reveal that while no one is there, nothing seems to show any signs of an attack. The company store is completely emptied, except for a few broken crates and boxes, and the same can be said for the mining office, which has had its maps, survey equipment and technical manuals removed. The mine is intact, but characters making an Easy task roll for Observation will notice that someone left the shaft in an awfully big hurry. A half-eaten sandwich still rots where it was left; tools are leaning against the wall; even a poker game was apparently left unfinished, with the chips still on the table. On another Easy: Observation roll, the party will notice a faint but cool breeze coming from the depths of the mine.

The mine extends several hundred more feet into the mountainside, branching off occasionally to follow the vein, until it stops in a wide shaft that plunges into the darkness. The shaft is 20 feet wide, and characters shining a light source down it will see only darkness. The breeze felt earlier is very strong here and is definitely coming from somewhere down below. Oddly, there are tracks for an elevator of some kind, but the pulley and all associated machinery that would be used to raise and lower such a device is absent. There was a ladder extending down the side of the shaft, but it has been hacked apart and is now unusable.

Getting down the shaft will require several hundred feet of rope, held or tied to a cross beam so the party can slide down. Characters must succeed in a roll against their Agility, though Mountaineering skill gives a +1 for every level of the skill the character has. A character failing the roll will plunge several hundred feet to the bottom of the shaft, which is filled with water from an underground river the miners accidentally tapped into last month. The uninjured character will find himself travelling down this river until it dumps out in a waterhole near the mining camp.

Roughly 50 feet down the shaft is a crosscut, and they characters will notice a foul smell as they get close. Four ore carts pushed to the ledge here all hold rock waste, but one also holds the body of a High Martian. This poor fellow has been here a couple of days and has slash marks on his neck, apparently the cause of



WILLIE BOGGS (EXPERIENCED NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 5	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat 3 (edged)
Agil: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mountaineering), Fieldcraft 1
Int: 2	Observation 3, Engineering 1 (structural engineering)
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2, Bargaining 2, Linguistics 2 (Na-Gaaryani, High Chryse)
Soc: 1	Riding 1 (horse), Medicine 2

Willie is the sole miner who escaped enslavement. His plans to get help have failed, and now he survives in a hidden nook in the mine. Willie arrived on Mars a year ago, though he has seen little but the subsurface through his mining job. Willie is not overly bright, but is observant and has a keen memory.

Motives: Steady, honest, just.

Appearance: Willie is in his mid-30s and is unkempt due to the situation. Overweight though he is, Willie is surprisingly strong. He has a knife and breech-loader he took from a High Martian guard, and he is proficient with both, though he has but six rounds for the gun.

WARZUK (VETERAN NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat 4 (bashing)
Agil: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 4 (bow)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (foraging)
Int: 3	Observation 2, Gunnery 1 (MLC)
Chr: 1	Linguistics 1 (English)
Soc: 5	Leadership 3

Warzuk is the High Martian subchief of the area in which Colorado Mining has its operations, an area constantly depleted of warriors and slaves by Overlord Kurge for his campaign against the rival kraags. The resulting frustration led to Warzuk's part in the plot. Warzuk is ambitious. He murdered the subchief before him and plans to murder Sharp, though he wants to keep Cole alive for future trade agreements. Warzuk hopes to challenge Kurge and believes that the Germans are the most direct way to securing superior off-world weapons.

Motives: Ambitious, ruthless.

Appearance: Warzuk is not old by High Martian standards, but sports an impressive mane. His stature is short for his race, but he more than makes up for that with his ability to fight. He wears his necklace of rank proudly at all times, and has a fair collection of weaponry about him, including a Martian great sword, a Winchester 86 Repeater and a Mauser light revolver.

EVERETT BARRISTER (TRAINED NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Ag: 2	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 1 (pistol)
End: 1	
Int: 5	Observation 4, Engineering 1 (structural engineering)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 4, Theatrics 2, Bargaining 4, Linguistics 1 (French)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 2, Medicine 1

Barrister is the Colorado Mining representative sent to negotiate the strike. He is very talented and has a promising future. Barrister is a member of America's middle class and reflects an optimistic view about his country. He has a healthy regard for the British, though he won't admit it, and a great respect for French culture. He has been with the company two years, but already has the confidences of his superiors. Barrister fears that the strike will not be easily solved and that he will look like a fool. He will spend his time going over his notes.

Motives: Responsible, cautious, ambitious.

Appearance: Barrister dresses conservatively so as not to outshine his superiors. His hair is short and blond. He is 27 years old, but looks younger. He abstains from violence, but carries a heavy revolver in his briefcase just in case.

ROBERT SHARP (TRAINED NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Ag: 4	Stealth 3, Marksmanship 2 (pistol)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 3	Observation 2, Engineering 3 (structural engineering)
Chr: 2	Leadership 2, Piloting (mole drill) 1
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse)

Sharp is the foreman of the Silvertap Lode—and the last person anyone in the Colorado Mining Company would think would betray them. Sharp's failed efforts to get rich have made him increasingly bitter over the years. He wrongly blames the world around him for failure that is due to his impatience and bad planning. Sharp will double-cross practically everyone in the valley, though he doesn't know how yet. It hasn't occurred to him that others may be planning to do him in. He spends most of his time daydreaming about how he will spend his money.

Motives: Greedy, spendthrift.

Appearance: Bob Sharp is a tall man, with dark hair that is always tossed by the wind. His clothes are those of a common miner, and he would be hard to tell apart from the other miners were it not for his clipboard, which he hangs onto as a symbol of his authority. He has a rare Colt 1878 model Navy double-action revolver (treat as a heavy revolver) that is his pride and joy, but he is not above using it in a firefight.

his demise. Also visible (with appropriate lighting) is a trail of deep boot prints leading up to the cart, then back into the crosscut. They lead back and abruptly stop, apparently without a trace. It will take some prodding about and a difficult Observation roll to discover a series of handholds carved into the side of the mine where the prints leave off and an improvised ladder that leads to a loose piece of stone in the mine ceiling that can be pushed up, revealing a room.

This hidden area is actually a raise that was left when its silver gave out and was subsequently used by the miners as a place to hide contraband goods from the foreman. It contains an assortment of goodies, including two casks of water, a case of Jack Daniels' No. 7, four knives, a rifle, several cases of canned food and a sleeping miner. Once awakened, the man will be frantic, until he comes to the realization that the party will not harm him. His name is Willie Boggs.

THE STORY UNFOLDS

About this time last month, Willie says, he and the others were working the mine when the alarm whistle went off. Fearing a cave-in, the miners rushed to the surface, where they were surrounded by two dozen or more High Martians. Their foreman, Bob Sharp, and his men seemed at ease with the beasts, talking to them as if it were a big plan of some sort. Bob and the savages made the miners pack up their belongings and head for the bottom crosscut, recently dug with the company's new mole drill.

The workers did as they were forced and found that the crosscut led to a small valley filled with liftwood trees. The miners were given saws, shovels and other tools and told to harvest the mature trees. For weeks, they labored under the guns and pikes of their captors, until the miners tried to stage an unsuccessful and bloody revolt. In the ensuing confusion, Willie escaped into the mine and began the long and difficult climb up the main shaft. He reached the surface but found no way to escape, so he hid in the old raise, living off the canned goods and JD ever since.

Willie knows nothing about the strike, and it should be obvious that it was just a ruse concocted by Sharp to cover up what is really going on. What led Sharp to sell out his people is unknown, but Willie recalls seeing several German-speaking men about the grove and thinks they may be connected. At any rate, rumors have been circulating about a Zeppelin being en route to the site, rumors which could be true given the fact that several workers were made to clear a large landing area in the far corner of the grove.

Willie asks if the PCs have seen any High Martians in the mine, and is surprised that they did not. They had apparently sent one or two warriors to patrol the shaft every day, one of which ran into Willie and was subsequently dumped in the ore cart. Willie has the dagger and breech-loading rifle he took from the warrior, and will readily take them to lead the party to the grove.

The lowest crosscut extends only a few hundred feet, then ends in a large natural cavern. Immediately to the side of the opening is the steam-powered mole drill with "Colorado Mining Operations" stenciled on the side. Also present are the components to the elevator, as well as the elevator car itself. The cavern is close to a quarter mile in length, and its opening overlooks the liftwood grove. Below, a hundred or so miners can be seen cutting and hauling (well, maybe towing) liftwood logs, while 20 High Martian and human guards watch them from a distance. As Willie mentioned, there is a large patch of open ground in the north end of the valley.

FREEING THE MINERS

Freeing the miners will no doubt present problems. There are, however, several methods resourceful players might come up with.

- There are far more workers than guards, and if an armed party starts something, the miners might join in, and the cave entrance the PCs are in is a good vantage point from which to zero-in on the guards. Unfortunately, this is also a good way to get many of the miners needlessly killed.

- The miners are housed in a large corral-like pen, and Willie remembers the guards as being lazy and few in number at night. Darkness is only a few hours away, and the PCs could wait until then to slip in and release the miners quietly. Most of the guards would be sleeping, so the element of surprise would definitely work to the advantage of the PCs.

- Last, but by no means least, is the mole drill, sitting in the cave, fully functional. A surprise attack is out of the question, but the winds in the cave would hide the sound of the machine long enough for the players to get it into the grove. The mole is tough enough to withstand small arms fire, and has windows that would allow PCs to shoot back. A small amount of coal is in the machine—enough to move it for several miles.

The mole drill is the latest model from John Deere and Company and has a Reliability of 4. It otherwise corresponds to the mole drill listed on page 69 of the

Space: 1889 rulebook. Operating the mole requires some kind of steam vessel piloting experience, and is a Difficult task unless the PCs have toyed with a similar contraption in the past. Boggs has some experience with the machine.

No matter how things get started, the resulting confusion will allow the angry miners to rise up and destroy the guards. Sharp's men are more on the lookout for *numero uno* anyway, and will fall back shooting at the first sign that they might lose. The High Martian warriors will show their characteristic ferocity in battle, but are too few in number and too inexperienced with their modern weapons to turn the tide of the battle. For combat purposes, the human guards are Experienced troops armed with lever-action rifles, while the High Martians are Veterans. Half are armed with breech-loading rifles and half with pikes.

Sharp and Warzuk will offer a great deal of resistance, even if their men do not, but will flee as well when they see that all is lost. Cole will leave at the first sign of trouble to a prearranged landing spot and signal his Zeppelin. If the referee wishes, he could have one of the PCs in a position to pursue Sharp, Cole or Warzuk in a dramatic last fight, or have them escape entirely, no doubt to return later to stir up more trouble.

The Zeppelin will arrive 2D6 rounds after the fighting begins. It is well equipped, with five-barrel Nordenfelts on either side of the gondola and a rack of four bombs. After destroying everyone on the ground (except Cole and his henchmen, who will have left anyway), the pilot will set his airship down and deploy a squad of *Luftschifferabteilung* elites to clean up the survivors and load the liftwood. If the dirigible arrives after the battle is over, it will simply assume something went wrong and leave to pick Cole up at the prearranged spot.

If all goes well for the party, the kaiser's government will deny any involvement in the affair and make an extra effort to stay out of the Chryse area for some time. Kurge will get wind of Warzuk's attempted betrayal and begin yet another ruthless purge of his ranks, leaving the mine area free of High Martians for a good month or so. If the PCs do not nail Sharp, the man will no doubt show up at some later date to seek revenge on the people who spoiled his plans.

The party stands to make out all right, too. The colonel will pay the agreed-upon sum plus the bonus amount, and Barrister will have dropped the "unfriendly" act and will offer a small number of shares in his company to the group. These shares will net the party anywhere from £50 to £200 every quarter.

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON

The foreman of the Silvertap Lode is an unsatisfied glory seeker. He came to Mars to seek his elusive fortune, only to fall onto bad luck and have to settle for a job with Colorado Mining. Bob performed his job with seeming eagerness, but inside he was ready to explode with anger and resentment. Naturally, he was attentive when a neatly dressed German agent came to speak to him about his future.

Subchief Warzuk was the other side of the figurative coin, frustrated by his King Kurge's constant demands on him to provide warriors and slaves for a meaningless and wasteful war. He had no slaves to work his groves anymore, and barely enough for his own chambers. All the while, the red men who encroached on his territory were getting stronger and stronger, even mining the metals he saw as his rightful property. The young subchief was so desperate that he even agreed to speak with the red man from Dioscuria when he came to request an audience.

In a tense, somewhat foolish, meeting, Cole brought Sharp and Warzuk together and proposed a plan to end their respective problems. Sharp would supply his miners as a work force to Warzuk's groves to harvest liftwood trees, and Warzuk would use his depleted forces to keep outsiders away until the harvest was complete. In return, Cole promised to pay an impressive amount of gold from his kaiser's vaults for the liftwood, gold the two bosses would split down the middle. To increase the richness of the deal, Warzuk and Sharp planned to sell the miners into slavery, not only to keep them quiet but to turn over even more *moola*.

SINGLE, DOUBLE AND TRIPLE CROSS

Each of the conspiring big shots intends to do in the other. Sharp plans to kill the High Martians, Germans and miners, and make off with his armed men and all the gold. He has not planned how this is to be carried out. Warzuk has similar plans, but will do in only Sharp and his men. The subchief has been given a quantity of weapons by the German, and wants to arrange future weapons-for-liftwood deals. With the miners, he has the slave force he needs to get things going again. Cole, as the mastermind behind the plot, has a surprise for both his "partners." The Zeppelin holds no gold—only machineguns, troops and bombs, which he will use to eradicate everyone so he can load up the liftwood logs his country so desperately desires. With such a success under his belt, Cole will have the prestige to climb even higher in the ranks of his kaiser's secret service.



FIELD AGENT WILHELM COLE (VETERAN NPC)

Att.	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 4 (edged weapon)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 3 (pistol)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2 (foraging)
Int: 4	Observation 3, Engineering 3 (explosives)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Theatrics 3
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 2, Linguistics 4 (English, Umbran, Dioscurian, Koline)

Wilhelm Cole is the gung-ho agent of the kaiser who came up with the scheme that enslaved the miners of the Silvertap Lode. In the end, he plans on killing everyone he has schemed with, all for the objective of bringing a shipment of liftwood to his country's enclave in Dioscuria.

Cole was born into an upper middle class family and knew he wanted to be a member of his country's elite almost from the time he could walk.

Toward this goal, he studied hard in school and joined the German Army as an officer, only to be drafted into the secret police soon after. This was a dream come true for Cole, as he finally felt he was rising to a higher social position.

However, his first taste of success only served to make him hungry for more.

Now posted to Mars, Cole sees unbounded opportunity for advancement, and will eliminate anyone—even his fellow countrymen—if they stand in his way.

Motives: Driven, ruthless.

Appearance: Cole even looks the part of a field agent. His field suit is always pressed and white, his hair trimmed, and his boots shined.

Cole has a fair amount of firepower—including a Zeppelin—available for this mission, and he carries a heavy multibarrel pistol and a throwing knife on his person at all times. Ω

Thus ends the three-part adventure, "Thymiamata: 1889." For additional information, refer to the first two segments of this exciting series in **Challenge 49** and **Challenge 50**.

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Dwellers in the DARK



By James L. Cambias

"Wilkins! Have you heard?" Smithers burst into our tent like an exploding shell.

"Must you be so abrupt? Now I've ruined the slide I was preparing."

"Never mind that scientific nonsense. There's been an accident—an ether flyer's gone down on the Dark Side!"

"Tragic. I fail to see why that makes it necessary for you to interrupt my work. If I am ever to make any progress cataloging the fauna of Mercury..."

"There's a rescue being planned. Do you remember Sir Charles Moreton? The inventor chap? Well he's got a machine that can travel across the ice and needs volunteers to go along to search for survivors. What a scoop this will make!" Smithers began stuffing clothing and bottles of gin into his carpet-bag.

I sighed. "I suppose there's no way to dissuade you from going?"

"Just think, Wilkins! The first expedition to explore the Dark Side of Mercury!

The readers will eat it up! Aren't you coming along?" He closed the carpet-bag and shouldered his golf clubs.

"It seems I must—someone has to keep you out of trouble."

"Good man. Sir Charles was pleased when I told him you were joining the party."

The ether flyer *Hermes*, a commercial ship of Dutch registry, has crashed somewhere on the frozen Dark Side of Mercury after an accident during landing approach to Princess Christiana Station.

Some of the crew may still be alive within the wrecked ship, and a rescue mission must be mounted immediately. Extrapolation along the ship's last known course indicates that it must have come down some 400 miles from the base, in the Dry Ice Zone where the temperature hovers around -200 F.

Fortunately, Sir Charles Plunkett Drax Moreton is at Princess Christiana Station preparing his new steam sleigh for an expedition to investigate the mysteries of the Dark Side. He will offer to use his machine to mount a rescue expedition and will call for volunteers among the small population of the base.

Unfortunately, Sir Charles' assistant, Jack Topwash, is in fact a German spy who is aware of the fact that the *Hermes* was carrying



a contingent of armed "colonists" intending to occupy the British station and claim German protection. The crash of the ship has obviously aborted the mission, so Topwash's job now is to see that the true nature of the ether flyer's cargo is not revealed. He plans to maroon the rescue mission on the frigid Dark Side and return to the station alone.

STEAM SLEIGH

Sir Charles' steam sleigh is a novel invention, based on the principle of the land juggernaut. A powerful oil-burning steam turbine drives caterpillar treads which propel the sleigh, while the bulk of the craft rides on large skis. An enclosed, heated cabin can accommodate up to 10 people. The steam sleigh is powered by a steam turbine engine of Sir Charles' own invention, which burns one ton of oil every eight hours and has a top speed of 10 miles per hour. The vehicle has a fuel load of 25 tons of oil, giving it a range of 2000 miles.

If PCs wish to invent their own steam sleigh, it requires a Transportation knowledge level of 30 and has a base Reliability modifier of 5. Without the steam turbine engine, fuel consumption doubles, cutting the range in half. Speed is equal to twice the Reliability in miles per hour. While Sir Charles' craft is unarmed, inventors can equip their own steam sleigh with a light cannon or machinegun. This reduces the passenger capacity to eight. The cost to

build a steam sleigh is Lv18,000.

Sir Charles has already established a base camp on the Ice Sheath 50 miles northward from Princess Christiana Station. The PCs and Sir Charles can be ferried to the spot aboard one of the station's liftwood flyers. After some hurried, last-minute preparations, the PCs, Sir Charles and Topwash set out aboard the steam sleigh, heading away from the warmth of the Sun into the icy unknown of the Dark Side.

EXPLORING GEAR

Sir Charles has brought along a fair amount of equipment for the exploration of the Dark Side. PCs are free to use any or all of it, as well as their own gear.

Vacuum Suits: Invented by Sir Charles, these have air tanks with a seven-hour reserve and are specially insulated against cold. Each suit is equipped with a clockwork alarm which goes off after 3.5 hours. Weight is 20 lbs. One is available for each person.

Ordinary Apparatus: Sir Charles has brought a set of surveying instruments, digging tools, a camera specially modified to withstand the frigid climate, 5000 feet of rope, a large, hand-operated drill capable of going down 10 yards, 10 pounds of dynamite, and four complete sets of mountaineering gear (pitons, ice axes and pulleys).

LAND OF ETERNAL NIGHT

As the steam sleigh chugs southward

into the Dark Side, the temperature drops steadily. The first 24 hours of the voyage are spent crossing the Ice Sheath. The temperature declines during that time from 0 to -100. PCs wearing very heavy arctic gear can venture outside in these temperatures, if necessary. But the intense cold makes guns prone to jam. Roll a die each time a gun is fired; on a 6 it jams.

It is perpetually night on the Ice Sheath, with no moon to see by. Mercury's bright auroral displays can often illuminate the sky with fantastic patterns of light and color. In addition, the steam sleigh is equipped with powerful electric searchlights, so the party can

see for about a mile in every direction. The steam sleigh cannot traverse mountains, crater rims or crevasses. Its speed is reduced to seven miles per hour in hills.

The Ice Sheath is a vast glacier, with a mostly level surface covered with fine snow. Here and there great mountain ranges poke through the ice cap, and elsewhere are volcanos, craters and crevasses. The Ice Sheath has been mapped from the air to a distance of 20 miles beyond the edge of the glacier; the rest is unknown. (The referee should create a map with the unknown areas left blank for the PCs.)

The referee should check the weather every 12 hours. Roll a die and consult the following table:

WEATHER

Roll	Result
1-4	<i>Clear and still.</i> Travel is unimpeded.
5	<i>Fogs.</i> Visibility is reduced to 100 yards. All tasks related to piloting the vehicle or avoiding hazards increase one level.
6	<i>Snowstorm.</i> Visibility is reduced to 50 yards. All tasks related to piloting the sleigh or avoiding hazards increase one level, and any PCs outside the sleigh must roll an Easy task of Endurance to avoid suffering one wound from frostbite.

HAZARDS OF THE DARK SIDE

Once every 100 miles travelled the referee should roll a die. On a result of 1 or 2, a hazard is encountered. Roll another die and consult the following table:

HAZARDS

Roll	Result
1	Crevasse
2	Volcanic vent
3	Avalanche
4	Whiteout
5	Windstorm
6	Mechanical failure

Crevasse: A small canyon in the ice, cutting across the steam sleigh's path. The party must detour one to six miles around it. PCs on foot can attempt to climb down one side of the crevasse and back up the other side. Each climb requires a separate Difficult Mountaineering task roll and half an hour. If the vehicle is travelling in a fog, snowstorm, whiteout or windstorm, the driver must make a Difficult Piloting skill roll to avoid tumbling the sleigh into the crevasse. The result of such a crash is the same as an avalanche, described below.

Volcanic Vent: An active volcanic vent is visible on the horizon. If the PCs elect to have a close look at the vent, they may encounter some of the life forms of the Dry

Sir Charles Plunkett Drax Moreton (Experienced NPC)

Sir Charles is a noted scientist and inventor whose researches are devoted to the cause of exploring other worlds, particularly those where humans cannot normally go. He heard of the exploits of the Tin Juggernaut on Mercury's Hot Side and immediately resolved to build a machine to explore the Dark Side. Sir Charles has an aristocrat's sense of self-importance and gives orders (often conflicting) regardless of rank and situation.

His inventions include the space suit, steam sleigh and steam turbine. Sir Charles still has two Intellect dice left to create new inventions.

Attributes	Skill
Str: 1	Close Combat 2 (bashing weapon)
Agil: 4	Stealth 3, Mechanics 2 (steam)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (foraging), Swimming 1
Int: 6	Observation 6, Science 5 (physics), Engineering 5 (naval architecture)
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2, Linguistics 2 (German, French)
Soc: 5	Riding 4 (horse)

Motives: Knowledge, Steady, Arrogant.

Research Areas: Transportation 30, Electricity 3, Biochemistry 7, Metallurgy 14, Power Production 17, Combustion 3

Appearance: Sir Charles is a stout man, impeccably dressed at all times. He has elaborate whiskers which he takes pains to keep groomed, even when he is facing death on the frozen back of Mercury.

Ice Zone clustered in the warm region around the vent.

Avalanche: As the steam sleigh travels up a slope, the unstable layers of ice and snow suddenly give way and begin to slide. A Formidable Piloting skill roll is needed to keep the steam sleigh from suffering a mishap. If the roll fails, consult the following table:

AVALANCHES

Roll	Result
1-2	<i>Minor damage.</i> A Moderate Mechanics skill roll and 15 minutes are needed to get the steam sleigh operating again.
3-4	<i>Major damage.</i> A Difficult Mechanics skill roll and half an hour are needed to get the vehicle operating again.
5	<i>Minor damage and overturned.</i> A Moderate Mechanics skill roll and 15 minutes are needed to get the steam sleigh operating again. And unless the sleigh can be righted, the party is marooned.
6	<i>Major damage and overturned.</i> A Difficult Mechanics skill roll and half an hour are needed to get the vehicle operating again. And unless the sleigh can be righted, the party is marooned.

Whiteout: A sudden thick mist envelops the vehicle, cutting visibility to zero. The steam sleigh must be stopped, or else there is a 1-2 chance of having an accident and damaging the vehicle. PCs on foot in a whiteout may become separated and lost unless they are tethered together. A whiteout lasts 1D6x15 minutes.

To avoid getting lost in a whiteout is a Difficult task versus Observation or Tracking skill.

Windstorm: A storm strikes the vehicle, making further progress impossible. Characters inside the steam sleigh are safe, but those outdoors must make a Moderate Endurance task to avoid suffering damage from the icy wind. Persons failing their roll suffer one wound. A windstorm lasts anywhere from 30 minutes to three hours (1D6x30 minutes).

Mechanical Failure: Something has gone wrong aboard the steam sleigh, making further progress impossible. Roll 1D6. On a 1-4 it is a minor failure; on a 5-6 it is a major failure. A minor failure requires 15 minutes to fix and an Easy Steam Mechanics task roll, while a major failure takes an hour and demands a Moderate task roll. (If the repairs are left up to Jack Topwash, it will always take at least an hour to get the vehicle moving again.)

Overturned: If the vehicle is overturned, everyone aboard must make a Difficult Agility roll to avoid suffering a wound. Obviously, the

steam sleigh cannot move when it is overturned, but the steam engine can function even in such a strange orientation (Sir Charles anticipated that something like this might occur). Righting the toppled steam sleigh is an extremely difficult job. The referee should encourage the PCs to come up with ideas for solving the problem. If none of their plans seems feasible, Sir Charles can suggest using the steam sleigh's engine to drive a pulley and right the vehicle with ropes.

DRY ICE ZONE

Once the PCs pass beyond the 300-mile mark, the temperature becomes so low that carbon dioxide freezes out of the air. Humans must wear vacuum suits to avoid damaging their nasal passages (unprotected persons breathing the air suffer one wound). The air is also thinner here, and every PC's effective Endurance is reduced by 1 outside the pressurized cabin of the steam sleigh. PCs wearing vacuum suits do not suffer the penalty. The same hazards of travel apply in the Dry Ice Zone as in the Ice Sheath, but of course it is much more dangerous to be marooned here.

Important Discovery: If the PCs study the surface of the ice in the Dry Ice Zone, they stand a chance of making a major scientific discovery: Seeds are buried in the snow. To discover the seeds is a Formidable test of Biology or Observation, and requires at least an hour's study of the ice. Further research will uncover tiny wormlike creatures curled up in the snow. They become active when the temperature rises to around -150 F.

The plants have no leaves, but spread throughout the ice like ivy, gaining energy from chemical processes. The worms feed ravenously on the plants, and grow to a length of two inches before laying their eggs and dying. Chemical analysis of the worms or plants will reveal that they have a metabolism based on ammonia rather than water. Humans cannot eat Dark Side life, nor can the Dark Side creatures eat humans—but they may not know that.

Temperature Effects: Because humans are so much warmer than the inhabitants of the Dry Ice Zone, they can do damage simply by touch. In hand-to-hand combat, all attacks by humans against ice creatures do one extra wound, and all tail, claw or teeth attacks by ice creatures against humans likewise inflict one extra wound. Humans in vacuum-suits neither inflict nor suffer extra damage because of the suit's insulation. Combat with melee or ranged weapons is unaffected.

It is difficult to imagine how life forms could have evolved on the Dark Side of Mercury in the relatively short life of the planet.

Their high level of sophistication sug-



gests (to persons with Biology skill) that they may have originated on one of the outer planets of the Solar System, where conditions are similar. How they reached Mercury remains to be determined.

Encounters: In addition to the normal hazards of travel, PCs may encounter denizens of the Dry Ice Zone on a result of 1 on 1D6 (or around volcanos or volcanic vents, on a result of 1-4 on 1D6). Roll on the following table to determine encounters:

ENCOUNTERS

Roll	Result
1-3	Ice worms
4	Ice spiders
5	Ice borers
6	Ice dwellers

Ice Worms: These are mobile herbivores preying on the strange plants which grow in warm areas. They cluster around hot spots and hibernate when the warm places disappear. They are nonaggressive and will generally flee from any creature larger than themselves. Big ones may fight back against an attacker.

Small Worms: Number Appearing: 1D6 Size: 1x1 square Movement: L10 Wounds: 1 Save: Nil Weight: 10 pounds Weapons: Tail (1,1,1,1).

Medium Worms: Number Appearing: 1-2 Size: 1x2 squares Movement: L15 Wounds: 2 Save: 1 Weight: 50 pounds Weapon: Tail (1,1,1,1).

Large Worms: Number Appearing: 1 Size: 1x3 squares Movement: L15 Wounds: 4 Save: 2 Weight: 150 pounds Weapon: Tail (3,2,3,2).

Ice Spiders: These are small carnivores roaming the ice surface in search of food. They are timid and will flee any larger creature, but are attracted to warmth. They will not attack anything larger than themselves unless their survival is threatened.

Number Appearing: 1-3 Size: 1x1 square Move: L40 (for one turn only, after which maximum speed is 10) Wounds: 1 Save: None Weight: 40 pounds Weapons: Teeth (1,1,0,1) and claws (1,2,1,1).

Ice Borers: Ice borers are sessile trap-builders, hibernating beneath the ice until food appears, then lunging forth from their burrows to attack. Ice borers will always have surprise when they attack from under the ice. If they cannot subdue their prey quickly, they will retreat into their burrows.

Number Appearing: 1 Size: 1x1 square

Movement: L10 (burrows at half speed) **Wounds:** 3 **Save:** 1 **Weight:** 60 pounds **Weapons:** Teeth (1,3,0,1) and claws (2,3,1,1). An ice borer's claws inject a toxic venom which can paralyze other ammonia-based life. It has no effect on water-based life.

Ice Dwellers: Ice dwellers are large creatures vaguely resembling spider or crabs. They are pure white and walk on four legs, with two arms bearing tool-using hands. The ice dwellers are intelligent, though extremely primitive. Their civilization is on roughly the same level as the Venusian Lizard-Men and is similarly handicapped by a lack of metal.

Ice dwellers are attracted to warmth, like all the ammonia-based life forms of the Dark Side. They live by gathering the plants and small animals which remain dormant in the ice, becoming active only around volcanic heat sources. Most groups of ice dwellers remain stationary around volcanic vents, but population pressure or the disappearance of a vent sometimes sends a group wandering across the ice.

Number Appearing: 1-2 in the wilderness, 3-10 near hot spots **Size:** 1x1 square **Movement:** L20 (for one turn only, after which maximum speed is 7) **Wounds:** 3 **Save:** 1 **Weight:** 100 pounds **Weapons:** Claws (2,4,1,1). Ice dwellers can also throw chunks of rock or hard ice as if with a Strength of 2, and can use spears as Green NPCs.

WRECK OF THE HERMES

The *Hermes* rests at the edge of a deep crevasse and is already covered with a fine

layer of frost. The ship's hull is split, and much of the cargo is spilled across the ice.

The PCs will make a startling discovery as they examine the wreck: There are over 300 bodies in the smashed hull or scattered on the ice. All are young men wearing German military uniforms without official insignia. The cargo hold contains several dozen crates of rifles and ammunition—enough to supply a small military force for a brief campaign.

If the PCs search the wreck thoroughly, they will find a plan (written in German, of course) for a group of soldiers, claiming to be colonists, to seize Princess Christiana Station and proclaim themselves rulers of the Republic of Mercury, which will, then accept German protection. Letters indicate that the plan has the consent of the highest levels of the German government—perhaps the kaiser himself.

MAROONED ON THE DARK SIDE!

On Sir Charles' instructions, Topwash will remain with the steam sleigh while the others investigate the wreck. If any PCs remain on board the sleigh, Topwash will wait until the others are well away from the vehicle, then pull a heavy revolver and attack the characters on board. He will try to subdue them, then take them out of the sleigh through the airlock. Once he has full control of the steam sleigh, Topwash will fire up the engines and head back toward the station, abandoning Sir Charles and the PCs.

If the PCs on the sleigh overcome Topwash, a time bomb hidden in the vehicle's engines will detonate half an hour after he is

defeated, irreparably damaging the steam sleigh.

Either way, the party is stranded in the frozen wastes of the Dry Ice Zone with no way to get home. If Topwash's theft was not successful, the boiler of the steam sleigh can keep the party members warm. If Topwash's theft was successful, characters with Electrical skill may tap the batteries of the crashed ether flyer for heat. To do so is a Difficult task requiring 20 minutes. The batteries will last for two days. Food is no immediate problem as the hold of the *Her-*

mes has enough undamaged supplies to feed the party for weeks.

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

Once the PCs have found some way to create heat and stay alive, they will notice that the warmth attracts Dark Side life. All Dark Side life is attracted to heat, but cannot survive in temperatures above the boiling point of carbon dioxide. Any nonintelligent creatures will be attracted to the warmth of the steam sleigh and cluster around it. Ice dwellers will be more cautious, hanging back to observe the machine, then leaving to inform their tribe. The life forms will treat the characters' shelter as another volcanic hot spot and gather around it to conduct their lives.

After about 10 hours, the PCs will see a group of 10 ice dwellers. These are obviously different from the other life forms—they carry primitive spears and travel in an orderly group. The tribe consists of 10 individuals—four females, three males, and three juveniles. The leader is the biggest male, Kood (a Veteran NPC).

COMMUNICATING WITH THE ICE DWELLERS

Establishing contact with the ice dwellers will not be easy. At first they will not recognize the humans as alive. Then they will assume that the humans are not intelligent and will react defensively to anything they perceive as a threat. The PCs must convince the ice dwellers that they are alive, intelligent, not a threat, and in need of help. Theatrics skill may be of use in communicating by gestures, and Linguistics ability might help PCs puzzle out some of the ice dweller language. Attempts to communicate should be roleplayed rather than being left to skill rolls.

The ice dwellers speak in voices that sound high-pitched to humans because of the thin air of the Dark Side. Their language is complex, consisting of root words expressing fundamental concepts, to which various suffixes are added. Some of their basic words follow: *shoonta* (warm), *shoontarooyish* (warm things or humans), *shoonva* (warm place, a volcanic hot spot or the ruins), *zabtib* (to go), *quaataroo* (food), *quaatibtaroo* (eater or ice borer), *neebtaroooyish* (talking things or ice dwellers).

RUINS

If the PCs can successfully communicate their plight to the ice dwellers, the leader of the tribe will attempt to get the humans follow his group across the ice, away from the steam sleigh. The ice dwellers will lead the PCs across the ice for three hours, until at last, cresting the rim of an ancient crater,

Jack Topwash (Veteran NPC)

Topwash is Sir Charles' assistant and is a highly skilled mechanic. However, he is also a German agent who took service with Sir Charles thinking his inventions might have some military applications. His presence on Mercury during the *Hermes* incident is merely a coincidence, but he knows about the ship's cargo, and his duty is clear. He is more intelligent than he lets on and carefully hides his fanatical admiration of all things German.

Attributes	Skill
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 3 (edged weapon)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Mechanics 3 (steam), Crime 2 (lockpick), Marksmanship 2 (pistol)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mountaineering)
Int: 5	Observation 6, Engineering 1 (explosives), Science 1 (physics)
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2, Bargaining 1, Linguistics 2 (German, French), Theatrics 2
Soc: 2	Riding 1 (horse)

Motives: Loyal (to Germany) Aggressive, Liar.

Appearance: Topwash is a slender, wiry fellow, who is always rumpled and grease-stained from tinkering with the engines.

Dark Side of Mercury



To Princess Christiana Station

Base Camp

Key

Edge of Ice Sheath

Large crevasse

Crater

Hills

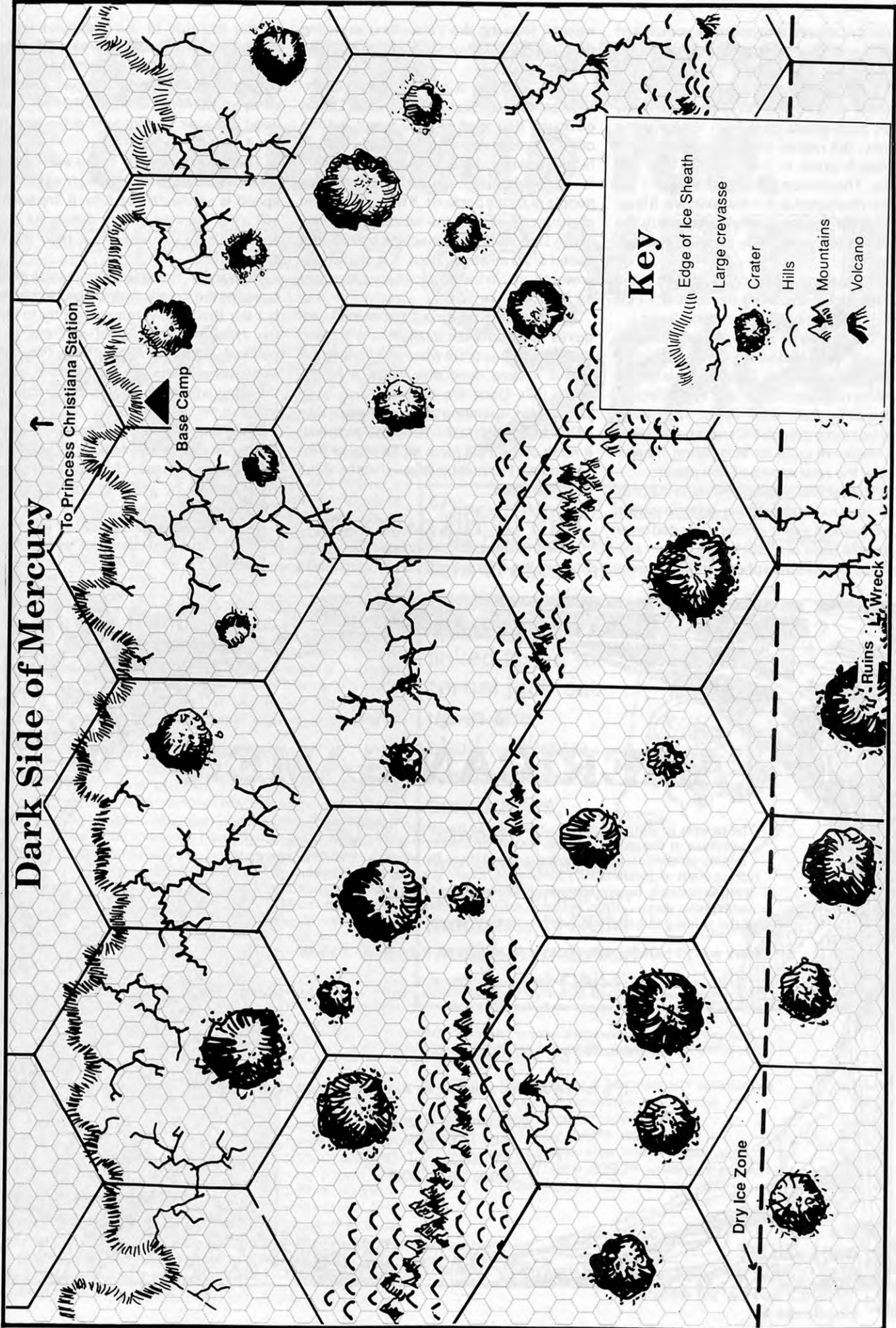
Mountains

Volcano



Dry Ice Zone

Ruins · Wreck



the party can see a mysterious complex of towers and strange egg-shaped domes at the bottom.

There are several encampments of ice dwellers around the complex, and many small black plants grow from the ice in the vicinity. But neither the plants nor animals approach closer to the buildings than 100 yards. The reason will become clear if the player characters enter the complex: It is far too hot for the ice dwellers, for inside the ruins the temperature is about 0° Fahrenheit.

The details of the complex are left to the referee, but in exploring the ruins the PCs may find a number of interesting items.

- The first is a room whose walls are covered with elaborate murals depicting humanoid creatures living in vast cities, building huge machines and flying through space in fantastic ether flyers. The beings may be recognized by PCs who have visited the interior of Luna as Vulcanians, inhabitants of the now-vanished fifth planet.

- The second noteworthy site in the complex is a room containing a large crystal sphere, about a yard across, mounted on an elaborate base of metal tubing. When anyone approaches the sphere, images appear

within it showing the Vulcanians exploring the Dark Side of Mercury using large tripod walking vehicles.

- The third site is a large hangar or garage containing two tripod vehicles. One is obviously damaged beyond repair, but the other seems intact. The controls of the vehicle are very complex and entirely unfamiliar. The tripod has a cabin with space for six people (if tightly packed). It is insulated and pressurized against the hostile conditions of the Dark Side. The machine travels at a speed of 20 miles per hour. It is electrically powered, and its batteries can provide power for 30 hours.

To attempt to figure out the controls requires an Impossible Intellect task roll and an hour of study (PCs who have viewed the crystal sphere need only make a Formidable roll). Once the controls have been deciphered, operating the machine requires a Difficult Piloting task roll to avoid accident. If none of the PCs have an adequate Pilot skill, then a Formidable Mechanics task can be substituted.

OUT OF THE DARKNESS

One the way back to Princess Christiana Station, the PCs will still have to cope with

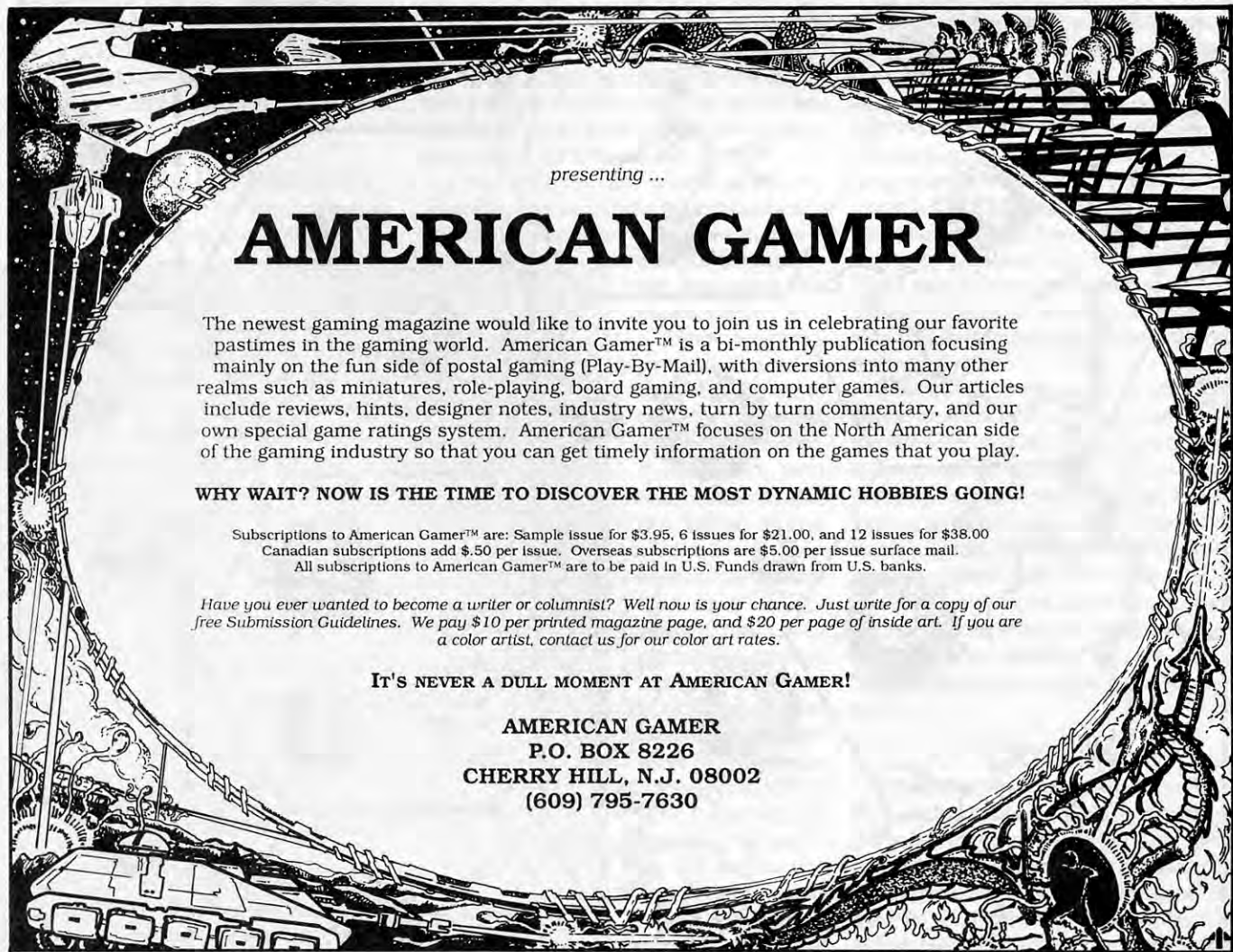
all the hazards of the outbound trip. In particular, mechanical failures of the tripod machine will all require Formidable or Impossible Mechanics rolls to repair. Too much delay en route may leave the PCs stuck with dead batteries hundreds of miles from the base.

The tripod is subject to the same terrain restrictions as the steam sleigh, except that speed is unaffected by hills. If Topwash is still alive, he may yet try desperate measures to stop the party from reaching the station alive.

Rewards: The scientific prestige of discovering the ice dwellers will be substantial, but the British government will try to keep the *Hermes* matter quiet and use it for political leverage against the Germans. Player characters attempting to publicize the affair will be discreetly encouraged not to do so.

Scientists can get new research dice in Transportation and Electricity by examining the tripod machines, plus research dice in Biochemistry by studying the life forms of the Dark Side.

And Sir Charles may decide to ask the PCs to test his next invention, whatever that may be. ☺



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The British government hires the PCs to deliver an aerial steam launch to the prince of Noorlan as a birthday gift. They will make the trip aboard an *Aphid*-class gunboat, the *Gnat*, travelling via Shastapsh, Karkarham and Syrtis Minor to avoid Oenotrian raiders. The trip is subject to Oenotrian ships, thieves, pirates, High Martians, and cheating merchants—all in all, an ordinary trip by cloudship. After a four-day voyage from Shastapsh, the PCs at last see Noorlan, at the junction of three canals amid lush fields and pastures. The party's ship is signalled to land at the naval landing field on the west side of the city, where the group will be met by Llewelyn Rhys-Owen, the British consul.

CITY DATA

Noorlan is a prosperous city, with a population of about 100,000. The city's wealth comes from farming in the rich seabed land.

nized, which is trained and equipped along the latest European lines. If any of the British PCs are military men, the prince will offer to show off his new regiment tomorrow.

The PCs will also be introduced to Aroniav's chief minister, Lord Mairol—an old, aristocratic Martian who obviously does not share the prince's tastes. He dresses traditionally and will say nothing to the humans, contenting himself with an icy glare. Mairol is always accompanied by a clique of young noblemen, who are less than subtle about their dislike of Earthmen. If asked, the British consul can identify all of them as being the heirs of the most powerful nobles in the city. Rhys-Owen will add that the nobles and Lord Mairol are opposed to the prince's plans for reform.

A small suite of adjoining rooms are at the PCs' disposal, furnished with imported British goods. The bathrooms even have hot and cold running water. Portraits of contemporary European rulers adorn the walls. The

Noorlan Revolt

Space: 1889 Adventure

By James L. Cambias

It is ruled by young Prince Aroniav, though much power is in the hands of the great land-owning nobles. The army is of fair quality, and consists of 1200 infantry, 600 cavalry and 20 cannon. There is a good quality mercenary contingent of 300 infantry, 300 cavalry and 10 cannon. The city's air fleet has 10 ships.

The bureaucrats and merchants are neither more nor less corrupt than is usual for Martian cities, despite the prince's efforts at reform. The citizens are generally hostile toward Earthmen, and pro-Oenotrian sentiment is strong. There have been several antihuman riots in Noorlan, which the prince has put down with soldiers.

The official language of Noorlan is Bootnai, but Oenotrian, Parhooni and Koline are widely understood. Only the prince and a few merchants know any European languages.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

Prince Aroniav dwells in the ornate royal palace in the center of Noorlan. He is fond of Earthmen and their technological marvels, and will enthusiastically greet his human visitors. He is delighted with his new present and invites the PCs to stay in the palace as his guests. Aroniav will show off his collection of machinery to the PCs—a huge hall filled with electrical generators, steam engines, agricultural equipment and even a small railway locomotive. He also chatters happily about the new regiment he has orga-

PCs may freshen up and change into formal wear before the prince's birthday ball. Martian servants, looking very uncomfortable and slightly embarrassed in English servant costumes, are on hand to offer assistance.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The celebration begins at sunset with a reception in the grand hall, where the PCs are the only humans in a throng of elegantly dressed Martian nobles. Ambassadors from all the neighboring cities are on hand with exotic gifts—coronets adorned with fire gems, ceremonial armor covered with gold filigree, opulent robes trimmed with rare furs and ancient Canal Builder treasures.

After the reception, a banquet is served, with 26 courses of spicy Martian dishes. Blue Martian wine is in abundance, and the PCs should make a Moderate Endurance task roll to avoid getting drunk. Drunken characters subtract 1 from their Agility and Intelligence for the remainder of the evening, and subtract 1 from their Endurance the following day.

Following the banquet is a fireworks display, then dancing in the ballroom. Martian dances are complex and ritualized; any human attempting to join in must accomplish a Formidable Agility task roll to avoid looking like a clod.

Amid the celebration, a PC may spot the high minister, Lord Mairol, speaking with some of the other guests. Mairol constantly confers with Duke Nochoor, the Oenotrian



LLEWELEYN RHYS-OWEN (GREEN NPC)

Rhys-Owen has been assigned here as a punishment for failing in an earlier posting. He is determined to succeed in his new duties, and is above all loyal to the crown. He is extremely knowledgeable about the political situation in Noorlan, but the coup will still take him by surprise. His wife lives at the family home in Wales.

Motives: Loyal, Driven.

Appearance: He is a small, quiet, dark Welshman. He is not generally armed.

Attribute	Skills
-----------	--------

Str:	2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Agl:	1	
End:	3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mountaineering), Swimming 1
Int:	4	Observation 5
Chr:	6	Eloquence 5, Bargaining 4, Linguistics 6 (French, Parhooni, Koline, Bootnai, Oenotrian, German)
Soc:	5	Riding 4 (horse)

PRINCE ARONIAV (GREEN NPC)

Aroniav is the friendly young ruler of Noorlan and the surrounding territories. As a boy, he was sent by his father to accompany a diplomatic mission to Syrtis Major, where he was entranced by the British way of life. Since then he has collected Terran machinery and is determined to modernize Noorlan. His desire is partly a drive to make himself more powerful, but it goes beyond that to the level of a minor obsession. His plans have made him very unpopular with the city's rich and powerful nobles, but the revolt will come as a shock.

Motives: Eccentric, Friendly.

Appearance: Aroniav prefers European-style clothes. He is not usually armed.

Attribute	Skills
-----------	--------

Str:	1	Close Combat 1 (sword)
Agl:	4	Stealth 3, Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End:	3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mapping), Fieldcraft 1, Swimming 1
Int:	2	Observation 1, Science 1 (chemistry)
Chr:	5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 6 (Oenotrian, Parhooni, Hellan, English)
Soc:	6	Riding 5 (gashant), Piloting 2 (cloudship), Leadership 4

LORD MAIROL (TRAINED NPC)

Mairol is responsible for the city's day-to-day administration. A staunch traditionalist, Mairol has thwarted Aroniav's reform measures—particularly the anticorruption campaigns—as Mairol makes a huge profit from bribery and extortion. He has always lusted for greater and greater power, and is loyal only to himself.

Motives: Ruthless, Arrogant.

Appearance: Mairol dresses traditionally and carries two concealed daggers.

Attribute	Skills
-----------	--------

Str:	1	Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl:	3	Stealth 2
End:	2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping), Swimming 1
Int:	5	Observation 4
Chr:	4	Eloquence 4, Bargaining 3, Linguistics 3 (Oenotrian, Parhooni, Koline)
Soc:	6	Riding 5 (gashant), Piloting 2 (cloudship)

GRAAZITH (VETERAN NPC)

Graazith thinks he is manipulating Mairol to his own ends, but he is actually just a pawn of the high minister and the Oenotrians. He is fond of battle and danger.

Motives: Ambitious, Adventurousome.

Appearance: Graazith is powerful and handsome. He is generally armed with a sword.

Attribute	Skills
-----------	--------

Str:	4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 4 (edged weapons)
Agl:	4	Stealth 3, Marksmanship 3 (rifle)
End:	3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mountaineering), Swimming 1
Int:	1	
Chr:	3	Eloquence 3
Soc:	6	Riding 5 (gashant), Piloting 2 (cloudship), Leadership 2

ambassador. The high minister also has several brief but significant-looking conversations with the four most powerful nobles in the city—Lord Imletar, Baron Tokaar, Lord Biihal and Count Elvriyaaden. If approached, Mairol will haughtily ignore the humans.

A PC would have to make an Impossible Stealth task roll to get near enough to overhear what is being said, and would then need to make a Moderate task roll in Bootnai to understand the conversation. If both rolls are accomplished, the character will overhear the following exchange:

"All is in readiness, Lord Mairol."

"Excellent. We move at sunrise."

A MATTER OF HONOR

At 11 p.m., Graazith, one of Mairol's young nobleman, will ask the PCs their opinion of the Oenotrian War. He will soon turn insulting, making slighting remarks about British courage, intelligence and manhood. From there, he will get personal, impugning the honor of the PCs. The moment any British character responds to the provocation, Graazith will challenge him to a duel. (If the PCs are sufficiently self-controlled to avoid responding to Graazith's insults, Rhys-Owen will lose his head and slap the Martian after a nasty insinuation about Mrs. Rhys-Owen.) Graazith will invite his opponent to duel him at midnight at the ruined west fortress just beyond the city walls. The one who has been challenged may select the combat weapon. Backing out or failing to show up would seriously erode British prestige in Noorlan and would be exploited by the pro-Oenotrian party. The prince will not interfere since this is a matter of honor.

The western city gate is watched by a single guard, who will allow the PCs to pass for a small consideration (bribe). The ruined fortress lies a mile beyond the walls.

Fortress: The fortress is mostly rubble (it was destroyed by the armies of Trinacria during the War of the Ausonian Succession over 100 ago). The shell of the central keep remains, and the PCs can see a light inside. Within the keep is a large circular space, ideal for honorable combat. Graazith is already there, along with 10 other young nobles as his seconds. The seconds are all armed with swords and pistols, but Graazith carries only the agreed-upon duelling weapon.

Ambush: As they enter the keep, any PCs making an Impossible Observation task roll will see several figures lurking in the shadows on top of the building. Any reaction to this will result in Graazith's springing his ambush early.

If the PCs haven't noticed the Martians in hiding, Graazith and his opponent will enter into combat normally. If the weapon of choice is a firearm, the ambush will begin when Graazith fires his gun. If the method of combat chosen is hand-to-hand, the attack will begin at the start of the second combat round.

Twenty Experienced Oenotrian soldiers (the

guard force from the Oenotrian Embassy) are hiding atop the keep. They will fire at the English party, and one of Graazith's seconds will call upon the humans to surrender. Graazith is armed with the duelling weapon and wears no armor. The Martian forces include the 10 noble seconds, who should be treated as Trained troops (their statistics are the same as Graazith's, but they are wearing doublets, and carrying sabers and single-barrel pistols). The Oenotrians are armed with muzzle-loading rifles and sabers, and wear breastplates and helmets.

The Martians' goal is to take the PCs prisoner to use as hostages during the planned coup in order to prevent any action by the commander of the British gunboat.

IN CAPTIVITY

The Martians will take the PCs' weapons, tie their hands and take them in a closed wagon to Lord Mairol's palace on the canal. Their captors will only say that the PCs are being kept alive "to avoid any complications."

Prison: The PCs are locked in a cellar—a large, dimly-lit room containing nothing but rubbish. It has two doors, both very heavy and locked. One opens onto a passage, guarded by a two of Mairol's private guards, who speak only Bootnai and will ignore anything the captives say to them. They are Trained soldiers, armed with muskets and knives, and wearing doublets and helmets.

The other door is long unused and is partially concealed by heaped rubbish at the far end of the room. The PCs will only notice it if they examine the debris. The door has been gnawed by rats at the base, leaving a gap of several inches. Though the gap can be seen a small, well-appointed room, with several Martians seated at a table in the middle. They are speaking in Oenotrian:

"The Red Men will not interfere. My forces will surround the palace at dawn. Tokaar's men will immobilize the cloudships."

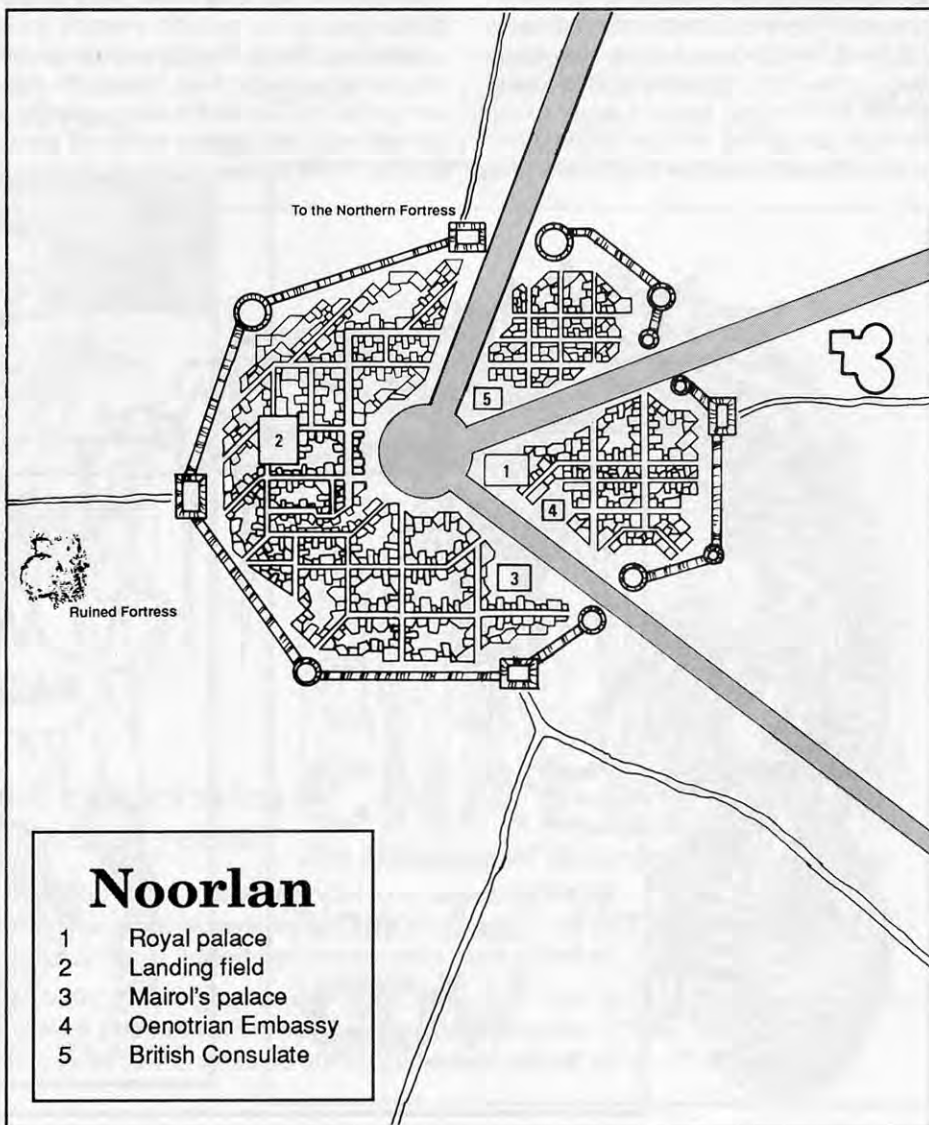
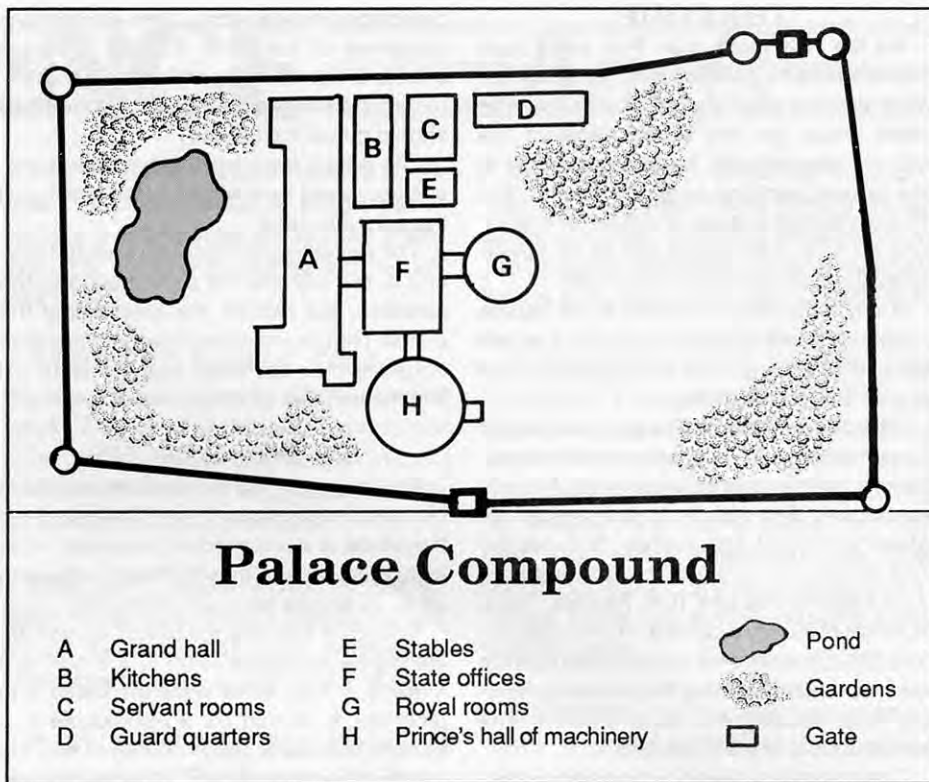
"Very good, Lord Mairol. You will have the full support of the empire in case any other princes wish to challenge your right to rule Noorlan."

"Then let us drink to victory!"

After a few moments, the Martians will depart, leaving the room empty.

Escape: To open the door requires either a Difficult test of Lockpicking skill or a Formidable Strength task roll. If Strength is used, the guards outside the other door will hear the noise and attempt to subdue the prisoners—if one of them is incapacitated, the other will try to run for help. If guns are fired, three more guards will arrive after five minutes. Further disturbances will bring an entire squad.

The conference room has one exit, a door which leads into a large cellar where 50 soldiers are quartered. The only other way out is a small window high up in one wall. It is an Easy task of Agility to slither out through it. Beyond lie the gardens, sloping down to a road along the edge of the canal.



THE COUP

As the PCs make their way away from Mairol's palace, they can hear gunfire erupt from various sites around the city as the rebel forces go into action. Most of the citizens stay indoors, but there are riots in the poorer sections near the docks. The PCs encounter a group of rioters on a roll of one on 1D6. The rioters will all be Green NPCs, armed with clubs and rocks.

If any PCs have remained at the palace instead of going off to fight the duel, they will learn of the coup only when cannon fire erupts around the palace.

Opposing Forces: The prince's guards have manned the walls and are holding out for now, but they are outnumbered by Mairol's contingent. The palace is surrounded by Mairol's force of 300 infantry, 300 cavalry and 10 cannon—10% Elite, 40% Veteran, 40% Experienced and 10% Trained. Three hundred of the city's cavalry—80% Veterans and 20% Experienced—have sided with the rebels and are guarding the cloudship landing field, keeping the loyal crews of the prince's navy in their quarters.

The prince is guarded by the palace guard of 100 infantry, 100 cavalry and five cannon—all Veterans. The prince's most powerful and loyal regiment is his New Model Regiment—10% Veterans and 90% Experienced. NMR troops wear no armor except helmets, are armed with Lee-Enfield bolt-action rifles and have five 20-pounder rifled

breechloading cannons. This regiment is quartered in the north fortress 10 miles outside of town along the canal to Gorklimsk. (Mairol persuaded the prince that the NMR should guard the border.)

The rebels have posted soldiers to prevent any word from reaching the NMR until the prince is dead.

The remaining 800 infantry and 200 cavalry in the city are not participating in the rebellion, but neither are they aiding the prince. The commanders have confined their troops to their barracks, and the units will join the winners of a decisive victory.

TO THE RESCUE

The only way into or out of the palace is the aerial steam launch the PCs brought to the prince. It is unarmed and normally holds eight passengers (though it can carry up to up to 20 people for short distances).

If the PCs wait until the palace is overrun, the prince will agree to go to the northern fortress. If they leave while the battle is in progress, it will require a Formidable Eloquence task roll to convince him to flee. He has no objection to the PCs' leaving alone, but requests that they send word to the NMR.

Landing Field: The *Gnat* commander has remained at the field, hoping the PCs can get to him. The field is surrounded by a 10-foot wall, and cavalry members patrol outside. It will require a Difficult Fieldcraft

task roll to reach the wall without being spotted and a Difficult Agility (or Moderate Mountaineering) task to climb the wall. Once past the wall, the PCs will be in sight of the *Gnat*, and any hostiles will be annihilated before they can harm the party.

A group approaching the field by air aboard the steam launch will be shot at from the ground for two rounds before the *Gnat*'s crew notices and suppresses the ground fire.

The *Gnat* could disperse Mairol's forces besieging the palace, but the rebels would find cover and regroup once the gunboat left. Or the PCs can help Aroniav link up with his NMR, which should be able to take the landing field, pushing the rebels back street by street. With the aid of the cloudship crews Aroniav can move against Mairol's troops at the palace.

ARONIAV'S GRATITUDE

When the prince regains his throne, he will give each PC a gold medallion bearing his likeness (worth about £1000 each) and will offer any military PCs commissions in his army. Though the prince cannot give any military aid against Oenotria (he will need his troops to fight unrest) Britain can count on Noorlan's friendship in the future. The *Times* will undoubtedly give the PCs a favorable story, and the British government might decide to reward them as well. Ω



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CITY OF DEATH



DALY

By James L. Cambias

A party of archaeologists from Cambridge University sets out to investigate the ruins of Andryn in the Eden Desert of Mars—and never returns. The PCs are invited to join a rescue expedition to discover the scientists' fate.

The missing expedition left Syrtis Major aboard a small steam flyer four months ago, intending to spend eight weeks exploring the city. It is now two months overdue. Led by the eminent Mars scholar Dr. Phillip Carter Howard, the team included Professor Benjamin Fine, Dr. Cyril Hardy, Mr. Jordan Treslingham and the Reverend Archibald Gannet. They were accompanied by two human servants, Jamshid Singh and Alf Haggage, and a Martian guide named Strookh.

RESCUE EXPEDITION

The rescue expedition—financed by the Royal Geographic Society with help from the Crown—will proceed in a small steam flyer, escorted by an Aphid-class gunboat, the *Firefly*. The gunboat will leave the party at the ruins of Andryn, then must head south to hunt for Oenotrian privateers preying on British shipping in the Sinus Meridiani region. The *Firefly* will return in a week to escort the PCs back to Syrtis.

The Royal Geographical Society has raised £400 through public subscription with which to equip the expedition. The PCs may spend this money on whatever items they need, but anything purchased will become the property of the R.G.S. once the whole thing is over. The steam flyer belongs to the society, as well.

The two ships will depart Syrtis Major, take on water and coal in Avenel, then steam across the Aerial Hills. As the PCs travel westward above the Martian desert, they will have the usual random encounters. The *Firefly* should be able to deal with any threats that appear.

The voyage should take about eight days. During the last two days there will be no random encounters—even aerial traffic avoids the cursed city. If an encounter is rolled, the characters see a mirage. In the hazy desert sky, heat shimmers create the image of a huge city with vast towers and broad avenues.

When at last the two ships reach the city, the *Firefly* will remain long enough to check for any large hostile force of nomads or High Martians. But there is no sign of anyone. With that, the gunboat will turn southward and steam off, to return in a week.

ANDRYN

Andryn is accursed, according to Martian legend. Desert caravans avoid it, even though it has a good source of water. Hill Martian nomads say Andryn was once a mighty city

in the middle of fair and green lands, but its prince supposedly committed an abomination so heinous that the gods caused the canal to cease flowing and placed the sign of death upon the city.

Andryn was once a metropolis of some 50,000 people. It was abandoned 3000 years ago when the Eden pumping station to the south was destroyed in an earthquake, drying up the canal. The city has been thoroughly looted and vandalized, and damaged by the ceaseless desert winds and the pitiless passage of time. All the buildings are now roofless, many collapsed, and everything is covered with about a foot of sand. It is possible to find shelter on the lower floors of some multistory buildings. Water is available nearby—a pond in the dead canal bed is still fed by a trickle from the old city sewers.

The outlying areas of the city have all been covered by shifting desert sands. Only the citadel section, built on a rise overlooking the dead canal, remains intact. The surviving section of the city is surrounded by a steep cliff (needing a Formidable Mountaineering task roll to scale), which is 50 feet high on the northern side of the citadel and rises to 80 feet high on the southern side.

One thing explorers will notice very quickly is the utter silence of the city. Aside from the whisper of the wind, there is no noise. The footsteps of explorers echo loudly in the abandoned streets.

LOCATIONS IN ANDRYN

In addition to the encounters described above, there are several notable sites in the city.

Academy of Wisdom: This was once a school where the elite of Andryn were educated. A careful search of the building will uncover a set of slate tablets inscribed in the nearly extinct Khallan dialect, describing some of the operations of the old pumping stations.

Expedition Campsite: This mansion was used by the ill-fated Howard expedition as a base of operations. It is described more fully below.

Temple: This domed building is in good condition, but the statues of Martian gods inside have all been mutilated. Their heads have been knocked off and replaced by skulls. Only the image of the death god remains undefiled. Behind that statue is a flight of steps leading down to the temple crypt. The steps are booby-trapped—anyone going down will set off a shower of darts dropped from above. Roll 10 hit dice: Each dart inflicts 1 wound on a roll of 6. Normal saving rolls apply.

Mansion: Jamshid Singh's corpse lies in one of the downstairs rooms, partially dismembered. He has a rifle with him, and the room is littered with spent shells. This house has a cellar connected to the undercity.



Sewer Outlet: A small stream flows sluggishly from the sewer outlet set in the old stone quay. It is screened by tough thornbushes, but can be seen from the floor of the canal bed.

Palace Service Wing: This wing held the kitchens and servants' quarters. It is in very bad shape, but on the second floor are the desiccated corpses of three Hill Martian warriors, apparently dead by suicide. They are decades old.

Palace Throne Chamber: The domed roof of this building is intact, and the huge carved stone throne of the princes of Andryn remains in the center. The throne is occupied by a Martian skeleton, wearing a crown made of finger-bones and a cloak apparently made of the skin of a Martian. In the rear of the chamber is flight of steps down to the palace dungeons. The steps are booby-trapped—anyone descending will cause a sharpened pendulum to swing down the center of the stairwell. It requires an Agility roll to avoid the pendulum, which otherwise will inflict 2 wounds.

Palace Old Wing: This wing once held the royal apartments. Some rooms still contain highly indecent murals on the walls, and the prince's chamber still holds an exquisite sandstone statue about eight feet tall (weighing nearly a ton). The statue would fetch a good price in Syrtis Major, if it could be moved.

Ruined Keep: This half-crumbled tower is dangerous to enter: There is a 1 in 6 chance of falling debris, requiring an Agility roll to avoid suffering a wound. Amid the rubble is the smashed hull of the Howard expedition's flyer. It is damaged beyond repair.

There is an entrance in the tower to the old storage cellar of the palace. To discover this entrance amid the rubble is a Formidable test of Observation skill.

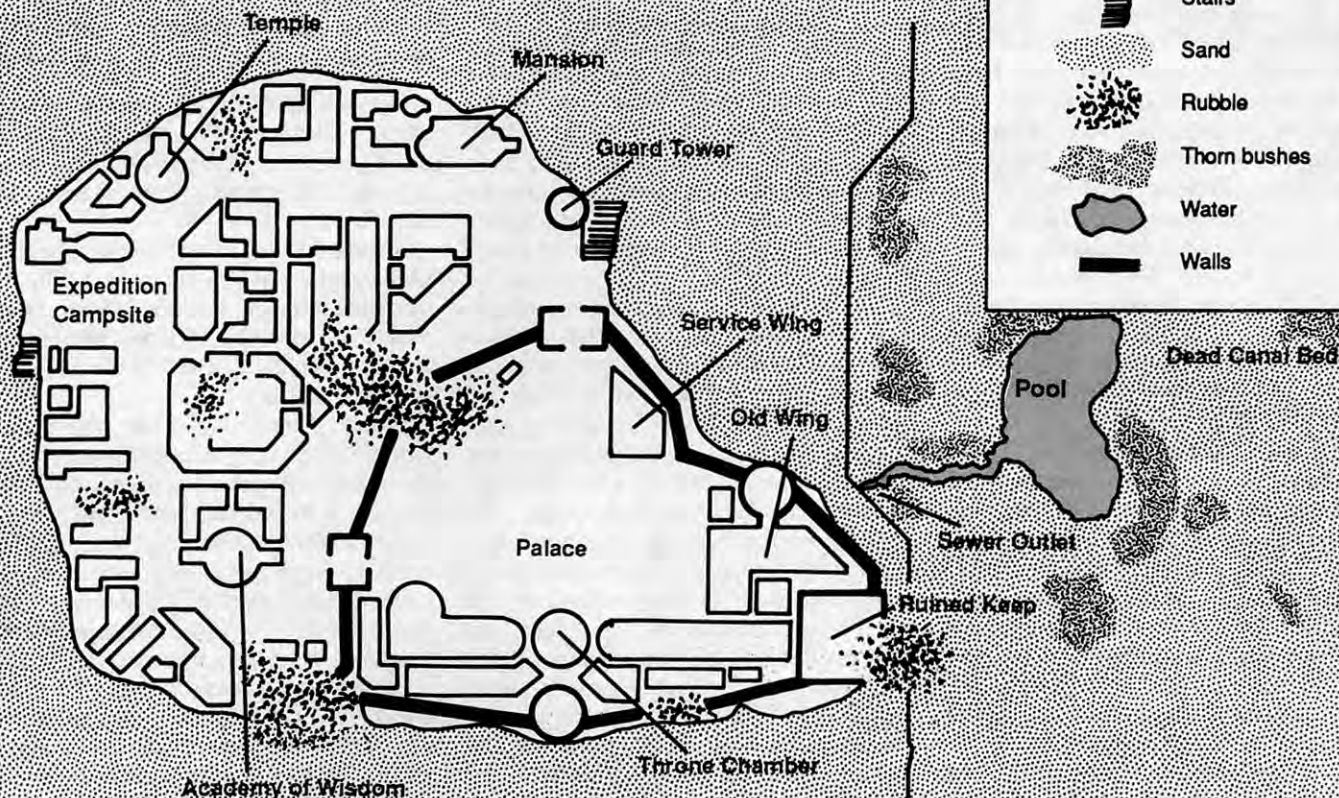
Guard Tower: The body of Dr. Fine is here, still clutching his heavy revolver. He apparently died from multiple stab wounds. Written on the wall beside him in dried blood are the words "Death comes at night."

ENCOUNTERS

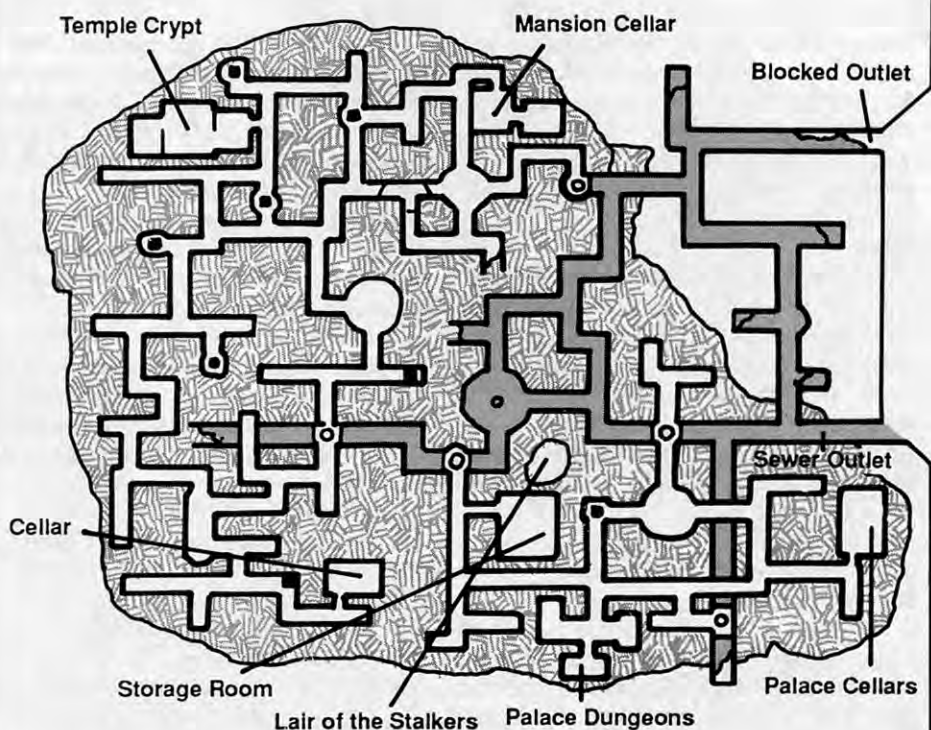
When characters enter a new building, the referee should roll on the table below.

Roll	Encounter
1-3	Nothing
4	Skeletons
5	Animals
6	Booby-trap

Andryn



Undercity



Skeletons: The building contains 1-6 bodies, at least several months old and possibly centuries old. Most will be Hill Martians, and the rest will be Canal Martians or humans. They will often be in positions of agony or arranged in horrifying poses. None will have any useful weapons or possessions.

Animals: This will probably be a small group of Roogies, Eegars, or possibly an Eelowaan. They will behave normally.

Booby-Trap: A trap is set at the entrance of the building. This is generally a bow-trap, in which a trip wire releases an arrow aimed at the door. The arrow hits on a roll of 5 or 6, and PCs get their normal saving rolls. It is unlikely that the arrow is poisoned.

LOST EXPEDITION

The mansion where the Howard expedition made its headquarters is a scene of bloody horror. In the main room lies Dr. Howard, his body horribly mutilated. Anyone with Medicine Knowledge can determine that he was still alive when most of his wounds were inflicted. The bodies of Mr. Treslingham and Alf Haggage are wrapped in tarpaulins and laid out in an adjoining room. Reverend Gannet's body is in an upstairs room; he was apparently played alive before being killed.

The expedition's supplies and apparatus are untouched. All the ammunition brought by the Howard party has been used up, and the steam flyer is gone.

Howard's Journal: Dr. Howard's expedition journal is under his cot. The first few days describe perfectly normal activities—setting up the camp, photographing the city from the air, and so on. Trouble begins to appear with the entry for June 20.

June 20, 1889: A great tragedy. Mr. Treslingham died at approximately 10 a.m. Upon entering the doorway of building A-31 he was struck with an arrow, piercing the carotid artery and causing his death a few minutes later. Rev. Gannet was with him and informs me that an infernal machine was set up in the doorway to protect an arrow at whoever might enter. It is senseless and tragic death. I have suspended our investigations pending a search for more traps of this sort.

June 21, 1889: Horror! Alf was slain in his bed last night, even as we all slept! He was stabbed through the heart. Singh is undoubtedly guilty of this foul murder, though he denies it, of course. I have ordered that he be secured, that we may take him back to S. Major for trial. This will certainly mean cutting short our investigation. Damnably nuisance.

June 22, 1889: Dr. Fine is missing. Strookh, Hardy and I will search while Gannet remains to watch Singh.

Later: Singh escaped while that idiot Gannet was making tea. It is too dangerous to remain here in our present circumstances.

No sign of Fine—I fear he may have stumbled into a trap. Strookh keeps repeating his nonsense about a curse. We will depart as soon as Fine is found.

There are no further entries.

STALKER STRIKES

The first night the characters are alone in the city, the Stalker priest will attack. He will prefer to attack any PCs left alone, but if necessary will take on a pair, or even three PCs. He will emerge from the shadows, a hideous knife-wielding figure, attacking with inhuman ferocity.

While this attack is going on, or shortly thereafter, other members of the cult will disable the party's flyer. They will secretly cut the flyer's rudder and trim-control cables. The first time anyone attempts to take off in the ether flyer, it will not respond to controls at all. An Impossible Piloting skill roll is needed to land the ship safely; otherwise it will crash, injuring those aboard. No pilot can prevent the flyer from being damaged in the crash. (A really good way for the referee to stage-manage this is to have an NPC panic and try to escape aboard the flyer, only to discover that it has been sabotaged when he crashes.)

DEATH THE STALKER CULT

The cult of Death the Stalker is an insane Martian religion, similar to the Cult of the Worm. Cultists worship Death the Stalker of All. The high priest is thought to become an avatar of Death, and goes out stalking victims to slay.

When a Stalker priest goes out hunting, he is always intoxicated with the Kroosht drug. This drug radically enhances one's physical attributes—at the cost of shortening one's life. Kroosht users generally die after a year or two from the effects of the drug. Kroosht raises a person's Strength by 2, Endurance by 1 and Agility by 2. The user never becomes unconscious due to wounds—he remains conscious until killed.

Kroosht also reinforces the fanaticism of the cultists, making them absolutely fearless. Cultists never need to make Morale rolls. The Stalker priest must have a one-ounce dose of Kroosht every 24 hours or his attributes return to normal.

There are as many Stalker cultists hiding in the city as there are members of the adventurers' party. Whenever one Stalker priest is killed, he is succeeded by another member of the cult. At any one time, only a single Stalker priest hunts the party (although his mobility and resistance to damage may give a different impression).

STALKER TACTICS

A couple of NPCs wandering off alone will probably be the first attacked—and found horribly mutilated by the PCs. If the PCs are smart and remain in groups, the Stalkers will



try to pick them off from long range with arrows (possibly poisoned), or prepare elaborate booby-traps. The Stalkers have a superb knowledge of the city and can often find secret passages into rooms where prospective victims have holed up.

The Stalkers are clever and utterly merciless. Some cultists will pretend to be killed and go down, only to rise later and continue their bloody work—a seeming corpse come to life. They may kidnap a PC or NPC and keep him alive, perhaps torturing the captive so that his screams will bring others out.

UNDERCITY

Underneath Andryn lies a complex network of sewers and basements, mostly intact. The cultists hide in the tunnels and use them to get from place to place secretly.

The sewer tunnels are an example of superb ancient Martian construction. They are 10 feet across and are diamond-shaped in cross-section. Smaller pipes enter from above and on the sides, but none of them are large enough to fit a person.

Shafts to the surface can only be found from underground; there is too much sand and debris on the ground up above. These shafts have a stone cover at the top, and stone handholds are carved into the side of the shaft. It requires a Formidable Strength roll to successfully open one of the lids from underneath.

Shafts between the upper and lower sewers have no ladders. It requires a Routine Mountaineering roll to go down and a Difficult roll to climb up these shafts. The upper sewer system is 10 yards above the lower system.

Sections blocked by debris are partially collapsed. They are completely impassable without digging machinery.

LOCATIONS IN THE UNDERCITY

Palace Dungeons: These grim cells once held enemies of the ruling prince. One chamber now holds instruments of torture, the dried body of a Hill Martian still resting in one device. A secret tunnel leads from a cell to the sewer system; it is concealed by a piece of cloth daubed with mud to resemble stone. A Formidable Observation roll is required to spot the tunnel.

Palace Cellars: This was once the storage area for the palace. A grating connects to the sewer system. There is nothing here of interest.

Sewer Outlet: This is one of the main sewer outflow pipes, and a small trickle of water still seeps out to feed the pond outside. The cultists

have booby-trapped the entrance with a dart trap. Anyone entering will trigger the trap, which fires 12 darts. Each dart hits on a roll of 5 or 6, doing one wound. Normal saving rolls apply. Darts which miss the lead person may hit anyone following.

Blocked Outlet: This sewer outlet is partially blocked and is screened by thorn-bushes. It requires a Difficult Observation or Fieldcraft roll to spot the outlet from the canal bed. The cultists have not placed any traps at this outlet.

Lair of the Stalkers: This chamber is the headquarters of the Stalker cultists.

Mansion Cellar: This is the basement of the mansion where Singh's body lies. A grating leads into the sewer system from here, which can easily be opened. A pit has been dug on the sewer side of the grating, concealed with a cloth cover daubed with mud. The pit is lined with sharp stakes. An Impossible task of Observation will spot the pit; otherwise, the first person passing through the grating will fall in, suffering 1D6 wounds.

Temple Crypt: This was the burial chamber of the royalty and nobles of Andryn. All the sarcophagi have been looted of any valuables, and the mummified skeletons have been removed from their wrappings and seated atop the tombs.

The Martian guide Strookh's body is here, impaled upon a stake and pinned to the ground. Someone making a Routine Observation roll will notice a trail of bloodstains leading from him to one tomb. If moved, the

tomb reveals an entrance to the sewer system. Moving the tomb is a Formidable test of Strength, but two people can work together.

Cellar: This cellar has no access to the surface, as the building above has collapsed. The chamber contains a great deal of domestic trash—broken furniture, rotted rugs and so forth—but one small chest holds a beautiful idol carved from a Moabite Fire Jewel. The idol is worth at least £1000.

Storage Room: This chamber's opening to the surface is blocked by tons of rubble. The Stalker cultists use this room for storage. There are several gashant carcasses, and a collection of foodstuffs looted from caravans and passers-by. There is also a small hoard of valuables collected in the city, stored in a small chest. The miscellaneous gold items, coins and bits of jewelry are worth about £300. The cultists store their Kroosht drug supply here; a large glass bottle holds 80 ounces.

LAIR OF THE STALKERS

The Stalker cultists' headquarters is in the deepest part of the undercity, where the original sewer catch-basin was. All approaches to the chamber are booby-trapped, with trip wires hidden in the standing water that cause huge blades to spring up from the floor. Each person passing a booby-trap will trigger it on a roll of 3 or less. Avoiding the blades is an Impossible task of Agility. Those who fail to avoid the blades suffer four wounds (the referee may simply rule that those hit by the blades are dead).

The lair of the Stalkers is a huge domed room, reeking of filth and decay, with puddles of murky water on the floor and a deep pool in the center. The room is decorated with shocking trophies of the Stalkers' grim activities: hideously mutilated bodies of Martians and humans are hung upon the walls, and a horrifying idol of Death the Stalker stands beside the pool in the center of the room.

All remaining Stalkers will be in the room; about half will be asleep—unless one of the booby-traps has been tripped. In that case, the Stalkers will be awake and armed. They will fight to the death with knives and swords, showing no mercy and asking for none. One cultist will be disguised as a mutilated body on the wall; he will not strike unless most or all of his comrades are killed.

Horror From the Depths: In the central pool is the hideous creature worshipped by the death cultists—a huge, tentacled horror resembling an enormous and bloated Knoe Shoshu, but with a face shockingly reminiscent of a Martian's. It will rise from the depths if all of the Stalkers are killed, and ooze toward the surviving PCs.

Size: 3x3 **Move:** W10, L4 **Wounds:** 12 **Weight:** 1000 lbs **Tentacles:** (4,4,4,4).

The horror can attack with up to four tentacles at once.

ESCAPE

Once their flyer has been disabled, the PCs have only two ways to escape the city: They can try to leave on foot, or they can wait for the *Firefly* to return. Departure on foot will be difficult. It is at least 500 miles to the nearest city, Emden, along the dead canal bed. The city of Thymiamata is 700 miles away across open desert. To the north lie mountains inhabited by High Martians; it is doubtful that they would be any improvement over the Stalker cultists. A party on foot will still be hounded by the Stalkers, who will attack at night, poison water sources, drive game away, and generally do their best to help the desert claim its victims.

The *Firefly* is scheduled to return in a week to escort the party back to Syrtis Major. It can be delayed by Oenotrian privateers for several days, if the referee wishes the PCs to have a longer stay in Andryn. And even after departure, a mad cultist might stow away aboard the gunboat, to turn up when the PCs least expect it.

Rewards and Experience: The PCs will undoubtedly get some combat experience during this adventure. Scientists may also improve their Archaeology skill.

A newspaper will undoubtedly pay handsomely for an exclusive account of the adventure, and the resulting publicity might generate some renown. A description of the Stalker Cult and the monster might earn a scholar some scientific prestige. There are still some items of value hidden in the city, for those who crave mere money.

PLAY HINTS

This horror adventure is *very dangerous*—the mortality rate among characters is likely to be high. Since PCs are often very attached to continuing characters, it might be wise to use temporary PCs for this mission.

The scenario depends a great deal on atmosphere and tension. The referee should emphasize the isolation of the party, the spooky silence of the city, the horrendous condition of the bodies found.

The referee should also pay attention to the moods of the party, and plan Stalker attacks accordingly. For example, after the first Stalker priest is killed, the PCs may think there was only a single fanatic. Only when their confidence has begun to return should the next Stalker priest strike.

Many alternatives are possible to add to the mood. The Stalker cult is widespread—a Martian servant with the group may secretly be a cultist. Perhaps one of the archaeologists (the missing Dr. Hardy) is not dead, but instead has gone insane and joined the Stalkers. If so, he will act as bait to lure the PCs into ambushes, or be rescued and then turn against the adventurers. Or maybe one of the PCs will go insane from terror and begin emulating the Stalkers. Ω

Stalker Priest

Att.	Skills
Str: 6	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 5 (edged)
Agl: 7	Stealth 6, Marksmanship 4 (Bow), Crime 2 (pick locks)
End: 7	Wilderness Travel 6 (mountaineering), Tracking 1
Int: 3	Observation 2
Chr: 2	Eloquence 1, Theatrics 1, Linguistics 1 (Koline)

Soc: 1
These statistics include the effects of the Kroosht drug.

Motives: Mad, Sadistic, Loyal.

Appearance: A Stalker priest is a terrifying sight. Pale and emaciated, with burning eyes and long fingernails, a cultist dresses in filthy rags, ornamented with the bones of past victims, with a big black cloak for concealment. Some wear garments of human skin or hair. A Stalker priest's face is decorated with abstract designs in blood. He moves silently about the city, invisible in the shadows, and strikes suddenly, creating terror in his victims.

CHALLENGE 55

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IMPRISONED in NOACHIS

By James L. Cambias

I had warned Phipps about offending the natives, but he seemed convinced that their rules did not apply to Englishmen. "These Martians have no real concept of law, old boy. The only things they understand are gold and force. If there's any difficulty, a small donation to the right person will solve everything. And if not, they still wouldn't dare harass British citizens. Remember Shastapsh and all that."

He didn't look so smug as we knelt before the prince, with soldiers holding naked swords against the backs of our necks. Prince Khaizan sat sprawled on his throne, an evil-looking brute if ever I saw one. There was a kind of obscene joy in his eyes that I didn't like at all.

"So, Red Men, you have dared to offend the sacred memories of my ancestors. This is a serious crime. The ancient penalty for such an offense is the Week of Steel and Fire. Still, I will show mercy—you will not die by any Martian hand. Instead, you will lie and rot in the cells beneath my palace. Your bodies will wither, your minds will rot and your souls will drown in the darkness. Perhaps someday my grandson will set you free when he becomes prince in Noachis."

Phipps lunged to his feet. "This is an outrage, Your Highness! Her Majesty's government will not look kindly upon your actions!"

Khaizan laughed wickedly. "Your Queen Victoria can do nothing to save you. The Oenotrians tell me the British colony will soon be but a memory, and the Red Men will be driven from the face of Mars. Who will come for you then? Guards, take them to the pit!"

They led us down endless stairs, past scores of guards and locked doors, deep into the foul-smelling dungeons. Only one thing relieved the utter misery of the situation—at last Phipps had nothing to say.

This scenario is not intended as a stand-alone adventure; rather it is designed to be used by referees in the event that their PCs have managed to get put in jail by a Martian prince. In the course of adventuring and serving the British Crown on Mars, characters will occasionally run afoul of local rulers. Often a little gold or the threat of British intervention will smooth over any legal obstacles, but now and then the adventurers will fail a crucial die roll or make a staggering blunder, and as a result must suffer the consequences of being imprisoned.

This adventure assumes that the PCs have been thrown into prison; the reason is unimportant. The Martian city-state used throughout is Noachis, but naturally the referee can change the setting to suit the circumstances. The ruler of Noachis is Prince Khaizan, a brutal, human-hating despot. One can expect little justice at his hands.

PRISON

The prison consists of a complex of cells, torture chambers and guard rooms underneath the royal palace. Over the years, the dungeons have been expanded into empty cellars, ruined sewers and ancient underground chambers left by the Canal Builders. The result is a bewildering maze of cells and passages, extending well beyond the walls of the palace.

The PCs will be stripped and carefully searched. Everything but their clothes will be taken (and any especially expensive or unusual garments will be taken as well). PCs may try to make an Impossible Bargaining task roll to attempt

to keep one personal item, but no weapons or tools will be allowed.

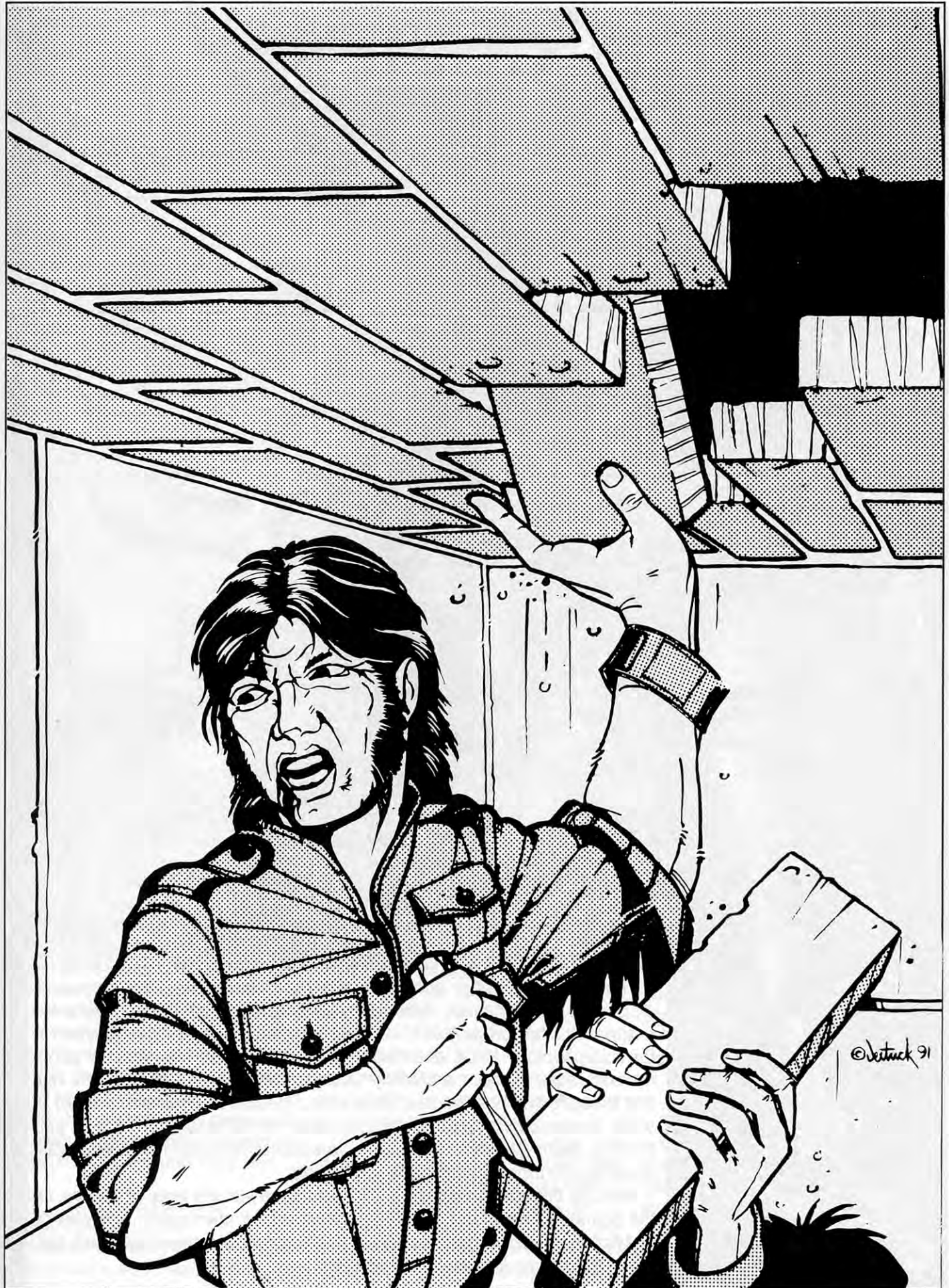
All the PCs will be put into the cell called "the pit," whether male or female, human or Martian.

Pit: The PCs' cell is a cramped little chamber about 10 feet square. It is lit only by the light coming in through the small grating in the door, which is dim at best. The room is perpetually damp and stinks like a cesspool. Foul water drips down the walls constantly. There are no beds or other furniture—merely some filthy straw infested with bugs.

The cell's walls and floor are granite slabs, each about a yard wide. The slabs are too hard to dig through and too heavy to move the slabs aside. The ceiling is 10 feet high at the highest point and is made of brick, forming a barrel vault. The walls and ceiling are all covered with a layer of slimy moss and lichen.

The cell door is four inches thick and is constructed of two layers of heavy timbers faced on both sides with bronze sheets. The door opens outward, so the prisoners cannot reach either the lock or the hinges. There is a small grating, six inches high and 10 inches wide, set at about eye level in the door. The grating has a single steel bar in the center. The lock is a heavy steel bar fitting across the width of the door, secured by a padlock at one end. It is impossible to break it open, and the lock cannot be reached from the grating.

Daily Routine: The prison has a set daily schedule, which is the only way the prisoners can keep track of the passage of time (any valuables such as watches will be taken from them upon imprisonment). The guards change watches





Zubyla will be avenged!" The PCs will recognize the voice as Zubyla. All calls to the ship go unanswered.

ZUBYLA TAKES CONTROL

Upon returning to the ship, Zubyla will go directly to the computer core on deck eight and seize control of the ship from there. PCs on board the ship will discover what is happening when the bridge controls go dead. Zubyla has taken control of the ship's computer and has disabled all other command functions. The officers on board can only watch helplessly as their ship attacks the planet surface.

Naturally, the Eltanin squadron will not ignore what is happening. When they can get no reply to their messages, they will attack the ship, surrounding it and battering at the shields with the disruptors.

Zubyla can operate only one control panel per turn—so if he is adjusting power allocation, the ship cannot steer or fire weapons. If the referee does not wish to go into detail, simply allow Zubyla to move and fire every other turn. He will fire on the Eltanin ships half the time and on the capitol half the time. Each shot at the capitol city destroys several city blocks, causing hundreds of casualties.

GETTING BACK TO THE SHIP

Undoubtedly the PCs on the surface will want to return to their ship. Transporting is impossible with the shields up, but the PCs can borrow a shuttlecraft from the Eltanins. Eltanin shuttles are of Klingon make, with a crew of one, space for six passengers, and a top speed of warp 0.83.

Zubyla will not attack a shuttle, as he is too busy fending off the Eltanin vessels and bombarding the capitol. Getting through the ship's shields in a shuttle requires a successful Shuttlecraft Pilot skill roll, and then another roll is needed to reach the hangar deck and dock while the starship is in combat.

Opening the doors requires an Electronics Tech roll. If the roll fails, the doors will not open, and Zubyla will be alerted to what is going on. He will spend a turn using the ship's tractor beam to fling the shuttle away. A successful Shuttle Pilot roll will be needed to avoid crashing into the planet.

Alternatively, PCs aboard a shuttle can attempt to force entry to the ship through other openings in the hull. Openings suitable for this purpose include the photon torpedo bank on deck three, the physics lab on deck three, the phaser banks on decks five and 11, and the main tractor beam assembly on deck 24. Getting one of these

ports to open will require an Electronics Tech roll and will automatically alert Zubyla. Characters attempting to get in this way must wear vacuum suits to cross from the shuttle to the ship.

REGAINING CONTROL

Zubyla has barricaded himself in the computer core on deck eight and has disabled all other control centers. (Basically, he has told the computer to ignore command from anyone but himself.) The turbolifts and transporters are shut down, and doors do not open without an Electronics Tech roll. The ship can receive messages, but cannot transmit.

If a PC officer is on board, he can direct efforts to regain control. If not, the crew will regain access to most regions of the ship, opening doors and using ladders to go from deck to deck. The computer center, weapons and shuttlecraft bay remain sealed off, however.

Disabling the Weapons: It may be possible to disable the ship's weaponry by physically disconnecting the power feeds to the phaser and torpedoes. This would prevent further damage being done to the Eltanins. Disconnecting the weapons requires a Ship's Weaponry tech roll for each individual weapon.

If the weapons are disabled, Zubyla will attempt to crash the ship into the Eltanin capitol. The PCs may be able to talk him out of it, or they may have to prevent it. It will take a few minutes for Zubyla to override the navigational safeties—the computer will not ordinarily allow the ship to ram a planet.

Getting to Zubyla: The real problem is getting Zubyla out of the computer core without causing any damage to the machinery. He has physically disabled the doors to the computer cores on decks seven and eight, and has instructed the computer to depressurize the corridor surrounding the computer core on deck eight. The doors are armored against phaser attack and can absorb 1000 points of damage (the walls of the computer room are similarly armored). A phaser set on disintegrate is assumed to do 200 points of damage.

None of the doors leading into the airless corridor will open (automatic safety locks prevent it). It requires a successful Electronics Tech roll to override the safety locks. The result will be a hurricane gale into the corridor as the computer tries to keep the corridor depressurized while simultaneously

maintaining life support in the rest of the ship. Anyone entering the corridor will need a vacuum suit.

Zubyla is armed with a phaser II pistol. He will try to hold out as long as he can to continue his vendetta against the Eltanins, but will try not to injure any Starfleet personnel, using his phaser on stun as much as possible.

AFTER AWARDS

If Zubyla is defeated, the PCs will have the gratitude of the Eltanin government. Ambassador Huvysa Defipo will come aboard with his entourage for the trip back to the Federation, and the PCs will be commended for resolving a difficult situation. Commander Zubyla will be sent to a Starfleet hospital for psychiatric rehabilitation.

If Zubyla crashes the ship into the planet, surviving PCs will be court-martialed for allowing it to happen. The hardliners will take power on Eltanin, and the planet will become a Klingon ally. (The referee may wish to avert such a tragic ending by having another starship arrive at the last minute to drag the PCs' ship away from Eltanin with a tractor beam.)

COMMANDER DERINO ZUBYLA

STR 50, END 52, INT 80, DEX 75,
CHA 66, LUC 54, PSI 04.

Marksmanship (Modern) : 61

Personal Combat (Unarmed): 31

Significant Skills:

Administration: 40

Communications Systems Tech: 30

Computer Operation: 92

Computer Tech: 52

Federation Law: 61

Languages: Eltanin 41, Klingonaase
30, Orion 32

Leadership: 40

Negotiation/ Diplomacy: 71

Psychology (Eltanin): 21

Racial Culture/ History (Eltanin): 22

Starship Combat Tactics: 42

Starship Communication Proce-
dures: 40

Starship Helm Op: 41

Commander Zubyla is a tall, slender man, 37 standard years old. His father, Heviso Zubyla, was a rebel leader who was executed by the southern government.

Derino was just a child at the time, and he and his mother escaped to the

STAR TREK®

Federation colony world Tania Borealis IX.

Zubyla is a Starfleet diplomacy specialist and has played an important part in establishing relations with several other species. He is also an extremely gifted computer programmer, and has written several lucrative commercial software products. He has served aboard several starships, but was removed from his position as second officer aboard the U.S.S. Long March after suffering severe mental stress in a battle with Orion pirates. Zubyla is now on detached duty, assigned to the Federation diplomatic service.

Zubyla will not bring up the fact that his is an Eltanin, but will admit to it if asked. His personal and family histories are available from his Starfleet record. He is careful not to let his fanatical hatred of the southern government show. Ω

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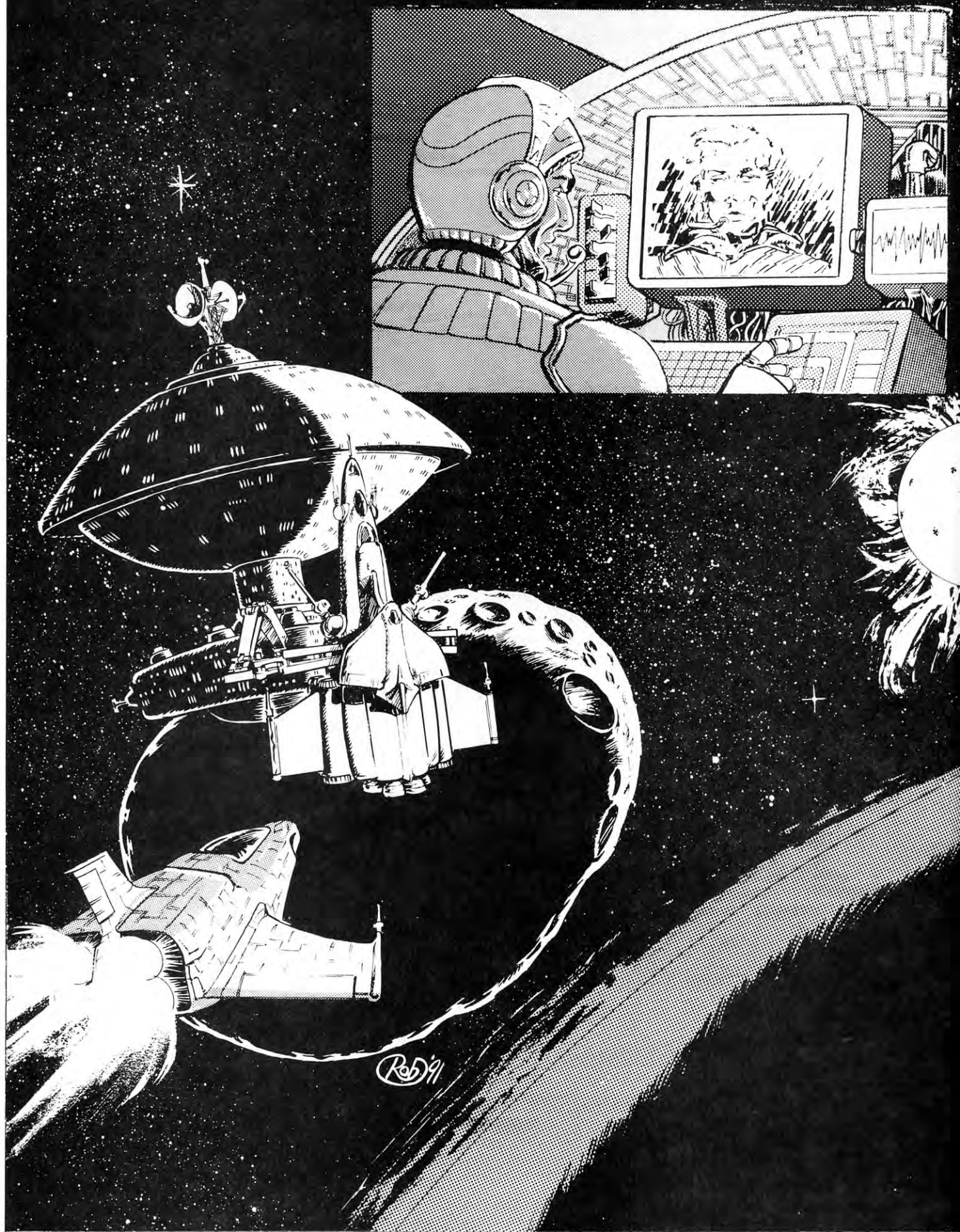
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By James L. Cambias

The noted Venus explorer Sir George Provis has contacted the PCs on a matter of some urgency. A year ago, he purchased the rights to an unexplored tract in the mountains east of Mount Maxwell on Venus, intending to develop the region for mining and trade with the natives.

Unfortunately, he has recently contracted Venusian Swamp Rot, a fatal disease that has incapacitated him and will almost certainly kill him in a matter of months.

Therein lies the problem. His purchase of the rights to the region on Venus was a lifetime interest. If no "substantive efforts" at development have been made before his death, his claim will lapse.

But if the area can be mapped, mineral samples gathered and friendly contact established with the natives, then Provis can pass his claim to the region on to his young daughter, Daphne.

What Provis needs is simple: The PCs must go to Venus and map out the area before Sir George dies. He does not have very much money—having spent most of his personal fortune buying his claim—but he can offer the PCs half of the profits from the region, in perpetuity. Naturally, this agreement will only stand if the mapping is accomplished before Sir George dies.

Sir George can provide the PCs with a copy of the rough map of the valley made by the Germans during their aerial survey of the region a few years ago. Otherwise, nothing is known about the area. The German map is a contour map of the region east of Mount Maxwell, with a contour interval of 500 feet.

PLANNING THE EXPEDITION

Provis can provide some monetary backing, but the would-be explorers may wish to seek out other sources of funds. The newspapers will be only mildly interested, contributing £100 at most. If any of the explorers has accumulated Renown in exploration, the Royal Geographic Society may also offer a few hundred pounds.

Water on Venus is freely available. Supplies are more expensive if bought on Venus (allow a 25% markup for everything except pacyosaurs and Lizard-men). Supplies purchased on Earth must be transported by ether-flyer at a cost of £10 per ton. Humans, as well as Lizard-men, require four pounds of food per day.

Travel will be on foot: All airships in the British enclave on Venus are government property and are used for official business only. Lizard-men porters and foragers can be hired for £1 per week; Lizard-men guards cost £2 per week. These workers can be paid in barter goods only (knives, steel axes, rubberized cloth, etc.). The usual arrangement is to leave the payment with their tribal chief, who frequently charges a commission of 5-10%.

Lizard-men porters can carry 40 pounds of food and supplies. Porters cannot forage for food, but a party could bring extra Lizard-men as foragers. A forager can find enough food for himself with an Easy skill roll and can feed one other person for each additional level of difficulty. Foragers cannot carry anything.

Pacyosaurs, like humans on foot, can make about 10 miles per day on Venus. Pacyosaurs can carry immense loads but cannot travel through mountains. Each pacyosaur requires at least one person with Riding skill to control it.

There are two ways to reach the Kukroka Valley from Fort Collingswood. The easiest route, in terms of travel, is

to skirt the mountains, entering the valley from the north. But this way is the longest in miles and would take many weeks. A more direct route is to head eastward from Alberta, cutting through the mountains. This path is shorter, but pacyosaurs cannot pass through the mountains, making porters necessary.

GATHERING INFORMATION

British Rumors: If the PCs ask around Fort Collingswood for information about the Kukroka Valley, they will hear several rumors about the region. For each person spoken with, roll 1D6.

Rumors

Roll	Result
1	"The natives won't go near the place—taboo. It's supposed to be sacred. They claim the gods will curse anyone entering."
2	"I've got a friend up at Venusstadt who says the Germans sent a party to explore the valley; they came back saying it was worthless. That's why the Germans haven't claimed it."
3	"I once traded a Bowie knife to one of the natives for a ruby the size of an egg; he said it came from there. The place is a treasure-house waiting to be opened. By the way, can you lend me a fiver until Tuesday?"
4	"I heard the Germans sent a party of 50 men into the Kukroka valley, and not one of them came out alive."
5	"I understand the natives regard the valley as sacred, and each year they take valuable treasures—gold, jewels, tools, whatever—and leave them in the valley."
6	"I wouldn't go there if I were you—that whole region's prone to earthquakes."

Lizard-Men Rumors: The explorers may also want to ask some of the local natives if they know anything about the valley. Most of the tribesmen around Fort Collingswood will know nothing of interest. However, natives from the eastern part of the British colony, around Alberta or the Mount Maxwell region, can provide some information. "It is a place accursed by the great spirits. They have placed guardians in it to slay all who enter. None who have gone into the place of death have returned."

Official Report: The British magistrate in Fort Collingswood can provide little information. The Kukroka Valley is a mountainous tract east of Mount Maxwell, in the southern part of the Kaiser Wilhelm Mountains. Some aerial mapping was done by the German zeppelin L-57 a few years ago, but this only established the general features.

The area is not currently administered by any colonial power, though both Britain and Germany have claimed the region. In such cases, a region generally goes to whichever power occupies and develops the area first.

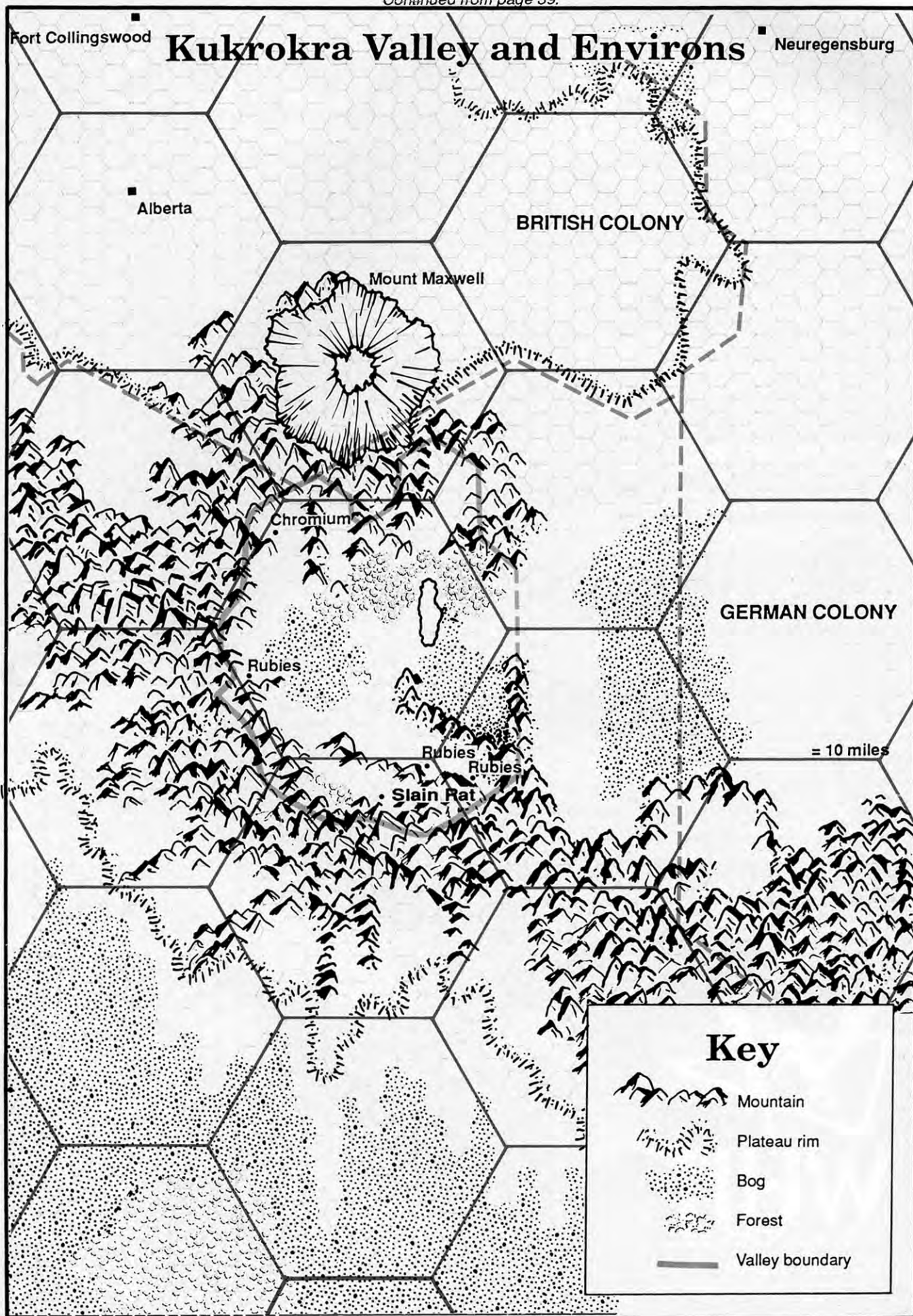
The government agreed to sell Sir George his monopoly on development of the region because it was hoped that such a noted explorer would encourage rapid colonization of the territory and thereby secure British control.

SETTING OUT

Travel from Fort Collingswood to the Kukroka Valley should be subject to the usual perils of life on Venus. In addition to the normal random encounters, the referee may wish to roll daily on the following table.



Continued on page 42.



Incidents

- | Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | Grumbling Among the Porters: The player characters notice that the hired Lizard-men are becoming unenthusiastic about the prospect of entering the "accursed" Kukrokra Valley. If nothing is done to stem this, a full-scale mutiny may result. |
| 2 | Theft: A Lizard-man in the party has been stealing items from the PCs. These will be minor at first—knives and trade goods, but if it is allowed to continue, the thefts may escalate. |
| 3 | Fight: Two or more of the hired Lizard-men get into a fight. They will continue to insult each other for the rest of the trip, and one may try to kill the other. |
| 4 | Animal Disease: A pacyosaurus gets sick. If the party spends a day without travelling, the beast will recover; otherwise, there is a 1 in 6 chance per day of it dying. |
| 5 | Bad Supplies: Some of the supplies have spoiled—2D6 pounds of food will be unusable and must be abandoned. |
| 6 | Insects: The expedition runs into a cloud of vicious biting insects. No progress is made this day, and all humans must immediately check for fever. |

KUKROKRA VALLEY

The Kukrokra Valley is a beautiful region, surrounded by high peaks, with the titanic cone of Mount Maxwell looming up to the west. Forests and bogs cover much of the valley floor, but there are substantial areas of clear terrain, particularly in the side-valleys.

Lake Constance: This lake (Constance-See on the German map), 30 miles long by 10 miles wide, is one of the few open bodies of water in the Venusian highlands. No dinosaurs live in the lake, but it is home to crocodiles. The lake is volcanic in origin, and so is extremely deep—so deep that it cannot be measured without special equipment. The water is warm, and has a slight metallic taste, but is drinkable without purification.

Eastern Side-Valleys: The eastern mountains are older and more eroded. Consequently, the eastern valleys are smooth grasslands, good for farming. The eastern mountains have some deposits of rubies. The southernmost side-valley is home to Ensign Douglas (see Survivor, below).

Western Side-Valleys: These valleys are more rugged than the eastern ones. The soil is thinner, and there are occasional landslides during heavy rains. The southernmost valley holds a seam of chromium ore.

FLORA AND FAUNA

The valley is home to several unique and previously undiscovered plants and animals. Some are valuable; some are interesting; and some are very, very dangerous. See the Flora and Fauna Table in the sidebar below.

Giant Worm: Similar to a common earthworm in appearance, but vastly larger, these scavengers wriggle through the bogs of Venus ingesting organic matter. They are shy and unaggressive, but are sufficiently stupid to blunder into travellers and attempt to ingest them.

Number Appearing: 1 *Size:* 1x8 *Move:* L5 *Wounds:* 30 *Save:* — *Weight:* 15 tons *Weapons:* Tail (1,1,3,2), Crush (1,1,1,3).

Gluevine: This dangerous plant has extremely tough vines and grows in dense thickets. The vines are coated with a very strong adhesive that bonds instantly to anything touching the vine. Getting free requires a Difficult Strength roll, plus a Difficult Agility roll to avoid getting stuck to another vine. Being pulled free of a vine may cause a wound (roll 1D6–3 to determine damage). The vines often have the bones of small dinosaurs scattered around them.

Deinonychus: An incredibly fierce small carnosaur, this fast creature attacks with the single large claw on its feet, springing from a place of concealment and chasing down prey. It is a sprinter rather than an endurance runner, but seems to kill even when it is not hungry. Deinonychuses hunt in packs and are dangerously cunning. It is because of these ferocious beasts that Lizard-men avoid the valley.

Number Appearing: 2–12 *Size:* 1x2 *Move:* L40 (for 1 turn, after which it drops to L30) *Wounds:* 6 *Save:* 1 *Weight:* 200 pounds *Weapons:* Claws (4,3,1,4), Teeth (2, 2, 0, 2).

Venusian Rat: The valley is home to the only known species of mammal on Venus, a small, furry, warm-blooded creature that lays eggs and nurses its young. The creature scavenges and feeds on insects. Its fur is oily and water-resistant. Discovery of the Venusian rat has a great deal of scientific value.

Number Appearing: 2–12 *Size:* 1x1 *Move:* 110 *Wounds:* 1 *Save:* 1 *Weight:* 10 pounds *Weapons:* Teeth (1,2,0,1).



DISCOVERIES

Because the expedition is scientific in nature, the PCs will have the opportunity to make several discoveries in the valley. Some are potentially valuable commercially, while others are of purely scientific interest.

Wine Fruit: In the forests, the PCs may notice a large red-and-blue-striped fruit growing on vines twined about the larger trees. If the PCs taste the fruit, they will discover that the liquid inside is fermented, creating a mild alcohol and a delicious flavor. Because of the alcohol, insects and many types of rot do not attack the fruits. The fruits will almost certainly have some commercial value.

Oil: The bog at the southern end of the valley is the site of a petroleum deposit. Natural gas bubbles up through the bog and a film of crude oil lies on the surface. Lighting a fire or firing guns in the bog has a chance of igniting the petroleum, creating an inferno (a 1 in 6 chance per shot fired or per turn that a fire is burning). To recognize the oil field requires an Easy Geology or Chemistry skill roll (no roll is needed if the PCs ignite a fire).

Jewels: The mountains on the eastern side of the valley have several small deposits of rubies. Each deposit holds about £500 worth of readily accessible rubies. To recognize the possibility of jewel deposits requires a Difficult Geology skill roll. Finding a deposit is a Formidable Geology task. There is generally only one deposit per hex, and hunting for jewels takes an entire day.

If the PCs wish to remain at a deposit and dig for rubies, they can uncover £100x(1D6–2) worth per day. If two days go by with no jewels found, then the deposit is played out and will yield no more rubies without special equipment.

Chromium: In the western mountains is a valuable seam of chromium, useful in making stainless steel. Discovery of the lode requires a

Flora and Fauna

Terrain	Jungle	Valley Floor	Bog
Encounter #	2	2	3
Die Roll	Encounter Type		
1	Pacyosaurus†	Pacyosaurus†	Giant Worm
2	Tree-Crusher*	Tree-Crusher*	Gluevine
3	Deinonychus	Deinonychus	Brontosaurus†
4	Gluevine	Steller's Dragon*	Steller's Dragon*
5	Hadrosaurus†	Pterodactyl†	Pterodactyl†
6	Venusian Rat	Hadrosaurus†	Hadrosaurus†

*Species described in *Conklin's Atlas of the Worlds*.

†Species described in the basic rules.



Formidable Geology or Chemistry roll. It will be necessary to bring back ore samples to interest anyone in mining the chromium.

Life Forms: The gluevine may have some commercial value in addition to its scientific worth. The deinonychus will attract attention as a new and dangerous dinosaur. The Venusian rat will be worth a great deal of scientific prestige for the discoverer, as the first known mammal-like creature on Venus, but its commercial worth is doubtful.

SURVIVOR

While the party is exploring the side-valley on the southeast side of the Kukrokra Valley, one of the PCs will make an interesting discovery—a Venusian rat, slain by an arrow. What makes the find especially fascinating is that the arrow's tip is made from a shard of diamond! While the diamond chunk is flawed and would be worth only £100 at most, the discovery implies the existence of more diamonds—and of someone living in the valley.

A Difficult Tracking task roll will lead the party from the dead animal to Ensign Douglas's cave. Douglas, a lone survivor of the Armstrong expedition of 1873, is living in a cave in the mountains just east where the

PCs discovered the slain rat.

Douglas is a gaunt, filthy, ragged figure, barely recognizable as human. He is nervous, twitching constantly, and will initially be terrified of the PCs. Food is the one thing that will entice him—he has been living on raw flesh and insects for 16 years.

If Douglas is treated well, he will gradually calm down and tell the PCs that the 1873 expedition landed near the mountain, then split up in four groups, three in the conveyors and one aboard the ether flyer. Captain Armstrong was on the flyer. Douglas' group went east for a day, then something went wrong with the conveyor, and the craft crashed. The survivors fled through the bogs, pursued by Lizard-men, then into the highlands and through the mountains, trying to get back to the big mountain.

At this point, his narration halts. If pressed, he will reluctantly continue. "Then the fast runners came and killed Jordan. They tore him open right in front of me. I tried to stop them—I emptied my revolver—but he was dead, and they ate him.

"I couldn't go on alone—not with those things waiting out there for me. Captain Armstrong never came looking for me. Nobody ever came."

Once he has adjusted to their presence, Douglas will eagerly accompany the party back to civilization. He will not be much use on the expedition, spending all his time huddled near the campfire, eating sweets. If the party encounters dinosaurs, he will flee to the safety of the nearest tree.

GERMAN EXPEDITION

The PCs are not the only ones currently exploring the Kukrokra Valley. Two German officers, Fritz Pfaufurt and Gerhart Mauser, are surveying the region for the Imperial German North Venus Trading Company, accompanied by four Lizard-man troopers. The troopers are Trained NPCs, with Marksmanship 3, Physically oriented, armed with a knife and a rifle. Pfaufurt and Mauser both have heavy double rifles, as well as Mauser bolt-action guns. They also have the usual camping equipment and surveying gear, plus four pacyosaurs and enough food to remain in the valley for two weeks without needing to hunt.

After the PCs have been exploring the valley for an appropriate time, they will encounter the Germans: The referee may either check each hex the PCs enter to see if they encounter the rival expedition or may introduce them at a dramatically appropriate moment. If the PCs are hard-pressed by fierce dinosaurs, the sound of gunfire may bring the Germans to the scene just in time to save the PCs from a grisly death. Alternatively, the Germans may shadow the PCs' party, remaining out of sight but keeping a close watch on the characters.

If the PCs have a large and formidable-looking group, the Germans will be friendly, hoping to get as much information from the PCs as possible, then will dash off to establish their own claim before the PCs can. They may engage in sabotage to slow down the PC characters, or one of the Germans may remain behind to harass the party with surprise attacks.

If the PCs' group is small, then the Germans will try to bully the PCs, ordering them to leave "German territory" and threatening to use force. If there is a confrontation, the two Germans may decide to eliminate the PCs and blame their deaths on the fierce Deinonychus.

OUTCOMES

If the PCs complete a thorough survey of the valley and prevent Pfaufurt and Mauser from making their claim first, then Sir George's rights to the region will be secured and development can begin.

If the Germans succeed in getting back to civilization and registering their own claim, then the PCs and Sir George have lost. The valley will become German territory. However, the PCs have a "trump card" if they think of it: Ensign Douglas has been living in

the valley for 16 years. Clearly the region should be British, as an Englishman was the first settler!

If they succeed, the PCs either keep their interest in the valley—it will still be sometime before any large-scale development can begin—or they can sell their shares for immediate cash. The price should be determined by the referee and by how well the PCs bargain with prospective buyers.

Any proceeds from the sale of rubies, diamonds or specimens brought back from the valley must be shared with Sir George and Daphne, and possibly Douglas.

LIEUTENANT FRITZ PFAUFURT

Lieutenant Pfaufurt is a good-natured young man who loves the danger and excitement of exploration. He is a firm believer in the superiority of the Nordic races and tends to treat everyone else—from Frenchmen to Lizard-men—as inferiors. Pfaufurt is devoted to Mauser and would be shocked to learn that the feeling is not reciprocated.

Attribute	Skill
Str: 6	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 3 (edged weapon)

End: 5	Wilderness Travel 6 (mapping), Fieldcraft 1, Swimming 1
Agil: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
Int: 1	Observation 1
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Linguistic 3 (Lizard-man, English, Russian)
Soc: 3	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 3, Medicine 1

Motives: Arrogant, Adventurousome.

Appearance: Pfaufurt is a huge, ramrod-straight young officer, the archetype of the blond, blue-eyed, Nordic "superman." He is, however, slightly dim and a little clumsy. Somehow he is able to keep his uniform spotless and pressed, even in the Venusian wilderness.

CAPTAIN GERHART MAUSER

Mauser is chiefly interested in making enough money to retire to a life of ease as a country gentleman in Germany.

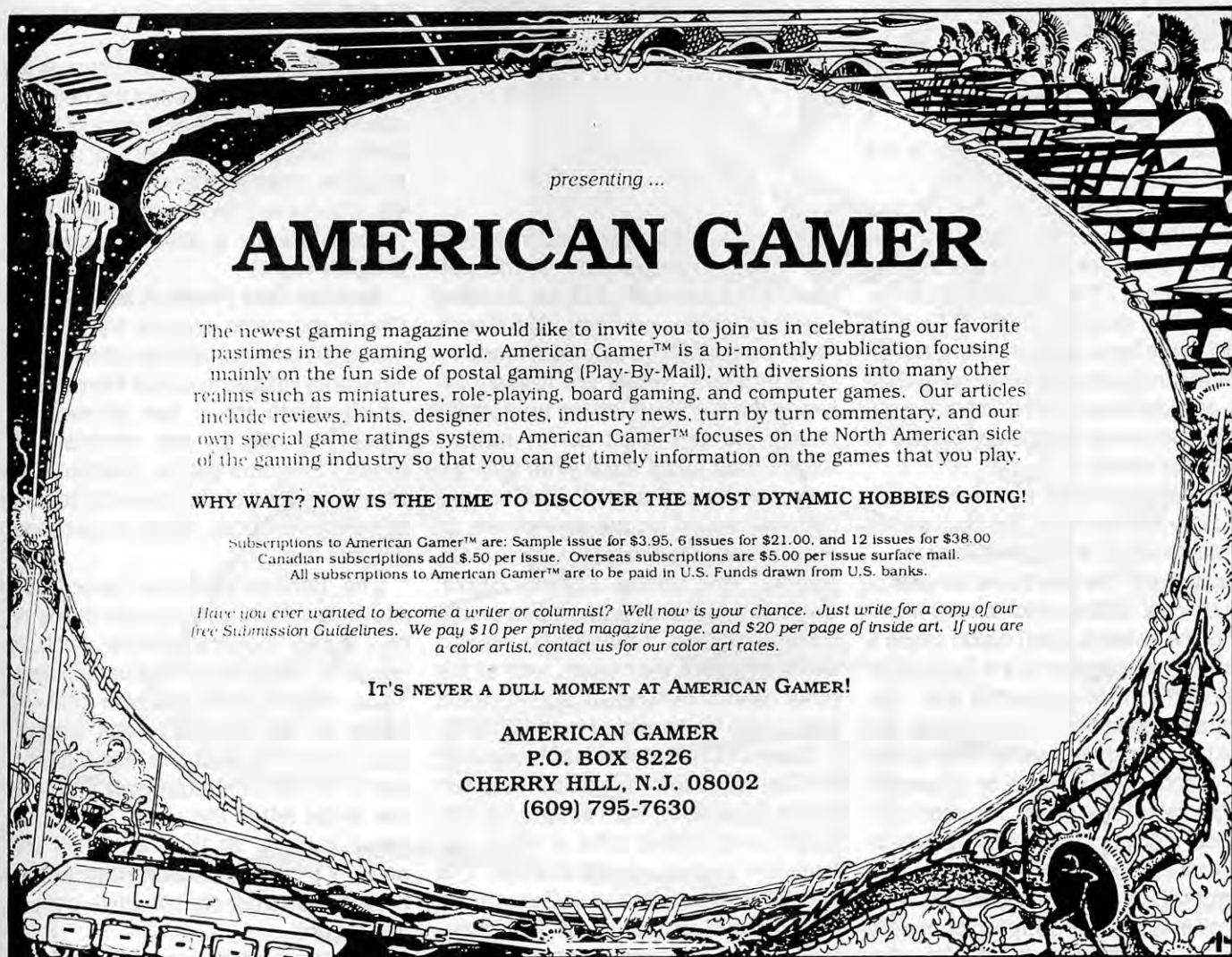
If he discovers that the valley can make him rich, then nothing—not even Pfaufurt—will stand in the way. Mauser will not be hindered by trivial concerns of honor or propriety.

SPACE 1889

Attribute	Skill
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 5 (mapping), Marksmanship 3 (rifle), Fieldcraft 2, Tracking 2
Agil: 6	Stealth 5
Int: 4	Observation 4, Science 1 (biology)
Chr: 1	Linguistics 2 (Lizard-man, English)
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (pachyosaurus), Leadership 1

Motives: Greedy, Ruthless.

Appearance: Mauser is a small, lithe man, whose eyes constantly dart about, alert for possible dangers or rewards. His hair and eyes are dark, and he prefers to wear civilian clothes in the field, rather than his army uniform. He is never without several concealed knives on his person. ♀



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A Solitaire Adventure

By W.G. Armintrout

What is a solitaire adventure? It's sort of a hybrid between a regular roleplaying adventure—which can be played as a game with the help of a referee—and an ordinary story, which can't be roleplayed at all. This story has been written so that the reader can play it by himself, making decisions and rolling dice, thereby arriving at different parts of the tale (and various outcomes).

Getting Started: To begin, you'll need a **Space: 1889** player character, along with 2D6, a pencil and a piece of scratch paper.

Designing a PC: The hero of this adventure has been hired as an oceanography assistant. However, he need not know any scientific skills—the job requires more bravery and common sense than book learning. The text assumes that the character is an American, which suggests that characters who are actually British or German are travelling under false credentials.

Entries: The story is broken down into entries, each beginning with a number. At the end of each entry, you may be asked to roll the dice or to choose from several options, or you may be given some sort of instruction. In any case, you'll be told the number of the next entry to turn to. As you play, you'll skip from entry to entry—not in any apparent pattern or order—to discover your adventure. Every time you play, the adventure can turn out differently.

Passwords: You'll be instructed throughout the adventure to write down various passwords. It's important that you do so because which code words you have will affect the course of your adventure.

Skill Rolls: Two types of skill rolls may be called for. Any roll not explicitly identified as a "quick roll" uses the skill dice/attribute dice method (see pages 44-45 of **Space: 1889**). If a character is asked to make a roll for a skill in which he has no ability (skill level 0), he may try a quick roll against the attribute on which the skill is based. If he succeeds, he is rewarded with a level of 1 in that skill and may attempt the requested skill roll. Otherwise, the character automatically fails the skill roll. Make a note whenever a skill is raised using this procedure, as experience points must be paid for the skill at the end of the adventure.

Saving Rolls: Players will be called upon to make saving rolls to avoid damage from accidents and other calamities. The save number is: Strength plus Endurance minus Damage. The save number may never be less than 1.

Refresher Entries: Refresher entries, marked with an asterisk, indicate that the PC has a chance to heal from his injuries. Only temporary damage (from unarmed melee attacks and similar events) can be healed at these times, one such wound per refresher

DALY

entry. The maximum which can be healed by the use of refresher entries is half the temporary damage (rounded up). There will not be time during the course of the adventure for normal healing, which takes days or weeks.

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

Imagine, if you can, that you are a drifting bit of flotsam cast in the midst of one of the great lakes of Africa. Never could a more primitive or bleak aquascape be pictured! No bright rays of sunlight penetrate the glowering deck of clouds overhead. The stained brown waters are troubled only by waves of a feeble and shallow character, and the life which churns in these waters is of an antediluvian type, from an age when beauty had not yet been developed and viciousness was the key to survival. Every fish has a gaping maw studded with teeth of needle sharpness, and the flora of the lake is uniformly green, repellent and of a slimy consistency.

Now upon the horizon you spy a darkness against the clouds, a spot that grows in size and seems to be approaching. In time you see that there is a larger shadow, from which project two towers or structures. What could this be? Is it one of the great beasts of Africa? Could it be some dinosaurian, come to snatch another timeless survivor for its morning repast? A rare beam of light lances through the overcast and illuminates the stranger for all to see. It's a ship—and a fine one! The sun sparkles off her copper stacks and polished railings; off the red, white and blue trimming the deckhouses and portholes; off the water lashed to a white frothing foam by the stern paddlewheel; and off the golden eagle surmounting the flagpole from which Old Glory flies. It is as if a vagrant ship from the modern century has stumbled into a scene from prehistory, and there's no mistaking the uniquely American character of such an occurrence.

The remarkable ship—constructed in the shipyards of Philadelphia, carried to Africa piecemeal by ether flyer and assembled by laborers under the direction of American engineers—was financed by the Destiny Fund, a coalition of progress-minded industrialists (led by Henry Tuttleston Rogers, one of the Standard Oil tycoons). The design is unique and takes into account all the particular circumstances of the African lakes. It is a two-hulled (catamaran) structure of shallow draft, propelled by a large paddlewheel mounted on gimbals to provide maximum maneuverability.

The ship is the *Destiny of Man*, and her crew was selected from the cream of the candidates who applied for each position. You are part of her scientific crew, a sort of aquatic expert, an explorer of the deep. Your job is to descend in a bathysphere to collect information and otherwise aid Professor

Collingsworth, the elderly chief of oceanography. Try a quick roll against your Science skill or Intellect level (whichever is highest).

- If you succeed, turn to 93.
- If you fail, turn to 29.

1. You see the creature emerge head-on from the darkness, boring straight for the bathysphere. Its general structure is eel-like, but the head is triangular, with three bony projections and dark globular eyes on short stalks. This creature must be nearly half the size of the *Destiny* herself. Erase the password STRONGHEART from your sheet.

- If you have the password STYGIAN, turn immediately to 97.

Otherwise, try an Intellect roll against a difficulty level of 12.

- If you succeed, turn to 82.
- If you fail, turn to 97.

2. You awaken to a scene of sparks and flame. The crystals of the cavern are on fire, melting to black stalactites of slag. "The Devourer," says Mnoth, staring upward. "It lived inside the Activator. We brought our enemy with us all along!" Turn to 51.

3. "Oh, come now. I thought you'd be a better guest than this." Mnoth claps, and you feel invisible hands propel you into the abyss. You fall through the air until you reach the Aquaceph's side, where the invisible hands again break your descent. "There, now—you've made me behave badly," says your host. "I'll not forget." Turn to 81.

4. You are thrown about the interior of the diving chamber, with sufficient force to break your limbs or cave in your skull. Try a saving roll against a Damage level of 4.

- If you fail, you receive a (temporary) wound.
- If you are dead, your adventure is over.
- If you are unconscious, turn to 34.
- In all other cases, turn to 18.

5. "Of course," says the Aquaceph, "if we'd known who you were, we'd not have let the beast interfere with you." Mnoth claps, and the chamber darkens. A single beam of light shines down from the ceiling, and in that illumination appears an object—the banner which President Harrison gave for this expedition. "The flag," you say. "And the sign," says Mnoth, pointing to the great seal of the United States, then removing the copper band and pointing to the inscription. To your amazement, both share a common element—the symbol of the eye-topped pyramid. "We know who you are. You are one of the People." Turn to 108.

6. If you have the passwords STUPEFIED, CONFOUNDED or STYGIAN, you cannot take a picture—return to 66 and

choose again. Otherwise, there's a satisfying click as the camera captures the instant of the attack on a photographic plate. Hopefully, this'll provide useful clues when developed, assuming you survive this dive. Make a note—you have the password PERILOUS. If you already have this password, give it to yourself again. Turn to 18.

7. Mnoth is trapped beneath fallen stonework. "There," gasps the Aquaceph, pointing toward an archway. "That's the exit. Save yourself!"

- If you try to free the Aquaceph, turn to 105.
- If you abandon Mnoth and take the exit, turn to 27.

8. You spot a strange-looking, multi-limbed shadow on the wall behind you—a deep, dense darkness that pulses slowly. Even as you look, the shadows leaps toward you. Try an Agility roll to avoid the hurtling menace. The difficulty level is 12 (Difficult) plus 2 for every box checked off at entry 53 (when you turn there, be sure not to lose your place here). However, the adjusted difficulty level cannot be higher than 20.

- If you succeed, turn to 30.
- If you fail, turn to 46.

9. "You are mine!" says an exultant Shadow, executing a mocking bow. "With your physical body dead, your mind shall dwell here in the Activator with mine, serving me until the very bowels of the sun turn dark and cold." His metallic laughter rings in your ears. Your adventure is over.

10. From your earlier glimpse of the underwater ruins, you realize that the bathysphere must be perched on the crest of the pyramid. How odd.

- If you now open the hatch, turn to 71.
- If you respond by tapping back, turn to 95.
- If you want to do none of these, turn to 58.

11. Henry Tuttleston Rogers, the directing officer of the *Destiny* Fund, visits the ship often, taking a special interest in oceanography and your research. He's a tall man who dresses with understated elegance, unafraid to dirty his hands examining the various oceanographic apparatuses (after he removes his silk gloves, that is). "Let there be no doubt of it," he has said, on more than one occasion. "The research conducted on this voyage and the discoveries you are about to make may determine whether our mother republic continues to advance to the forefront of the industrial nations, or whether our progress is stunted or constrained." Make a note—you have the password SECLORUM.

- If you have the password IRRADIANCE, turn to 103.

Otherwise, turn to 22.

12. The camera has torn from its moorings and shattered, destroying your chance to take any further pictures of the African deeps. Make a note—you have the password CONFOUNDED.

- If you have the password PERILOUS, turn to 77.
- If not, turn to 94.

13. Mnoth is free—and you have the password SAVIOR. Turn to 27.

14. You discover yourself face to face with a stranger. He is tall and slender, dressed like a prince of Araby—with a turban tied about his skull, and a queer cloak that wraps about his shoulders and attaches to the backs of his pointed slippers. His tunic leaves his legs and arms bare, revealing flesh tanned coppery-red and muscles toned by exercise. His clothes seem to be made of some sort of kid leather, white and supple. He wears a jeweled bracer, and a large crystal pendant is suspended from a necklace about his throat. The most impressive things about him, besides his Adonis-like build and the metallic hue of his skin, are his eyes. They seem to absorb you in a glance, drinking you in and pouring you out again, laughing at you and dissecting you and romancing you all at once. "Welcome to SubAfrica," he says in flawless English. His voice is deep and powerful, and the words seem to march regally one by one across the air. "I am Mnoth. I am an Aquaceph." Turn to 37.

15. The impact knocks you to the floor, leaving you momentarily breathless and dizzy. Try a saving roll against a Damage level of 4. If you fail, you receive a (temporary) wound.

- If you are unconscious, turn to 25.
- If you are dead, your adventure is over.
- In all other cases, turn to 7.

16. Abruptly, you feel an odd tingling sensation. Try a quick roll against your Endurance level.

- If you succeed, turn to 60.
- If you fail, turn to 85.

17. "Quite the question," says Mnoth, licking the juice from a speared vegetable, then replacing it on the plate. "The Acquisitor deduced your presence from the actions of the Guardian, prompting the Activator into motion in time to save your ship from diving into the Abyss. Your derelict was elevated in on the radiant wave, and I was awakened to deal with you. Incidentally, my congratulations on surviving your encounter with the Guardian. It's a horrific entity, but it serves its purpose well."

- If you have the password SECLORUM, turn to 5.
- If not, turn to 108.

18. The leviathan of the African deeps has momentarily retreated, but for how long? In the meantime, you assess the damage it's just done. Roll 1D6 and find the instructions below corresponding to the number you rolled. If the box following it is unmarked, cross it out, then follow the directions which immediately follow. If the box is already crossed out, roll over.

- ☐ 1: Turn to 84.
- ☐ 2: Turn to 12.
- ☐ 3: Turn to 102.
- ☐ 4: Turn to 61.
- ☐ 5: Turn to 10.
- ☐ 6: Turn to 48.

If all of the boxes have been marked out, turn to 94.

19. The room quivers, and for a moment you fear that the end has come for buried SubAfrica. But then you see the panels sliding away in front of you, revealing viewing ports that show the lake—and your rapid ascent. You have escaped! But your exultation is short-lived. The alien submersible shudders, and the crystals dim out entirely. The chamber is suddenly as still as the tomb.

- If you have the password SAVIOR, turn to 31.
- If not, turn to 112.

20. Try a quick roll against your Theatrics skill or Charisma level, whichever is highest, to see if you can fool Mnoth.

- If you succeed, turn to 41.
- If you fail, turn to 65.

21. There's also a chance here to meet many of the so-called movers and shakers of American industry, the bigwigs who have financed this project and who visit (arriving on the biweekly ether flyer) to learn of progress and tour the ship. Professor Collingsworth often delegates you to give such visitors the tour of the bathysphere chamber, as he dislikes to be interrupted. Try a quick roll against your Charisma level.

- If you succeed, turn to 11.
- If you fail, turn to 50.

22. At last, the *Destiny of Man* reaches that part of the lake where Professor Collingsworth has determined to make the first deep dives. To the surprise of the project's skeptics, the voyage so far has been unmarred by the savages which are supposed to ravage central Africa. At any rate, the twin Nordenfelts and the one-pounder main gun should be sufficient to deter the most aggressive tribal chieftain. The bathysphere is a globe, fabricated of steel, from which various tools, tanks and apparatuses are suspended: an oxygen-arc lamp above the main viewing port, a 10-foot manipulating arm linked by gears to handles within, and chambers designed to automatically sample the lake water at different depths or to scrape

the lake bottom for mineral specimens. The key to lowering the diving sphere into the depths and then recovering it is a powerful winch, mounted between the twin hulls of the ship. The bathysphere is a dead weight, entirely dependent upon the steel cable for its return to the surface. A supply of compressed air is capable of sustaining the single operator for up to 50 hours submerged.

- If you have the password SECLORUM, turn to 62.
- If not, turn to 80.

23.* When you open your eyes, you find yourself sprawled on the floor, held in the arms of the Aquaceph. "You have not lost," says Mnoth. "The destruction has already begun." "What?" you ask. "Your battle with the Devourer gave me the time to clear my mind of the barriers planted there by my enemy ages ago. With my understanding clear, I took action even as you fought him. Do you see? The Devourer dwells inside the Activator and has preyed on my race until I am the only one left alive. And now I have turned off the Activator, a step which can never be undone." Turn to 51.

24. "I have caught you! You are real! We are alive!" Mnoth bursts into tears and collapses on the floor. A booted foot kicks against the hard stone. "There is reality, and I am not yet wandering in the Abyss. Thank you, foreign one." Turn to 53.

25. Time runs out. With a howling roar, the lake waters rush in to claim SubAfrica. You and Mnoth die together, and the ruins of SubAfrica are your tomb. Your adventure is over.

26. "I slept for centuries," says Mnoth, almost oblivious to your presence. "My mind is clouded, and the memories fall out of their ranks. I shall show you the couch of timelessness and much more, and you shall stay and be with me for eternity."

- If you wish to disagree, turn to 101.
- Otherwise, turn to 53.

27. The archway leads to a brief hallway, then into a circular room crowded with three large chairs and an altar of crystals. How can this be an exit?

- If you have the password SAVIOR, turn immediately to 38.
- Otherwise, you have a choice:
 - If you wish to try to activate the crystals yourself, turn to 49.
 - If you want to return to rescue Mnoth, turn to 7.

28. "You may ask me a question," says Mnoth, chewing on a meat-wrapped vegetable. You might ask:

- "Can you help me return to the surface?" Turn to 79. □

- "How did I get here?" Turn to 17. □
- "How did you learn to speak English?" Turn to 45. □
- "What are you? Are you human?" Turn to 74. □
- "What is the Activator?" Turn to 63. □
- "Where am I?" Turn to 96. □
- If you think you might forget which questions you've asked, check off the box after each question when you ask it.
- If you don't wish to ask any more questions, turn to 108.

29. The elderly professor is a hard man to work for, peremptory in his demands and unforgiving of errors. He also works odd hours, keeping you at work for 20 hours at a stretch when he's investigating something of particular interest. "Africa could be the savior of Earth," he tells you repeatedly, when your own enthusiasm flags. "Here's an undeveloped continent, potentially with vast mineral riches waiting to be exploited. Do you understand what it would mean to have unlimited resources? Prices would plummet; there'd be abundance for both rich and poor; and the surplus wealth could be invested in science and research. It'd be a millenium, mark my words!" Turn to 73.

30. Mnoth leads you on the run down a series of passageways. "Stop the invader. I command it!" shouts the Aquaceph several times, clapping simultaneously. Nothing appears to happen, and, glancing back, you see a pulsing blackness following several paces behind.

"Our only hope is the Activator," says your host. "It has always been our defense, and only it can save us."

"How can you battle a shadow?" you ask. "It is much more than a shadow," replies Mnoth. "It is the hungering of the void, the viciousness which gnaws at the fabric of civilization." The two of you sprint through an archway, entering again the cavern of the Activator. Mnoth steps to the altar and begins to stroke the crystals, crooning something in a language without consonants. The pursuing shadow pauses in the entrance, gathering into a new form—a repellent, throbbing, humanoid shape.

"We meet again," speaks the Shadow, forming a voice out of gravel and sand.

The Aquaceph smiles, just as an encasing illumination springs up from the altar to protect both of you. "I know you not, Devourer."

"You are mistaken." The enemy gestures, and the safeguarding illumination pales. Then the Shadow leaps toward you with a speed impossible to escape. Make a note—your password is ALTAR. Turn to 46.

31. "SubAfrica has died," says the familiar voice of your host. "And the Activator with it. What? I feel myself pouring away!" You rush to the Aquaceph's side, but not before Mnoth

collapses. The skin is clammy to the touch, and the pulse is weak and ragged. Then the eyelids open. "Do I know you?" asks Mnoth, with a puzzled look. Turn to 112.

32. When you open your eyes, you find yourself sprawled on the floor, held in the arms of the Aquaceph. "The Devourer," says Mnoth, staring upward. "It lived inside the Activator. We brought our enemy with us all along!" Turn to 51.

33. In an instant, the steel diving sphere is crushed by the pressure of the depths. Your adventure is over.

34.* A tapping noise awakens you. The bathysphere has ceased to move, and the interior is illuminated by bright light streaming in from outside. As you recover your senses, the metallic pinging comes again—from the hatch. Do you:

- Open the hatch? Turn to 71.
- Peer out the viewing port? Turn to 109.
- Tap back? Turn to 95.
- Do nothing? Turn to 58.

35. "Pardon me if I speak my mind," says Mnoth, suddenly sitting at your side. "Among your sort, are you considered an attractive specimen? Don't answer. Let me decide." The Aquaceph stares into your eyes, and you again feel the queer sensation of being drawn out and then replenished. "You stir me," Mnoth says, then rises. "So what more will you ask of me?" Turn to 53.

36. Try a quick roll against your Agility level, in order to grab a rope and use it to tie yourself down to the chair. Subtract one from the number rolled for every box (if any) checked off below.

- If you succeed, turn to 90.
- If you fail, check off one of the boxes below, then turn to 18.

□ □ □ □ □ □

37. "We must leave at once," says Mnoth, leading you at once toward a pit in the middle of the plaza where the bathysphere has landed. "The Activator cannot be left untended for long, not at this stage." So saying, the Aquaceph jumps into the pit—but instead of plunging precipitously to a sudden death, Mnoth floats downward at a gentle pace. "Follow me," commands the Aquaceph.

- If you jump into the pit, turn to 81.
- If you insist on asking questions first, turn to 54.
- If you do none of the above, turn to 3.

38. "Place yourself in one of those chairs," commands the Aquaceph, turning to the altar and its crystals. "I shall command it to rise to the surface." Turn to 19.

39. At these depths, the character of the lake life is very different from that which you glimpsed before. There are few "fish" down here, not of any expected kinds—the creatures you see are wispy, as if constructed from panels of silk glued together with jelly. One rotates past the viewing port like a paddlewheel, using expanding pockets of tissue to collect and then expel lake water. When the lake floor comes into view, you can scarcely restrain the gasp that rises to your lips. There's some kind of ruin laid out on the bottom of this lake. Your eye is caught by a titanic pyramid constructed from what appears to be a greenish steel, surrounded by lesser structures of pastel hues. There are colonnades, stepped stairways, plazas and roadways, all curiously clean of silt and debris. The entire community rests on the edge of a precipice, which leads further down into the inky depths. In fact, the only reason you can see as much as you can is that you view it through some kind of illuminated haze, as though there is a mist or fog in the water between you and the city. Make a note—you have the password ENLIGHTENED. If you don't have the password CONFOUNDED, this is worth a picture—give yourself the password VALIANT. Turn to 16.

40. If you have the password MORTIFY, you know what you must do—turn immediately to 100. Otherwise, roll 1D6.

• If the roll is even, turn to 76 (if you have the password DIRE) or to 64 (if you don't have that password).

• If the roll is odd, turn to 1 (if you have the password STRONGHEART but don't have the password DISASTROUS) or to 97 (in any other situation).

41.* "I like it when you're cooperative," says the Aquaceph. Turn to 8.

42. "I tire of this. Be still," commands the Aquaceph, clapping. You freeze where you are, held by powers beyond your detection or resistance. Mnoth gazes into your eyes from inches away, then reaches out to touch your cheek. "Reality continues, and we must be part of it," sighs your host. Turn to 53.

43. The Aquaceph smiles broadly and returns to dining. "I want you to know that you have pleased me mightily, strange one," says Mnoth. Turn to 108.

44. You've just been caught "totally by surprise." Turn to 97.

45. "This is due to the Activator," says Mnoth. "It is both the power and the essence of our civilization, wandering one. I can speak with you because both of us have been indexed by its crystalline rays. As the

diviner of the chords of harmony, I am the one who stands duty in the hall of mastery." Turn to 108.

46. You have been transplanted to a dreamscape. A rod of flickering flame is in one of your hands, and a shield of translucent crystal is strapped to another arm. The sky above is a pale and pearlescent white, and the surface on which you stand is of a midnight ebony hue, crisscrossed with lines of an electric and flickering silver. Two figures emerge from the mist. One is Mnoth, bound and unarmed. Another is a faceless figure of fire, armed with a rod of blue fire and a shield of jade. It is the Shadow. "Duel with me, mortal one," husks your enemy. "And if I win, you shall serve me in the Halls of SubAfrica for all eternity."

"And if I win?" you ask. There is no reply but laughter.

Resolve the battle using standard melee combat rules, with these alterations: Your Intellect level is the number of actions you may take per turn, your hit dice, and your hit number. When dodging or blocking, roll versus Intellect rather than Agility—the rods have a blocking modifier of -1. The Shadow has an Intellect of 4, with 10 hit points.

- If you defeat the Shadow, turn to 2 (if your password is ALTAR) or to 32 (if you don't have this password).

- If you are knocked unconscious, turn to 23.

- If you are killed, turn to 9.

47. You release the pressure switches on the hatch, listening for the telltale hiss of invading air—but there's nothing. Rotating the valve wheel, you open the hatch and step out.

- If your PC is male, turn to 99.

- If your PC is female, turn to 14.

48. The diving sphere lurches—harder and sharper than it has previously, jerking you toward the ceiling. Then you feel it begin to fall. The cable linking the bathysphere to the surface has snapped, condemning you to the depths of the African lake. Make a note—you have the password DIRE. Turn to 97.

49. Try an Intellect roll to decipher the pattern of these control stones. The difficulty level is formidable (target level 16).

- If you succeed, turn to 19. Otherwise, check off one of the boxes below and roll one die.

- If the number rolled is greater than the number of marked-out boxes, turn to 25.

- If not, you may try another Intellect roll, or you may choose to return to save Mnoth (turn to 7).

□□□□□□

50. It's common knowledge that this expedition has been financed by the Destiny Fund, a coalition of progress-minded indus-

trialists. The chief of these is Henry Tuttleston Rogers, who made his fortune working with one of the Standard Oil companies. According to the rumor mill, Rogers isn't the only oil tycoon with an investment—J.D. Rockefeller is said to have a large shareholding, although he's not taken an active role in the corporation. Whether Andrew Carnegie (of Carnegie Steel) and George Washington Vanderbilt (grandson of Cornelius Vanderbilt, the railroad magnate) are also investors are subjects of heavy speculation. Turn to 22.

51. A violent quaking shakes the building. "What's that?" you ask. "SubAfrica is now doomed," says the Aquaceph. "The Activator kept us safe from the pressure of the lake. Very shortly now, the power will fail, and we will be one with the fishes." "Not if I can help it," you say, propelling Mnoth into the passageway. "There's got to be a way out of here. Find it!" The last inhabitant of SubAfrica leads you again through the warren of tunnels as the building quivers more and more violently. Smoke clouds many of the tunnels, and the wall crystals are dimming. Then, with a crash, a portion of the ceiling caves in. Try a quick roll against your Agility level to avoid being crushed.

- If you succeed, turn to 7.

- If you fail, turn to 15.

52. Try an Endurance roll to avoid the effects of the battery vapors accumulating within the diving sphere. Use the difficulty level shown below, adjacent to the uppermost unmarked-out box.

- Easy (target level 4).

- Moderate (target level 8).

- Moderate (target level 8).

- Difficult (target level 12).

- Difficult (target level 12).

- Formidable (target level 16).

- Impossible (target level 20).

- If you fail, turn to 85.

Otherwise, cross out the uppermost unmarked-out box, and:

- If you have the password AQUEOUS, turn to 78.

- If you have the password DISASTROUS, turn to 70.

- If you have the password STYGIAN or DIRE, turn to 40.

- If you have the password STRONG-HEART, turn to 1.

- If you have more than one of these passwords, follow the directions for the first one you have on the list.

- If you have none of the above, turn to 97.

53. Try an Observation roll. Use the difficulty level shown below, adjacent to the uppermost unmarked-out box.

- Impossible (target level 20).

- Formidable (target level 16).

- Formidable (target level 16).

- Difficult (target level 12).

- Difficult (target level 12).

- Moderate (target level 8).

- Moderate (target level 8).

- If you succeed, turn to 107.

Otherwise, cross out the uppermost unmarked-out box, and turn to 28.

54. "There is no time for discussion," says Mnoth, still descending.

- If you persist, turn to 3.

- If you meekly follow, turn to 81.

55. "How do I know that you exist?" The Aquaceph stalks the chamber, pacing in disjointed steps, pausing only to hurl some new thought or consider an enigma. "I will touch you!" your host suddenly cries. Mnoth rushes toward you, stretching open fingers toward your face.

- If you flee or resist, turn to 98.

- If not, turn to 72.

56. "Perhaps I could come with you." From a pouch within the white cloak, Mnoth produces a familiar volume—your copy of *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. "I would like to meet the author of this book. I think we would have a lot to say to one another. Do you conceive of what it is like to slumber for an age, then to awaken in a time and place in which your own beginnings have been forgotten? What of Therra, Hespaddon and Mure? My heart pines to see again the pavilions of Mamelar, to be stirred by the marches of legions on their way to war, to beat in time with the cadence of activated crystals drawing the stars together. So much time, compressed into one mortality." The Aquaceph is silent for a time, then dips a hand into the pot and sips from the broth. "I forget myself. My apologies." Turn to 108.

57. As you wait for a particularly interesting specimen to swim into focus—a curious triffid worm with a double tail and lavender scales—you catch an instant of movement out of the corner of your eyes and feel the bathysphere gently quiver. Something's out there. Something large and curious. Turn to 97.

58. The rapping ceases, and for a time there is silence. Then, abruptly, the bathysphere shakes. The valve wheel which seals the main hatch begins to spin as the door is unlocked from the outside.

- If your PC is male, turn to 99.

- If your PC is female, turn to 14.

59. The Aquaceph suddenly jumps up, with a face as pale as ivory. "The Devourer!" gasps Mnoth. "We must flee!"

- If you instantly run for the exit, turn to 104.

- If you first turn to see what Mnoth sees, turn to 8.

60. You feel as though your spine has turned into a tuning fork. Bizarre vibrations stream through your body, pouring strange colors into your eyes and producing sounds like wind chimes and organ tones. Struggling to bring your eyes into focus, you stare at the lake bottom and see a beam of kaleidoscopic light flowing directly toward you. The strange sensations threaten to overcome your self-control. Turn to 85.

61. One of the valves gives way, and in an instant you are ankle-deep in cold water. The jet sprays from the burst fixture with unbelievable force, driven by the weight of tons of lake between you and the surface, rebounding off the far wall of the sphere and sending its stinging droplets everywhere. Make a note—you have the password DI-SASTROUS. Turn to 94.

62. Professor Collingsworth has arranged for a simple ceremony before your first exploratory descent. Captain Johns is present to shake your hand and give a brief speech, and other notables come forth to wish you well or prophecy on the importance of this endeavor. One of the oil men steps forward, carrying a pole and a flag. "Other eyes than our own are watching the events of this day," he announces. "Mr. Rogers, who is convinced of the importance of this exploration, has been in contact with President Harrison on behalf of the Destiny Fund. The US government has in turn bestowed upon us this token of the nation's favor—a banner to be planted on the lake floor at the point of today's deepest descent." The flag, stiffened by wax and other preservatives, is emblazoned with the great seal of the United States. After conferring with Professor Collingsworth, the pole and flag are placed in the tool hopper next to the manipulating arm. Turn to 68.

63. "I am patient with you, but only so far," says the Aquaceph, lancing into the soup pot and drawing forth a thin-shelled animal like a crab, transfixed by the dividers. The meat is sucked from within the shell with gusto. "Know that the Activator is the source of energy and knowledge, custodian of all that we are and ever shall be. I am its servant. That is all." Turn to 108.

64. You have escaped from the clutches of death and fate! The leviathan of the African deeps has departed. Meanwhile, your companions on the surface have detected your peril from the sudden tugs and pulls on the cable, and are reeling you back in. Congratulations—your adventure is over! (Please play again to discover the complications you missed this time.)

65. "You don't understand, do you?" says the Aquaceph. Sighing, Mnoth claps, and you

find yourself avidly devouring the bizarre meal. "Don't choke on your food." Turn to 28.

66. Note:

- If you wish to take this moment to strap yourself down, turn to 36.
- If you would like to get a good look at the creature attacking the bathysphere, turn to 75.
- If you want to take a photograph, turn to 6.
- If you wish to do none of the above, turn to 18.

67. "All the dead," sighs Mnoth, staring at nothing. When you start to speak, the Aquaceph motions for silence. "Let me mourn in silence, unknown one. I am suddenly in full remembrance. Once these passages were full of people—living people—and SubAfrica was like floral Hesperdon! Where are they now? Have the Devourers come? If so, where can they lair? Never mind. Erase my statements from your awareness, observer. They have no bearing but for myself." Turn to 53.

68. Collingsworth inspects the seal of the pressure hatch, then signals the winch operator to begin the descent. As the brown-green waters rise above the level of your viewing port, you are sealed off from the world of your companions. Until you again rise from the waters, there is no way to signal your discoveries or distresses. The descent to the lake floor will take several hours, during which there is little for you to do other than to record the readings of the dials and pressure meters in the logbook. Your other task is photography. Carefully handling the delicate glass plates, you load the camera, then look for marine life worthy of being caught by the lens. As the depth increases, the light decreases, forcing you to ignite the oxygen-arc lamp. Its bluish light, fed by a constant draft of pure oxygen gas, seems to attract as many inquisitive fish as it frightens away. Try a quick roll against your Observation skill level.

- If you succeed, turn to 57.
- If you fail, turn to 44.

69. Try a quick roll against your Strength level to resist the strange forces which the Aquaceph has called upon.

- If you succeed, turn to 89.
- If failure is your prize, you buckle to your knees—turn to 43.

70. There's only one way to stop this leak from filling the bathysphere—you've got to close the shut-off valve. Against the pressure of tons of water, however, it will take a Herculean effort to force the emergency valve closed. Try a Strength roll against a Difficulty level of 12 as you attempt to close the valve and save the bathysphere. If you succeed, the leak is stopped—erase the password DISASTROUS from your record sheet. However, if you fail, you must check off one of the boxes below.

- If all the above boxes have been checked off, turn to 87.

- Otherwise, turn to 40 (if you have the password STYGIAN or DIRE) or to 7 (if you don't have those passwords).

□□□□

71. Try a quick roll against your Intellect level.

- If you succeed, turn to 86.
- If you fail, turn to 47.

72. "You don't even run," says your host, returning to the table. "Are you a tame pet, to be ordered about so easily? Of course you are real—and so am I. Eat." Turn to 53.

73. When you are not in the company of Professor Collingsworth, you have the opportunity to meet others travelling on the *Destiny*—crewmembers, fellow scientists and illustrious passengers. Try a quick roll against your Social level.

- If you succeed, turn to 83.
- If you fail, turn to 111.

74. "Surely you don't expect me to answer such a bold question." Mnoth leans to lap from the simmering pot of soup. "Ask something more sociable." Turn to 108.

75. Pressing yourself against the thick pane of the view port, you stare into the murky waters, trying to get a good look at whatever is out there. Try an Observation skill roll. The task difficulty level is 8 (Moderate)—unless you have the password STYGIAN, in which case the difficulty is 16 (Formidable).

- If you succeed, turn to 92.
- If you fail, you see nothing—turn to 18.

76. At last, the lake beast swims away, but your troubles are not over. The bathysphere is still descending, with nothing to stop it but the ooze and muck thousands of fathoms beneath you. And there's no guaranteeing that the steel shell can withstand the pressures of such a dive. Fortunately for you, the engineers who designed this diving chamber did their work well. The steel creaks and groans, but keeps you safe and alive all the way to the bottom.

- If you would like to switch the oxygen-arc lamp back on, and if you don't have the password STUPEFIED, turn to 88.

- If you leave the lamp off (if you have the password STUPEFIED, you have no choice)—turn to 16.

77. Roll once for each PERILOUS password you have. If you roll an even number, the plate with which you took your photograph of the leviathan has been destroyed with the camera—erase the password. If you roll an odd number, the plate is intact. Turn to 94.

78. Roll 1D6 to determine whether the weakened viewing port stands up to the pressures of the leviathan's attacks.

- If you roll a 6, turn to 33.
- Otherwise:
- If you have the password DISASTROUS, turn to 70.
- If you have the password STYGIAN or DIRE, turn to 40.
- If you have the password STRONG-HEART, turn to 1.
- If you have more than one of these passwords, follow the directions for the first one you have on the list.
- If you have none of the above, turn to 97.

79. The Aquaceph laughs long and hard. "To the surface? To the top of the waters of shelter?"

- If you have the password BROWSER, turn to 56.
- Otherwise, turn to 106.

80. There is little ceremony—you walk onto the scaffolding between the hulls; the captain shakes your hand and wishes you luck; and then you step within the sphere. Turn to 68.

81. The Aquaceph leads you through a warren of pits and passageways, all drearily alike to your bewildered gaze. Everywhere is the orange-streaked stone, a sort of marbled granite. There are neither carvings nor decorations, except for the colored crystals—most of the same size as the one Mnoth wears—which stud the walls near archways and intersections. You see no other people. Whenever you try to question your host, the Aquaceph refuses to make any reply other than one of concern for "the Activator."

At last, you are led into a great chamber, with entrances at each of the cardinal corners. Catwalks lead from each opening to a central platform, suspended without benefit of pillars or columns from above or below. Mnoth strides to an altar, and touches the crystals embedded there in a quick and precise pattern. Every wall of this chamber—a veritable rococo chapel of strange technology—is encrusted with crystal-line structures, obviously not natural. Lights flicker in the depths of some, while other quartzian masses lie clouded and dark.

"The Activator has been satisfied," announces Mnoth, bowing and then retreating from before the altar. "Come, let us take nourishment, and you can learn more of myself and this place." Pursuing another catwalk, the Aquaceph leads you rapidly to a chamber where a table and benches await. In a pot of gleaming blue-copper boils a soup, without benefit of a visible fire, and red-veined steaks and brown roots in a syrup steam on a pair of plates. The eating utensils are thick spearing hooks, joined at the blunt ends like a pair of dividers. "Eat up," says Mnoth, "or I'll be very unhappy. You must keep up your health, you know."

- If you eat the food, turn to 41.
- If you only pretend to eat the food, turn to 20.
- If you refuse to dine, turn to 65.

82. Suddenly, it's obvious to you—the creature is attacking the oxygen-arc lamp! It must be attracted by the light!

- If you wish to switch off the light, turn to 100.
- If not, turn to 97.

83. How you come to meet and befriend Mark Twain, the humorist who recently wrote the very popular *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, is entirely a product of fortune: You have no idea who he was, and finding him inspecting the bathysphere, you cuss him out royally. It turns out that the author was being given a tour of the ship and wandered off on his own. Shortly, you find yourself explaining to him the workings of the oceanographic devices, in which he seemed to take singular delight. He is kind enough to give you an autographed copy of his latest book—entitled *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*—and you enthusiastically read it whenever you can. Make a note—you have the password BROWSER. Turn to 21.

84. A furious bubbling from beneath the deck warns you that the battery cells have cracked, spilling their acids into the bilge. An acrid scent fills the air, making your eyes smart and hurting the back of your throat. You have the password SHROUD. Turn to 94.

85. You lapse into an unconscious state. Turn to 34.

86. Hold on a second, you think. What about the pressure? Even if there's air out there, it should be compressed under thousands of fathoms of lake—enough to rip this diving machine to shreds the instant you crack the seal. However, when you check the pressure gauge, it tells you that the air down here is at standard air pressure. Is it registering properly?

- If you persist in opening the hatch, turn to 47.
- If you'd rather not, return to 34 and select a new option.

87. The bathysphere has filled with water—you drown long before the rising pressure crushes you. Your adventure is over.

88. Make a note—you have the password MORTIFY. Roll 1D6.

- On a roll of 5 or 6, turn to 97.
- Otherwise, turn to 39.

89. The veins stand out from your skin, and sweat beads on your brow, but the mysterious forces have met their match against human willpower. "Call off your eldritch demons," you tell Mnoth. "A free man shall never kneel." "I see," The Aquaceph gazes on you with folded arms. "I was wrong about you, splendid one." The invisible vise releases you. Turn to 43.

90. You've strapped yourself in. Make a note—if you are called on to make any

further Agility rolls to keep your laket, substitute a difficulty level of 4 (Easy). If you ever fail this roll, you come untied and must strap yourself in again. Turn to 18.

91. "We cannot dine on *sassem niya* without *topari*," says Mnoth in agitation, jumping up from the table. "Matri! Bulak! Attend me!" The Aquaceph claps several times, but no one comes. "I do not comprehend," mutters Mnoth, again sitting, "where all the others have gone. Am I alone, then, at last?" Turn to 53.

92. There, for an instant, gliding past the porthole—you see a fin larger than the entire bathysphere, veined with blue and covered with warty knobs entirely unlike the scales of a fish. Then you glimpse something trailing after the creature. A tendril, a tentacle or a feeler? As it drags across the outside of the sphere, you hear a rasping hiss, as if the tendril is studded with teeth, barbs or some other abrasive. Make a note—you have the password STRONG-HEART. Turn to 18.

93. In your months aboardship, Collingsworth has come to respect you—he says you remind him of the sharper students he used to teach at Dartmouth. He's even confided a secret to you: "It's all a crock," he bursts out one night when you and he are poring over the oceanographic charts. "We're not here to search for oil and minerals. Here's what we're really after."

From within a locked portfolio, the old professor gingerly withdraws five glass plates. "Photographs?" you ask.

Collingsworth bobs his head. "Of a sort. Pugachev called them 'irradiographs.' They use a type of light which has penetration factors, so that the Russian scientist was able to photograph and map portions of Africa from great altitude." He sighs. "Poor soul."

"Pugachev?"

"Indeed. Never returned from his last voyage. His secret of irradiography has likewise been lost." From among the five plates, Collingsworth selects one and mounts it on a viewing frame over the porthole. "What do you see here, eh?"

The plate shows a scattering of what seem to be buildings, including several of monumental proportions, forming a small community. You see no evident sign of life, but no hint that the settlement has been abandoned, either. "A lost city of the Africans?" you venture.

"Bah!" Collingsworth replaces the plates within the portfolio. "Pugachev's irradiographic camera worked better than even he had expected. Those structures are of the bottom, in the depths of this African lake—and that's where you're going in the bathysphere!" Make a note—you have the password IRRADIANCE. Turn to 73.

94. Note:

- If you have the password SHROUD, turn to 52.
- If you have the password AQUEOUS, turn to 78.
- If you have the password DISASTROUS, turn to 70.
- If you have the password STYGIAN or DIRE, turn to 40.
- If you have the password STRONG-HEART, turn to 1.
- If you have more than one of these passwords, follow the directions for the first one you have on the list.
- If you have none of the above, turn to 97.

95. You step to the steel hatchway and rap against the steel plates with your knuckles. DUM-DUM-DE-DUM-DUM. The outside knocking stops, then replies: DUM-DUM-DE-DUM-DUM-DUM.

- If you want to open the hatch now, turn to 71.
- If you want to look out the porthole, turn to 109.
- If you want to do none of these, turn to 58.

96. "I have told you," snaps the Aquaceph. "SubAfrica. There! I've said it again. Slumbering beneath the waters of shelter, on the second world, secure from depredation and invasion." Turn to 108.

97. The bathysphere bounces as something collides against it, quivering and jouncing at the end of its steel tether. The motion—in all three dimensions—threatens to throw you head-first against protruding valves and the jutting steel structural girders. Try an Agility roll. The task difficulty level is 8 (Moderate)—unless you've been caught totally by surprise, in which case the difficulty is 12 (Difficult). You can only be caught "totally by surprise" the first time you come to this entry.

- If you succeed, turn to 66.
- If you fail, you are thrown—turn to 4.

98. "Excellent! Run from me! Try to escape! Illusion, I shall not tire of this game." The Aquaceph chases you about the room, scattering the dinnerware in the pursuit. Try an Agility roll to avoid being caught.

- If you succeed, turn to 42.
- If you fail, turn to 24.

99. You discover yourself face to face with a stranger. She is tall and slender, dressed in a most outlandish fashion, with a turban tied about her hair, a brief tunic that leaves her legs bare, and a queer cloak that wraps about her shoulders and attaches to the backs of her slippers. Everything seems to be made of some sort of kid leather, white and supple. A jeweled badge hangs from a bracelet, and a large crystal pendant is suspended from her left ear.

The most impressive things about her, be-

sides her comely build and the copper-red hue of her skin, are her eyes. They seem to absorb you in a glance, drinking you in and pouring you out again, laughing at you and dissecting you and romancing you all at once. "Welcome to SubAfrica," she says, in flawless English. Her voice is low, and she speaks slowly, releasing the words one by one like notes in a melody. "I am Mnoth. I am an Aquaceph." Turn to 37.

100. The lake is plunged into darkness now that the bright oxygen-arc lamp has been extinguished. Just to be safe, you switch off the dim electric lights within the bathysphere as well. Make a note—you have the password STYGIAN. Turn to 97.

101. "Your opinion is of no matter if I will it to be so," says the Aquaceph. "And I will it. Now argue with me no more." Turn to 53.

102. It's dark as Stygia outside—the creature has carried away or broken the oxygen-arc lamp! The inside of the bathysphere is lit only by dim electric lights. Make a note—you have the passwords STUPEFIED and STYGIAN. Turn to 94.

103. He motions you closer and leans to whisper conspiratorily. "Collingsworth tells me that he's taken you into his confidence. Let me add only this—if there are secrets on the African lake bottom, or elsewhere on the continent for that matter, the nation which possesses them will have the key to the future. This is no idle matter." Turn to 22.

104. Try a quick roll against your Agility level to escape the mysterious menace.

- If you succeed, turn to 30.
- If you fail, turn to 46.

105. Try a quick roll against your Strength level to free the Aquaceph from the entrapping stones.

- If you succeed, turn to 13. Otherwise, check off one of the boxes below and roll 1D6.
- If the number rolled is greater than the number of marked-out boxes, then turn to 25.
- If not, you may try another Strength roll, or you may abandon Mnoth and escape (turn to 27).

□□□□□□

106. "What purpose would it serve, except to betray my people to the Devourers That Wait? Is this your purpose, outlander? Do you offer destruction, risk, and ultimate failure?" Mnoth's face flushes with anger. "Feel this, then!" The Aquaceph claps, and an invisible force draws you downward. "Kneel to me, invasive one!"

- If you resist, turn to 69.
- If you obediently give in, turn to 43.

107. Something catches your eye. Look-

ing around, you spot a strange-looking, multilimbed shadow on the wall behind you—a deep, dense darkness that pulses slowly. Following your glance, the Aquaceph sights the peculiarity. "The Devourer!" shouts Mnoth, leaping up. "You must flee!" But even as your host speaks, the shadow leaps toward you. Try an Agility roll to avoid the hurtling menace. The difficulty level is 8 (Moderate) plus 2 for every box checked off at entry 53 (when you turn there, be sure not to lose your place here). However, the adjusted difficulty level cannot be higher than 20.

- If you succeed, turn to 30.
- If you fail, turn to 46.

108. Roll 1D6. Count down the number of unmarked boxes equal to the number just rolled, cross out that box, and follow the directions which follow.

- ☐ Turn to 91.
- ☐ Turn to 67.
- ☐ Turn to 55.
- ☐ Turn to 26.
- ☐ Turn to 35.
- ☐ Turn to 59.
- ☐ Turn to 59.
- ☐ Turn to 59.
- ☐ Turn to 59.
- ☐ Turn to 59.
- ☐ Turn to 59.

109. The diving sphere has most improbably come to rest in the center of a square plaza. High above is a dome of shifting hue, an aurora borealis of the African depths. You instantly realize that you're not underwater anymore—there is air out there. But at what pressure?

- If you have the password ENLIGHTENED, turn to 10. Otherwise, you may:
- Open the hatch (turn to 71).
- Respond by tapping back (turn to 95).
- Do nothing (turn to 58).

110. To your horror, you see that a hairline crack now worms its way across the center of the pane of the viewing port. That thickness of glass is the weakest point in the structure of the bathysphere. Should it give way—and the crack makes this an eventual certainty—all the force of tons of lake will force its way into this diving sphere, imploding it like an egg smashed between clenched hands. Make a note—you have the password AQUEOUS. Turn to 94.

111. The grand salon is off-limits except for the most important of the *Destiny's* crew, but on Sunday evening the captain hosts a seminar here, at which one of the ship's more famous passengers lectures. You've had the pleasure of listening to such notables as Thomas Huxley, the science popularist (and the only Englishman on board), professors Edmond Whistler and

Thomas Engfeldt (both of Yale and respectively experts on ether theory and historical geography) and Mark Twain (the American humorist). Turn to 21.

112.* At last, you notice that there is more light within the diving chamber—the lake outside grows less dark! The craft is surfacing of itself, despite its apparent loss of motive power. Then a bell chimes, and with an explosive hiss the uppermost portion of the room irises open, admitting an African breeze. Meanwhile, water floods in from somewhere, washing about your ankles. It is a simple matter to clamber upward onto the superstructure of the bobbing sphere. Spying the *Destiny of Man* not too far distant, you make an impromptu flag from your clothes and wave to catch the attention of your countrymen. Shortly, you see the paddle-wheeler come about, and a dinghy is sent to fetch you. Congratulations—your adventure is over.

APPENDIX

Loose Ends: If Mnoth survives this adventure, the Aquaceph may continue in the campaign as either a PC or an NPC. Mnoth lost much memory when the Activator was destroyed, but might recall something interesting about the lost civilization by accident. If used as an NPC, the Aquaceph becomes emotionally dependent on the PC. Mean-

while, there are plenty of villains in the solar system who would like to get their hands on Mnoth, fearing that the Americans will unlock the secrets of the SubAfricans. The alien diving sphere floods quickly and descends again to the lake bottom, falling into the chasm. SubAfrica is flooded and entirely in ruin, and future explorations will be extremely hazardous. The Guardian—the captive beast which originally attacked the bathysphere—now roams the depths at large and may eventually cause grief to the *Destiny of Man*.

Character Points: This adventure is worth one character point, with the following bonuses and penalties: Characters with the password SAVIOR receive one renown point (Exploratory Discovery) and an additional character point. Characters with the password PERILOUS should roll 1D6. On a result of 4-6, another renown point (Scientific Achievement) is received. Characters who have multiple copies of this password may roll for each, but only a single renown point can be won. Characters with the password VALIANT should also roll 1D6. On a result of 4-6, another renown point (Exploratory Discovery) is received.

None of the battles in this adventure qualify the PC for a Close Combat experience point.

Password Guide: The following is a guide to passwords encountered during this adventure.

ALTAR=ACTIVATOR: Final battle takes place in Activator cavern.

IRRADIANCE=ADVANCE NOTICE: You know about Pugachev.

CONFOUNDED=BROKEN CAMERA: You have no camera.

STUPEFIED=BROKEN LAMP: The oxygen-arc lamp is broken.

ENLIGHTENED=CITY VIEW: You have seen SubAfrica from the bathysphere.

BROWSER=CONNECTICUT: You carry Twain's novel with you.

AQUEOUS=CRACK: The viewing port is cracked.

STYGIAN=DARK: The oxygen-arc lamp is turned off.

VALIANT=DEPTHS: You have a picture of SubAfrica.

SECLORUM=EMBLEM: You have the great seal of the United States.

SAVIOR=FREED: You free Mnoth from the fallen rocks.

SHROUD=GAS: Battery gas has flooded the compartment.

DISASTROUS=LEAK: The bathysphere has sprung a leak.

STRONGHEART=OBSERVER: You are watching for the creature.

PERILOUS=PICTURE: You try to take a picture of the Guardian.

MORTIFY=RETREAD: The Guardian attacks again.

DIRE=SNAP: The bathysphere cable has snapped. Ω

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A

medium-sized city in the northern steppes of Mars west of the Boreosyrtris League, Dioscuria stands at the intersection of three dead canals, surrounded only by good farmland. Were it not the center of German influence on Mars, Dioscuria would be little more than another way station on the caravan route to Cydonia.

Dioscuria is an old city. Archaeologists from the Berlin Museum have discovered remains from before the construction of canals. It was never a great power, however, and for centuries was a buffer state between the Boreosyrtris cities and the now-defunct Protonilus Empire.

The failure of the canals in the region occurred 8000 years ago but was not as catastrophic as it might have been. The local aquifers are replenished directly by the polar cap, and there is occasional snowfall during the winter. Trade shifted from canal boats to caravans, and the economy became agrarian.

Politically and economically, West-

until the young prince should reach the age of 10 Martian years (which will be in 1890).

Ssaskeen has been extremely cooperative with the Germans. An infantry regiment now occupies Fort Friederich-Wilhelm west of the city, and the mighty gunboat *Hamburgis* is based at Dioscuria. Several hundred Germans live in the city, and formal treaty has pledged the German Empire to protect Dioscuria against attack.

GOVERNMENT

Ssaskeen, acting as regent, has followed German advice and replaced the corrupt bureaucracy with an honest, efficient civil service. He gives Baron von Gruber, the German ambassador, his complete loyalty in exchange for 10,000 a year in bribes. However, in his heart he remains true to the old ways.

Under the terms of a treaty signed in 1884, German residents have their own police force and magistrate, all under the administration of the ambassador. Though the courts are technically only

DIOSCURIA

ern Dioscuria became a satellite of the Boreosyrtris League. The region became a quiet backwater, with only raids by High Martians and desert nomads to liven things up.

German influence in the region began in 1875, when the German Interplanetary Trading Company established friendly relations with Prince Hasthiith and secured landing rights. The German presence grew steadily as companies set up operations in Dioscuria.

Hill Martians raids on caravans bearing German goods led Bismarck to demand that troops be allowed into the city to protect German citizens. Prince Hasthiith resisted, promising to improve his own army. He also declined to allow the Germans to base gunboats at Dioscuria and began secret negotiations with the French, hoping to offset German power.

In 1882, Hasthiith was killed in a mysterious explosion aboard the royal yacht. His successor, Prince Shskaas, was only a child at the time, so High Minister Ssaskeen was named regent

for German citizens, in practice all Earthmen fall under the jurisdiction.

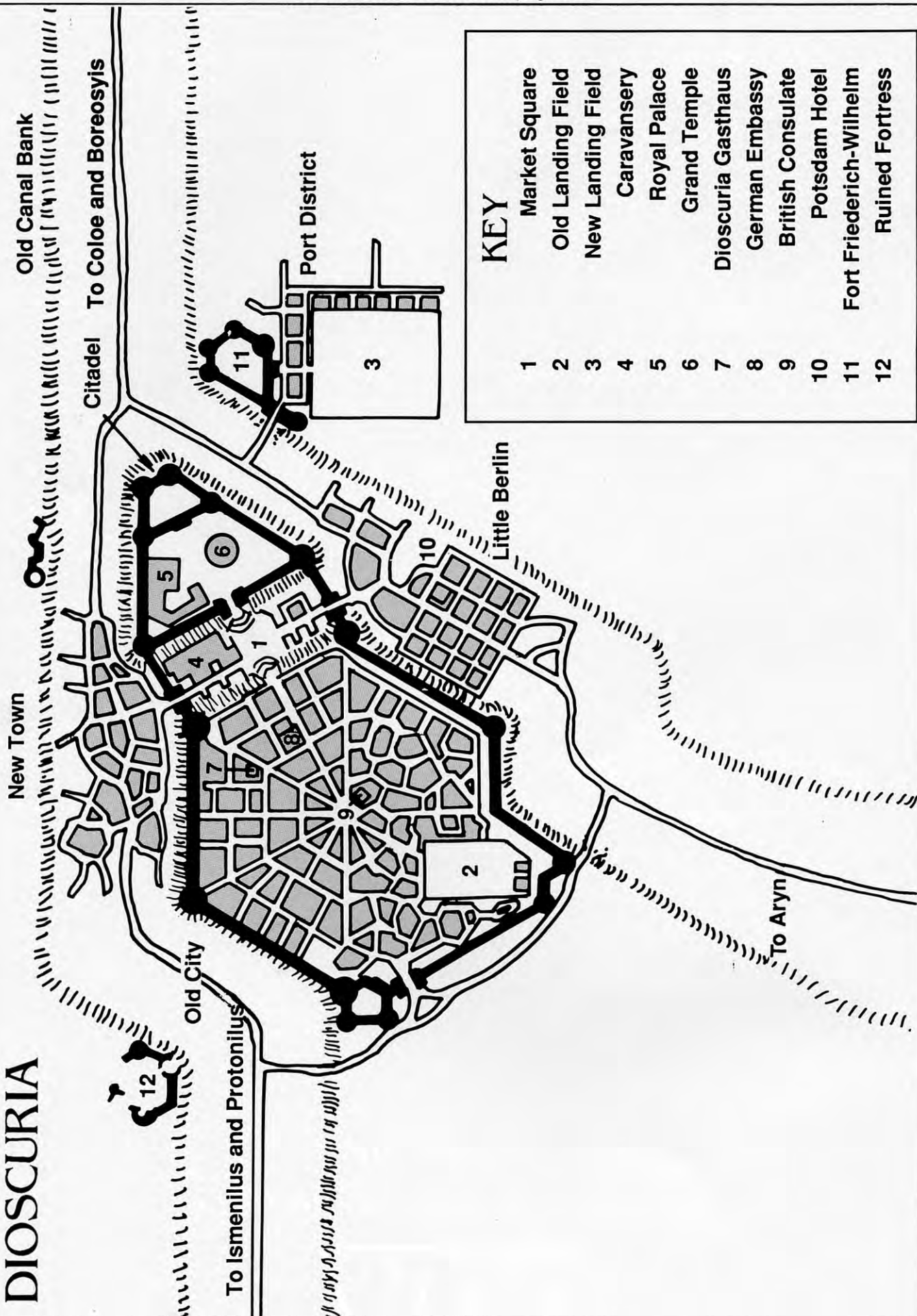
The great noble landowners of Dioscuria formerly wielded great power and influence, sometimes rivalling the princes. Since the arrival of the Germans, their power has waned, due in part to the growth of trade in the local economy. Several noblemen who actively opposed the growth of German influence died under mysterious circumstances, and others have been imprisoned by Ssaskeen.

The German presence has benefited the city in many ways: Wealth and prosperity have resulted from interplanetary trade; reforms have made the government honest and efficient; and German assistance has eliminated High Martian and nomad attacks on caravans and outlying settlements. Dioscuria now dominates the surrounding cities. However, the city's foreign policy is entirely subservient to German ends, and Ssaskeen must labor to avoid giving the kaiser cause to annex the city outright.

James L. Cambias



DIOSCURIA



ARMED FORCES

Dioscuria's standing army is of poor quality. It includes 780 infantry organized into 13 bands, each with a light cannon attached. Also, 480 cavalry are formed into eight bands.

City Police: Two bands of infantry and one band of cavalry stationed in the city serve as a police force, and a third infantry band mans the city gates. Twelve heavy guns and seven Rogue guns are permanently mounted at the forts defending the city.

Cloudship Fleet: The cloudship fleet is based at the old landing field inside the city walls. It consists of eight ships—two *Whisperdeath*-class kites, three *Hullcutter*-class screw galleys, and three *Swiftwood* kites. At any given time half the ships are out on patrols.

The cloudship crews are all Trained NPCs. A single band of 60 infantry is attached to the cloudship fleet under naval command. These marines are the best of the city's regular forces—Veteran NPCs armed with modern rifles.

Admiral Hraviith Shaasthan, the commander of the fleet, is loyal to Prince Shskaas and quietly opposes the Germans.

Border Posts: The remaining regular troops are deployed in the surrounding towns or in border posts.

New Model Regiment: Prince Hasthiith began organizing a regiment along European lines before his death. Ssaskeen kept it up, and accepted German assistance in equipping and training the unit. The New Model Regiment has 180 excellent-quality troops, armed with Mauser rifles and equipped with two Krupp 12-pounder field guns. The officers and men are all Martians, but their training has made them great admirers of all things German. The regiment is quartered in the citadel and guards the royal palace.

Ssaskeen's Loyal Guard: Ssaskeen maintains a fair-quality Hill Martian mercenary cavalry unit of 480 men organized into eight bands, and a poor-quality mercenary infantry force of equal size. They are paid out of Ssaskeen's own pocket (with money embezzled from the city treasury) and are loyal to him alone. The three bands of cavalry are quartered in the citadel, and the remaining mercenaries are billeted as Ssaskeen's villa a few miles outside the city.

GERMAN PRESENCE

Some 2000 German citizens live in Dioscuria. Most are merchants and their families, or employees of the Zeppelin Company. The Germans mostly live in Little Berlin, though some reside in Old City near the embassy.

The German Army has a regiment of 200 men in Dioscuria. The troops are of excellent quality, and are equipped with four Maxim guns and four 12-pounder field guns. They are billeted at Fort Friederich-Wilhelm, an abandoned fortress restored by the Germans. The regiment is commanded by Colonel Horst Vorbeck.

The powerful gunboat *Hamburg* is based at Dioscuria, as well as several smaller craft and launches for patrol work. The German Navy is under the command of Kaptenleutnant Hermann Deutsch, the captain of the *Hamburg*. He is under Vorbeck's command.

The Germans have their own police force, consisting of two dozen officers. The police patrol the Little Berlin area and are an independent civilian organization, funded partially by the ambassador.

Although there are numerous inns in Dioscuria, most European visitors patronize the two German-run hotels. The Potsdam Hotel is a new brick building with 30 rooms and hot, running water. The Dioscuria Gasthaus is an old Martian inn with 20 rooms; it has a beer garden in back and is popular with the military officers.

ECONOMY

Dioscuria is primarily a farming center. The land is fertile and well watered, producing large amounts of grain and ruumetbreehr meat. Most of Dioscuria's produce is shipped overland to the Boreosyrts cities.

The caravan trade is the second most important aspect of the economy. About once a month, a caravan departs for Coloe bearing agricultural goods, returning with manufactured products and luxury items. Once a year, the great Cydonia caravan comes through town, gathering up local products for the long trek westward. Few caravans travel south across the desert, as it is easier to transport goods to Coloe and ship them by canal.

The Germans have dramatically affected the city's economy. Dioscuria's



population has grown to 80,000 in recent years, and construction of the new landing field has increased cloudship commerce. Local merchants have prospered by serving as middlemen for the Germans, and several manufacturing ventures have been started. Ssaskeen's administrative reforms have further encouraged trade. Dioscuria is now a wealthy city and dominates the regional economy.

Food prices are low in Dioscuria, but the lack of canal transportation means that many imports are expensive. Luxuries brought in by cloudship are not overpriced, but imported bulk items are much more costly than in canalside cities. Terran goods—particularly German products—are very common and are priced only slightly higher than on Earth.

Slavery was legal in Dioscuria before the arrival of the Germans but was not essential to the local economy. Under strong pressure, Prince Hasthiith abolished slavery in 1879. However, many of the citizens, particularly the nobles, keep "indentured servants" who are slaves in all but name.

CITY DISTRICTS

The older sections of Dioscuria still huddle within the city walls on what was once a peninsula surrounded by canals on three sides. The newer sections have been built in the old canal beds.

Citadel: When the canals were full, this section was an island, holding the royal palace and the homes of nobility. When the waters dried up, it was enclosed and fortified, and now holds the royal place, the grand temple and the eastern fort. Members of the royal household (including the regent) live in the palace, and the fort is home to the New Model Regiment and Ssaskeen's mercenary cavalry.

Visitors are not allowed into the citadel without a pass. Passes can be obtained from the German ambassador, the British, Dutch or Russian consuls, the port warden or the commander of

the city police. The prince frequently invites notable foreign visitors to dine with him at the palace.

Marketplace: The market square is the hub of local commerce. It occupies the old canal bed which once separated the main city from the citadel. Two great stairways lead up to Old City and the citadel at opposite ends of the plaza. The square is always filled with a teeming raucous bazaar. Hundreds of booths hold merchants selling a variety of goods, hawking their wares at the top of their lungs. The market is a good place to buy food, local manufactures or imported luxuries, but no illegal goods are available.

Caravansery: The caravansery is a huge building next to the market square, built to accommodate caravans passing through and to serve as a warehouse for goods awaiting transport or sale. It is a vast, rambling structure with numerous forgotten nooks and chambers. The whole building smells of pack animals and spices. When a caravan is in town, the place takes on the aspect of a carnival, with merchants bartering with caravaneers, strolling entertainers and gawkers.

Old City: The main part of Dioscuria is Old City, within the walls. The northern part preserves the original street layout and is home to the city's wealthier residents. The Dioscuria Gasthaus and the German Embassy are both in that part of town. The southern half of Old

City is poorer, and in years past the streets were very dangerous at night. Improved police and a general increase in living standards have made it much safer. The British Consulate stands at the center of Old City, fronting on Ten Roads Square, and the Russian Consulate is nearby.

Landing Field: A large section of Old City is taken up by the old landing field. Once the only facility for aerial traffic, the old landing field has been largely superseded by the new German-built field. The old field still serves the Dioscurian Navy and a few Martian merchant ships, and includes the city shipyards. The yards can build Martian ships only. The four drydocks can hold of up to 1000 tons. The field is guarded by city police and customs officials, but the drydocks are patrolled by marines.

The fort at the western end of the city is home to three bands of infantry and one cavalry from the city's regular army. (Two bands of infantry and one band of cavalry stationed in the city serve as a police force, and a third infantry band mans the city gates.)

Prisoners are kept in dungeons below this fortress and the eastern fort.

Little Berlin: Built in the canal bed east of Old City, this area appears to be a modern section of Dusseldorf or Hamburg magically transported to Mars. Neat cottages of brick and wood stand amid well-tended flowerbeds on straight, well-lit, paved streets.

About 1500 people reside in Little Berlin. Most are German merchants and their dependents, but some married officers from the German regiment or the *Hamburg* have houses here, as do scientists and archaeologists from the Berlin Museum and the University of Cologne.

About 300 Terrans of other nationalities also live in the neighborhood, although the few British residents of Dioscuria prefer Old City. The Dutch consul, Jan Van Oort, maintains his office here.

New Town: In the canal bed north of the city, a new district has grown up outside the walls. New Town is home to most of the immigrants who came hoping to share in Dioscuria's new prosperity. It is a maze of unplanned, unpaved streets, lined with ramshackle buildings of mud brick and rubble. No guards or police patrol New Town, making it a center of vice and crime. The taverns never close, and all manner of illegal goods and weapons can be found here—for the right price.

A few Terrans live in New Town, mostly drunkards and criminals. It is rumored that a secret Anarchist cell meets in the neighborhood, and the Germans have occasionally sent in troops looking for revolutionaries, without success.

Port District: In contrast to the brawling, wide-open port sections of many cities, the port district of Dioscuria is as safe and proper as a Temperance Soci-

DAYTIME ENCOUNTERS

	<i>Citadel</i>	<i>Marketplace/ Caravansary</i>	<i>Old City</i>	<i>New Town</i>	<i>Little Berlin</i>	<i>Port District</i>
<i>Roll</i>	6	5	4	5	5	6
1	Guards	Guards	Guards	Beggar	Police	Soldiers
2	Guards	Beggar	Beggar	Beggar	Merchant	Merchant
3	Noble	Merchant	Noble	Thief	Official	Merchant
4	Official	Merchant	Merchant	Merchant	Ladies	Crewmembers
5	Official	Thief	Thief	Thief	Soldiers	Martian
6	German	German	German	Accident	Martian	Martian

NIGHT ENCOUNTERS

	<i>Citadel</i>	<i>Marketplace/ Caravansary</i>	<i>Old City</i>	<i>New Town</i>	<i>Little Berlin</i>	<i>Port District</i>
<i>Roll</i>	4	2	1	3	2	1
1	Guards	Guards	Guards	Thief	Police	Soldiers
2	Guards	Guards	Guards	Thief	Police	Soldiers
3	Guards	Thief	Thief	Thief	Merchant	Merchant
4	Guards	Beggar	Beggar	Beggar	Official	Crewmembers
5	Noble	Merchant	Merchant	Beggar	Soldiers	Martian
6	Noble	Accident	Accident	Merchant	Martian	Martian

ety tea party. Fort Friederich-Wilhelm stands guard over the new landing field and holds the German regiment commanded by Colonel Vorbeck. A six-inch Krupp naval gun is mounted atop one tower of the fort to protect the field against aerial attack.

The landing field is large and well-lit, with several mooring masts set up to service Zeppelin ether flyers and steam airships, but there are no drydocks to construct vessels.

A row of large warehouses lines one side of the field, and there are offices of various shipping lines and merchant companies between the landing field and the fort. There are no taverns or shops.

Underground: Dioscuria was built with the usual advanced Martian water and sewer system, but radical rebuilding was required when the canals dried up. Deep wells were dug, and the sewers were re-routed to dump wastes into huge catch basins rather than into the canals. Therefore, Dioscuria's sewer system no longer contains the lethal bacteria which make other cities' systems impassable to Martians. Fugitives, outcasts and lunatics now lurk in the tunnels beneath the city, and numerous secret entrances to the sewer system have been dug, particularly in the New Town. Abandoned basements and hidden tombs create a vast labyrinth under Old City, and local legends speak of an entire culture living underground.

A similar network exists beneath the citadel, created by the palace dungeons, the royal crypts and various secret chambers built over the centuries by the princes. The rulers of Dioscuria have tried to ensure that the entrances to the catacombs have all been found and sealed off.

Little Berlin has its own water and sewer system, installed by the Germans. There are no hidden tunnels or passages—or at least none the Germans know about.

ENCOUNTERS

To roll for an encounter, first select the proper table based on the appropriate place and time.

Next, roll for chance. The chance number follows each location name in bold type. Rolling this number or less means an encounter takes place.

Third, roll for the specific encounter. Encounter descriptions follow below.

Accident: The PCs are involved in or witness an accident. Possibilities include runaway animals, falling masonry, fires or vehicle collisions. The details are left to the referee.

Beggar: All beggars in Dioscuria are Martians.

Crewmembers: These are 1D6 Teran or Martian crewmembers from a cloudship or ether flyer. During the day they are well behaved, but at night they may be drunk and looking for a fight. Crewmen may also be German Navy personnel from the *Hamburg*, who are treated as Soldiers.

German: A German encountered in the citadel is an official. For Germans encountered elsewhere, roll on the Little Berlin Encounter Table.

Guards: A pair of city guards. In the marketplace or Old City, these are mounted half the time. During the day, guards simply make their rounds, watching for disturbances. At night, they stop and question suspicious-looking characters. In the citadel, guards encountered are soldiers of the New Model Regiment—they will arrest anyone without a pass.

Ladies: The PCs encounter a pair of German ladies going about their business, probably accompanied by a servant. Ladies never speak with strange men. Strangers bothering ladies will be treated very strictly by the police.

Martian: Martians encountered in Little Berlin should be determined by rolling on the Old City Encounter Table. Those encountered in the Port District are determined on the Marketplace Encounter Table.

Merchant: In the market, a merchant is a Martian selling things. In Old City, a merchant is a wealthy trader accompanied by his staff. In New Town, a merchant is a sleazy dealer in illegal goods. At the port or in Little Berlin, a merchant is a German trader.

Noble: A member of the royal family or one of the wealthy nobility. Nobles generally are accompanied by a swarm of guards and servants.

Official: At the port, these are mostly Martian customs inspectors. Elsewhere, they are just bureaucrats going about their business. Important officials have a retinue of assistants, with guards at night. In Little Berlin, officials encountered are German bureaucrats, either embassy staff or employees of the Zeppelin Company.



Police: The PCs encounter a German police officer, questions any suspicious persons, anyone walking the streets at night or any Martians. Police are armed with truncheons.

Soldiers: The PCs encounter 1D6 German soldiers. In Little Berlin, soldiers are officers going about their business. Around port, they are troopers on patrol acting as police. Soldiers on duty carry rifles.

Thief: All thieves in Dioscuria are Martians. During the day most are pick-pockets or purse-snatchers, relying on stealth and a quick getaway. At night they may be strong-arm robbers. Most thieves are solitary, except in New Town, where gangs of up to a dozen may be encountered at night.

PRINCE SHSKAAS

Shskaas will accede to the throne of Dioscuria in another year. He is a good-hearted person who genuinely wishes to keep his subjects happy. Though the prince is no genius, he has realized that his survival depends on cooperating with the Germans and Ssaskeen. At the same time, he hopes to find some way to offset the German influence and take control of the government himself.

He is an amiable young man and is quite charming.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 3 (edged)
Agl: 1	Marksmanship 1 (bow)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 4 (mapping)
Int: 2	Observation 2, Engineering 1 (earthworks)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Linguistics 3 (Koline, German, English)
Soc: 6	Riding 5 (gashant), Leadership 6, Pilot 2 (cloudship)

Motives: Friendly, Proud.

Appearance: Shskaas is tall and good-looking, but has a tendency to clumsiness. He dislikes wearing the uncomfortable formal dress his position requires, and prefers peasant clothing when alone.

SSASKEEN

High Minister Ssaskeen desires only to keep his lucrative position as regent and is willing to sell the whole city to the Germans in order to do so. He has absolutely no scruples and will do anything for money. He is shrewd enough to realize that he is of value to the Germans only as long as they do not have complete control over the city, however. So Ssaskeen must constantly strive to keep the ambassador happy without giving him too much.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agl: 4	Stealth 4, Crime 1 (forgery)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 5	Observation 5
Chr: 3	Eloquence 3, Bargaining 3, Linguistics 3 (German, Koline, Parhooni)
Soc: 6	Riding 5 (ruumet breehr), Leadership 5

Motives: Greed, Cowardice.

Appearance: Ssaskeen is a short, slender Martian. He wears elaborate robes and fantastic amounts of jewelry, and never goes anywhere without a huge retinue of guards and servants. Ssaskeen always carries a dagger hidden under his robes.

HORST VORBECK

Colonel Vorbeck is first and foremost a soldier, loyal to his regiment and the German Army. But he is also a Bavarian patriot and resents the domination of Germany by the Prussians. He is fair and honest, and is occasionally disgusted by the underhanded methods used by von Gruber. So far Vorbeck has chosen duty over personal feelings.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 5	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agl: 1	Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 4 (Mapping), Fieldcraft 2
Int: 2	Observation 3
Chr: 6	Eloquence 5, Linguistics 2 (Dioscurian, French)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 4, Pilot 1 (steam flyer)

Motives: Honest, Loyal.

Appearance: Vorbeck is tall and distinguished looking, with silver hair and elaborate whiskers. Because he is

slightly deaf, he speaks in a parade-ground bark, but this does not detract from his considerable personal charm. Despite his age, Vorbeck is still very strong and delights in taking on younger men in boxing matches.

GEORGE CREIGHTON

Consul George Creighton is the British consul in Dioscuria and is responsible for aiding British citizens in the city. He keeps up the facade of being careless, do-nothing British gentleman, but in fact has an astounding intelligence and will power.

Creighton is more than just a diplomat. He also gathers information for the Secret Service on German activities. He enjoys "the great game" against von Gruber and relishes the chance to use his abilities in the service of his country. Creighton is an extremely useful ally.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 1 (edged)
Agl: 3	Stealth 2, Crime 2 (forgery)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 6	Observation 7
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Bargaining 2, Linguistics 5 (French, German, Dioscurian, Koline, Parhooni), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse)

Motives: Steady, Stubborn.

Appearance: Creighton is a small dapper man, always cool and self-possessed. He is slender and hawk-nosed, with very pale blonde hair.

VLADIMIR GRISHNAKOV

Consul Vladimir Ivanovich Grishnakov is the Russian consul in Dioscuria. Like many other Terrans on Mars, he came to the Red Planet hoping the low gravity would help a heart condition.

Grishnakov is a man of wide-ranging interests and many talents. He has travelled extensively on Earth and Mars, and views his consular appointment as sort of a permanent paid vacation. He is forever going off on mountain-climbing trips, hunting expeditions or archaeological digs. Like Creighton, he is supposed to send intelligence reports home about German activities, but he does so only sporadically. He would enthusiastically undertake any secret missions, however, if only for the excitement they would bring.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 6	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 3 (edged)
Agl: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 1 (pistol)
End: 1	Wilderness Travel 1 (mountaineering), Swimming 1
Int: 4	Observation 4, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 3	Eloquence 3, Bargaining 2, Linguistics 6 (French, German, English, Dioscurian, Koline, Turkish)
Soc: 5	Riding 4 (horse), Pilot 2 (sailing vessel)

Motives: Friendly, Adventuresome.

Appearance: Grishnakov is huge bear of a man with a bushy beard and a booming laugh. He is very jolly and is an indispensable part of the Dioscurian social scene. He generally wears casual Cossack-style clothing.

HRAVIITH SHAASTHAN

Admiral Shaasthan is the commander of Dioscuria's cloudship fleet. He has served the ruling house of Dioscuria for 30 years and is extremely loyal. He distrusts the Germans and scorns Ssaskeen. He has patiently built up his fleet, training loyal officers, and now commands the most effective military force still loyal to the prince.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Trimsman 2 (cloudship), Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agl: 3	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 1 (rifle)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mapping)
Int: 5	Gunnery (MCL) 1, Engineering 1 (naval architecture)
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2, Linguistics 3 (Koline, Parhooni, German), Bargaining 1
Soc: 5	Riding 3 (gashant), Piloting 3 (cloudship), Leadership 2

Motives: Loyal, Adventuresome.

Appearance: Shaasthan is an old, fierce-looking Martian. In his youth, he was a famous privateer (some say pirate), and he still has a buccaneering air about him. He dresses in flamboyant, casual clothing, and wears his white hair in a long mane like a Hill Martian. Ω

Don't miss "Escape from Dioscuria" by James L. Cambias in Challenge 59.

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**APRIL
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ESCAPE FROM DIOSCURIA

We were travelling eastward from the Boreosyrtilis League to Cydonia, aboard a big merchant cloudship stuffed with spice. The ship stopped for a few days in Dioscuria, so Dr. Blogsworth and I decided to tour the Martian city. We had just finished having a cup of strange, smoky flavored Martian tea in a little cafe in the Old City, when Blogsworth suddenly grabbed my arm. "I say old chap," he said, "Did you just hear some- one scream?"

The group is touring the Old City area of Dioscuria. As they wander the

quaint streets, admiring the architecture of the Martian buildings and the charming atmosphere of the neighborhood, the characters suddenly hear a feminine scream coming from a nearby alley.

If the adventurers investigate (and what sort of cad would ignore the sound of a damsel in distress?), they see two German officers (Wegenspach and Zweigmann) struggling with a beautiful young Martian girl. Wegenspach

brusquely orders the PCs to leave: "Be off, Englishers! This is none of your concern!"

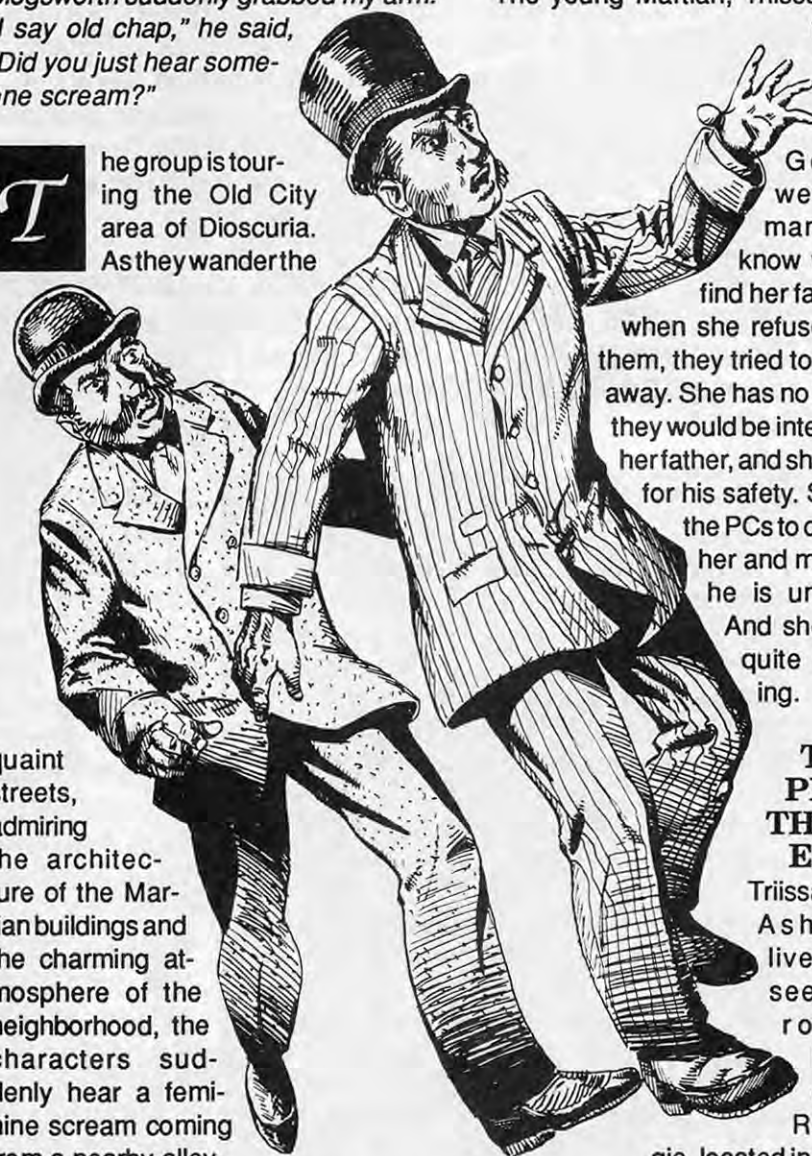
The two officers are unarmed except for Wegenspach's pistol. If confronted with superior numbers, they leave the girl and flee. "You'll suffer for this, Englishers!" cries Wegenspach as he departs.

The young Martian, Triissa, thanks the PCs for helping her. The Germans were demanding to know where to find her father, and when she refused to tell them, they tried to drag her away. She has no idea why they would be interested in her father, and she is afraid for his safety. She begs the PCs to come with her and make sure he is unharmed. And she can be quite convincing.

THE PLOT THICK- ENS

Triissa's father, Ashaasth, lives in a seedy old rooming house called the Red Roo-

gie, located in the poorer part of Old City near the old landing field. The building is dark, and reeks of filth and Martian cooking. Ashaasth lives in a tiny room in the basement, sparsely equipped with broken furniture. A dirt-encrusted window gives a rat's-eye view



By James L. Cambias

of the street.

Ashaasth is not present when the PCs arrive with Triissa. The young Martian girl is beside herself with worry, and will beseech the characters to help her find her father.

If they search his dwelling, the PCs will find only one thing of any real interest—a letter, apparently initiated by High Minister Ssaskeen, authorizing the assassination of Prince Hasthiith seven years ago.

After the PCs have had a few minutes to investigate the premises, an old Martian bursts into the room, wide eyed and stinking of alcohol. "Father!" Triissa calls out joyfully.

Ashaasth's replies in a panicked voice: "They're coming! We're going to be killed!"

Suddenly, the PCs hear loud voices barking orders in German and heavy footsteps. Any character who understands German can interpret the orders: "Take no prisoners!" A glance through the window will reveal a squad of armed soldiers from the New Model Regiment drawn up in the street outside, while another two squads search the building.

The PCs seem to be in a jam. They can try to fight their way out against incredible odds or find a way to sneak past the Germans. If they search for an escape route, the PC with the highest Observation skill will notice an old stone manhole cover set in the floor underneath Ashaasth's bed. Raising the cover is a formidable task of Strength (up to three people may combine their Strengths to make the attempt).

The hole leads to a shaft with crude handholds down one side, extending down into foul-smelling darkness. The passages are unlit, so if no one thinks to bring a light, the PCs will have to grope their way in complete darkness. Ashaasth and Triissa will follow their lead.

The sewers form in a vast web underneath Old City, extending for miles on

several different levels. Passages are known to lead into the New Town section, so the PCs might try to find their way to the British Consulate, the old landing field or New Town. Or they may simply plunge ahead blindly,



table below for every 20 yards travelled.

ASHAASTH'S STORY

While they are fleeing through the sewers, Ashaasth will stonically refuse to answer any questions concerning the German attacks or the letter the PCs found in his room. Triissa knows nothing of the matter, and will intervene if the PCs pressure her father too forcefully.

The PCs will undoubtedly tire of

without making any plans at all. Some sections have collapsed, and new tunnels have been dug, creating a three-dimensional maze confusing even to the engineers in charge of maintaining the system. The referee can either map out the sewer system or determine the PCs' route randomly by rolling 1D6 on the

Random Sewer Layout

Roll	Result
1	Straight: The tunnel continues unchanged.
2	Bend: The tunnel bends. Roll 1D6: 1-3: The tunnel turns left. 4-6: The tunnel goes right.
3	Junction: Roll 1D6: 1: The tunnel intersects another at right angles. 2: The tunnel intersects another at right angles and ends. 3: A passage enters on the left. 4: A passage enters on the right. 5: The passage forks into two. 6: 1D6+3 passages enter.
4	Chamber: A room, two to 12 yards long by a two to 12 yards wide. Roll 1D6: 1-3: There are no other exits. 4-5: There is one other exit. 6: There are 1D6 other exits.
5	Special: Roll 1D6: 1: A shaft with crude handholds leads up to the surface. The shaft is covered by a heavy stone or bronze lid. 2: A vertical shaft leads down to a lower level of the sewers. 3: The tunnel ends, either at a stone wall or a pile of rubble. 4: The tunnel floor has given way, leaving a huge pit. It is 1D6×10 yards down to the tunnel level below, and the pit is a two to 12 yards across. 5: A secret door opens into the tunnel on one side. PCs making an Impossible Observation task roll may spot the passage. Passages may lead into basements or hidden chambers. 6: The tunnel floor slopes downward into a section filled with murky, foul-smelling water. The water is eight feet deep at the deepest and extends for three to 18 yards.
6	Encounter: Reroll on this table to determine what the tunnel section is like, then consult the Sewer Encounters Table below.

Sewer Encounters

Roll	Result
1	Lunatic: An insane Martian who has taken to living in the sewers. He will appear as a filthy, inhuman figure, and will attack frantically on a roll of 1-2. Lunatics are Green NPC types, with no attribute higher than 4, and are armed with clubs.
2	Scavengers: A group of 1D6 poor Martians who make their living by scavenging the sewers. They will attempt to rob weaker parties, but can guide the PCs out if promised a reward. They are identical to the standard Martian thief NPC.
3	Green Koko: A large water snake, as described in the basic rules.
4	Germans: The party's pursuers have caught up. The enemy has 1D6 Veteran Martian troopers from the New Model Regiment, armed with bolt-action rifles and led by either Sergeant Zweigmann or Lieutenant Wegenspach. They will attack automatically.
5	Grigian: The party encounters one or two Grigians. Grigians are small, furry, lizard-like creatures about a foot long, kept as pets by wealthy Martian ladies. The sewers of Dioscuria are infested with a giant strain of albino Grigians, which have been known to attack unwary explorers. A giant Grigian is a huge, six-legged, white-furred creature with big red eyes and a mouthful of fangs. <i>Number Appearing:</i> 1-2 <i>Size:</i> 1×2 <i>Move:</i> L20/W10 <i>Wounds:</i> 5 <i>Save:</i> 1 <i>Weight:</i> 300 lbs <i>Weapons:</i> Teeth (3, 3, 0, 2).
6	Thieves: A group of one to three thieves hiding out in the sewers. They will attack weaker parties and flee from stronger ones. Use the standard thief NPC.

Ashaasth's evasive manner. If they convince him that they deserve an explanation to the mysterious goings-on, and if they confront him when Triissa is not in earshot, he will finally give in—to the point of breaking down in tears.

"It is all my fault," he moans. "My sins have come back to injure my daughter. I'm so ashamed! The blood of the old prince is on my hands! I took their gold and did what they asked, and my spirit will suffer for it in the afterlife."

It will take some time to get the full story from Ashaasth, as he meanders and weeps and forgets what he is talking about. With patient prodding, he will reveal that he was the assassin who planted a bomb aboard the royal yacht seven years ago, killing Prince Hasthiith and placing High Minister Ssaskeen in power as regent of the child prince and puppet of the Germans.

Ashaasth has proof of his tale, including the letter with Ssaskeen's own signature. The old Martian is willing to admit his own guilt and suffer the penalty as long as those who paid him are punished as well. But he wants to tell Triissa himself and in his own way.

In the right (i.e., British) hands, Ashaasth's testimony could bring down Ssaskeen and drastically undermine German power in Dioscuria. No wonder the Germans were trying to find him.

OUT OF DIOSCURIA

Ashaasth will now ask the PCs' help in getting him and Triissa away from Dioscuria. If the PCs' patriotism is not enough to convince them to do what they can to bring down Ssaskeen and weaken the German influence in Dioscuria, then Ashaasth can offer them a moderate payment for their efforts (his life savings).

The PCs should develop their own plan for escaping from the city—the three main routes are by land, by air or with the help of the British Consul.

Land: The PCs must first get past the city walls, if they are still in the Old City. They can try to cross into the New Town district through the sewer tunnels. Finding their way will require a great deal of exploring unless the party hires scavengers as guides.

Or the PCs can try to slip past the guards at the city gates. Each of the three gates will have 10 soldiers from

the city guard force (Trained soldiers armed with Martian rifles and swords), and a squad of five troopers from the New Model Regiment (Veteran soldiers armed with bolt-action rifles). A German officer will be at each gate (Wegenspach is at the western gate, and Zweigmann is at the northern one). The guards will search all vehicles leaving the city, looking for anyone matching the PC groups' description. In addition, the *Hamburg* and a couple of aerial steam launches are patrolling the main roads out of Dioscuria. If caught, the party will be imprisoned in Fort Friederich-Wilhelm and charged with whatever crimes the Germans come up with.

Air: In addition to the stepped-up security at the city gates, the Germans will have a platoon of 10 German soldiers guarding the new landing field. If the adventurers arrived in Dioscuria by ship, that vessel will be detained in port until the fugitives are caught.

Security at the old landing field is poorly maintained, so it might be possible to slip in past the six city guardsmen at the gate. The field is patrolled by Dioscurian Marines, the only effective soldiers in the city who are not pro-German. At any given time, there are one or two small merchant cloudships at the old field.

Captured intruders will be taken to the naval authorities commanded by Admiral Shaasthan before being given to the city police.

Consulate: A final means of escape for British characters is the British Consulate. Consul George Creighton is also an intelligence agent for the Foreign Office and will be highly interested in Ashaasth's story. He can keep the party in the consulate for a few days, but no longer—eventually word would leak out.

The Germans keep the consulate under surveillance as a matter of routine and will know if the PCs have sought refuge there. The Germans cannot enter the building without provoking an incident with Britain but may arrange for "thieves" to break in. And even if the adventurers have found safety at the consulate, they must still get out again.

For a complete guide to this Martian city and more on Dioscurian NPCs, see "Dioscuria" by James L. Cambias in Challenge 58.

Triissa

Triissa's is devoted to Ashaasth and will do anything to keep him safe. She is cool-headed in danger, but can have a temper when annoyed.

Attribute Skills

Str:	2	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1
Agl:	4	Stealth 4
End:	4	Wilderness Travel 4 (foraging)
Int:	3	Observation 2
Chr:	6	Eloquence 7, Bargaining 5, Linguistics 2 (German, Koline)
Soc:	1	Riding 1 (Gashant), Medicine 1

Motives: Love (for Ashaasth), Steady.

Appearance: Triissa is young and pretty. Her slightly reddish hair hints at some Hill Martian ancestry.

Ashaasth

Ashaasth was once a crewman aboard the royal yacht. He accepted the bribe to assassinate the prince hoping to make enough money to provide a good life for his family. But remorse over the deed drove him to drink, and the death of his wife sent him over the edge.

Attribute Skills

Str:	4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 1, Trimsman 1 (cloudship), Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl:	5	Stealth 5, Marksmanship 1 (rifle), Crime 2 (lockpicking)
End:	6	Wilderness Travel 6 (mountaineering), Engineering 1 (explosives)
Int:	3	Observation 3, Gunnery 1 (MCL)
Chr:	2	Eloquence 1, Linguistics 2 (Koline, German), Theatrics 1
Soc:	1	Piloting 1 (cloudship)

Motives: Disgraced, Eccentric.

Appearance: Ashaasth is an elderly Martian, still fairly strong and healthy despite being an alcoholic. He is ragged and unkempt, and his attention wanders.

Lieutenant Wegenspach

Wegenspach is a dedicated soldier and a loyal subject of the kaiser. He hopes his success in this mission will lead to promotion.

Attribute Skills

Str:	3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl:	5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 2 (pistol)
End:	2	Wilderness Travel 3 (mapping), Fieldcraft 2
Int:	6	Observation 7
Chr:	1	Linguistics 2 (English, Dioscurian)
Soc:	4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 4

Motives: Ambitious, Loyal (to Germany).

Appearance: Wegenspach is a small, nimble man with a sharp mind and abrasive manner. He is dark-haired and dark-eyed, looking more Italian than German. He is never without his service revolver.

Sergeant Zweigmann

Zweigmann has settled comfortably into army life because it requires little thought from him. He dislikes Wegenspach, but respects his rank.

Attribute Skills

Str:	6	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl:	4	Stealth 3, Marksmanship 4 (rifle)
End:	5	Wilderness Travel 6 (foraging), Fieldcraft 4
Int:	1	
Chr:	3	Eloquence 2, Linguistics 2 (French, Dioscurian)
Soc:	2	Riding 1 (horse), Leadership 2

Motives: Sadistic Loyal.

Appearance: Zweigmann is a giant man. His boyish good looks belie the fact that he is a sadistic brute. He carries a pistol but prefers to fight with his massive fists. Ω

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CHALLENGE 60

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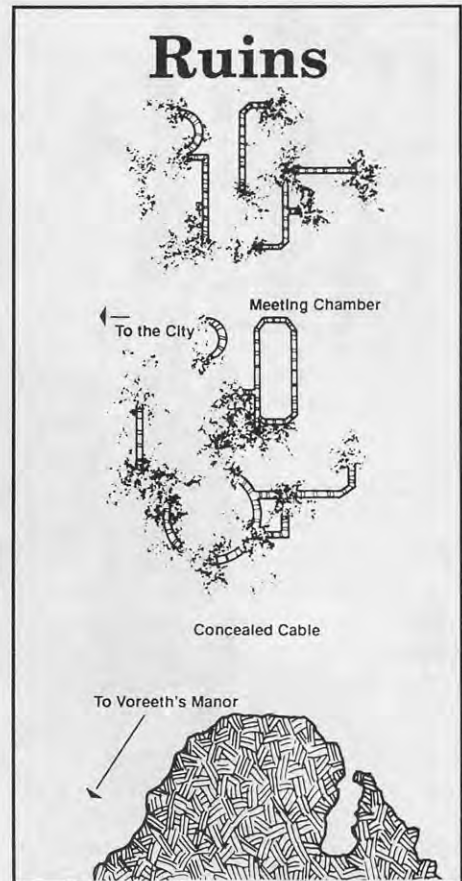
A strange new cult advocates the overthrow of British rule on Mars. The city of Gorovaan seems to be the center of activity for the new cult. There have been riots, the main temple was burned down, and several Terrans have been attacked. For now, the Gorovaan garrison is keeping order, but the situation is very tense. The Oenotrian war has stretched British forces to the limit. A rebellion now could lead to the collapse of British rule on Mars.

Lord Dundas, the governor-general of Britain's possessions on Mars,

Gorovaan



Ruins



would like the PCs to go to Gorovaan to find out what is going on and put a stop to it as quickly and as discreetly as possible.

If the PCs are military, they will be assigned to this investigation. Otherwise, they may be hired for the job. If they are journalists, they may be sent to investigate the story while the other PCs try to cover it up.

GOROVAAN

Gorovaan is the northernmost city in British territory. It has a population of 102,600, including 3500 British citizens. The city's economy is based on metal-working, particularly copper and bronze, using ore mined in the mountains to the north. Unfortunately, competition from British industry has caused a slump in the copper business. Poverty and unemployment in the city have risen, creating fertile conditions for unrest.

From the air, Gorovaan is a large and impressive-looking city. Some colossal towers dating back to the Canal Builder period loom over the smaller, more recent buildings. The British flag flies over a fort on the east bank of the canal.

District Commissioner: The chief British official in Gorovaan is Sir Charles Eglantine, the district commissioner.

(Technically, Gorovaan is under the rule of Parhoon, so Eglantine represents the British regency of Parhoon.) If contacted by the PCs, Eglantine will be somewhat indignant about "interference" by the governor-general. He insists that the whole affair has been blown out of proportion, and that the riots have simply been the work of "rowdies and hooligans." The destruction of the temple, he claims, was the result of lightning. Eglantine will eventually grudgingly cooperate with the PCs. Though he knows little about what is really going on, he is a useful source of general information about the city and can tell the PCs who might know the answers to their questions.

Garrison: Gorovaan's garrison is commanded by Major George Quickstone. Quickstone is alarmed by the growing unrest and has been pestering the army for more troops. His solution to the problem is, "Give them a taste of the bayonet, and they'll stop this foolishness soon enough."

Temple: The old grand temple was destroyed by fire a week before the characters' arrival. Six priests were killed in the blaze. The burnt-out remains stand in the center of the city. If the PCs ask about the fire, everyone swears it was

caused by lightning. Several people even witnessed it. This is very peculiar, as lightning is almost unknown on Mars due to the thin, dry air. Only during desert sandstorms does it occur, and there was no storm the night the temple was destroyed. An examination of the ruins will reveal little; what the fire did not destroy has been picked over thoroughly by scavengers and treasure-hunters.

DISTURBANCES

The referee should roll 1D6 each day to determine if there are any outbreaks of unrest. A result of 1-2 indicates that the city is quiet that day; 3-4 means a minor disturbance; and 5-6 means a major disturbance.

Minor Disturbance: A minor disturbance involves fewer than 20 people. It could be a tavern brawl, an episode of vandalism, or an attack by a couple of thugs on a lone Briton. The incident will probably take place in the slums or near the waterfront. The constabulary will be able to break it up fairly easily, and the whole thing will last no more than half an hour. Unless they are involved, the PCs may not hear about a minor disturbance.

Major Disturbance: A major distur-

bance is a full-fledged riot. A crowd of 50 to 100 Martians will gather, shouting slogans, looting, attacking British citizens and destroying property. Only the arrival of troops will break up the riot. For the rest of the day, the city will be tense, buildings will be locked and shuttered, and there will be 1D6 minor disturbances.

A major disturbance will always affect the PCs, unless they have left the city. The characters will be warned to stay off the streets, or they may be called upon to protect British lives and property from the mob. If they are so foolish as to get caught up in a riot, the PCs may well be injured.

ENCOUNTERS

The characters' investigations will take them all over the city. Depending on where they go, they can learn a great deal of useful information (and some utterly useless facts, as well).

1. A British merchant, Cyril Isleford, can tell the characters that Lord Voreeth recently ordered a large shipment of electrical equipment from London. Isleford has no idea what the equipment could be for, but he made a handsome profit off the deal.

2. A British archaeologist, Professor Readley, was chased away from the ruins north of town by a gang of rowdies. He complained to the authorities, but the district commissioner was too concerned with the cult scare to offer any assistance.

3. A Martian priest, Paaranan, is worried about the cult because even devout followers of the traditional religions have become fanatical cultists. The traditional priests have grudgingly accepted British rule in Gorovaan, but know little about the new cult.

4. A British physician, Dr. Thimble, can tell the PCs that he treated a couple of cultists injured in a riot. Their behavior was highly unusual, as if they were under the influence of a drug.

5. A Martian tavernkeeper, Graaziith, will inform the investigators that a curse has befallen the city ever since the British stopped the practice of beating gongs at moonrise.

6. Ixtaan, a Martian tobacconist, recalls selling a whole case of Bulgarian cigars to one of Lord Voreeth's men. This is highly unusual, as Terran tobacco is not very popular among Martians.

7. The party may notice several of Lord Voreeth's personal guard at any riots or disturbances they witness. The guards do not participate, but carefully observe the outbreaks.

8. Soolian, one of the district commissioner's servants, knows that the cultists meet somewhere outside the city on the day of the Wind Lord. Soolian's brother has joined the cult and told him about it. He has not told District Commissioner Eglantine.

9. Broon, a beggar at the bazaar, will swear that Eglantine is a member of the cult. (Actually, Broon just likes to tell tall stories.)

ASSASSINS

At some point during their investigations, the PCs will be attacked by a gang of assassins. The killers are equal in number to the PCs and are armed with daggers. Their identities are concealed by black cloaks and hoods, but a few of them are wearing their household livery underneath. If any are killed or captured, the PCs can recognize the livery as that of Lord Voreeth's household. All the assassins are Experienced NPCs, and they will fight until half their number are incapacitated.

LORD VOREETH

Lord Voreeth is a Martian nobleman and the largest landowner in the Gorovaan region. He has a vast estate north of the city, along the canal. His property includes some ancient Canal Builder ruins.

Voreeth owes his great wealth to the fact that he was an early supporter of the British and cooperated with them extensively in the wake of their conquest of Gorovaan. Until recently, he was very friendly with the district commissioner and other officials, but he has now become withdrawn and hostile. (In fact, he has been influenced by the anarchist Hartmann.)

Lord Voreeth's main residence is his palace, located beside the grand canal two miles north of the city. The mansion is heavily fortified and is garrisoned by two dozen well-trained guards. Visitors to the palace will be turned away by Voreeth's steward, who claims that the lord is ill and cannot see anyone. The PCs may persuade the steward to let them in, either through Eloquentia or by bribing the man. A letter of introduction

from Eglantine would also suffice.

In person, Voreeth seems a bit odd. He is obviously intelligent and can speak very knowledgeably about managing his estates, the art treasures in his house and Martian history. But if the PCs ask about politics or religion, he becomes almost zombie-like, and answers all questions with variations on the same slogan: "The British are evil; the gods demand that they be driven off Mars." If pressed, he will become quite hostile and will order the PCs to leave his house and lands at once.

RITUAL

The PCs may attempt to observe a cult ritual in progress. They can find out where and when the cultists meet through their investigation or by following some cultists to the ruins.

The ruins lie about five miles outside of Gorovaan, on Lord Voreeth's estates. Until recently, the ruins were something of a tourist attraction, but they are no longer safe to visit. Half a dozen thugs (Trained NPCs) guard the area, armed with knives and clubs. The original purpose of the ruins is still unknown. Most structures are little more than rubble, but one edifice is perfectly intact. It is a big building, about 100 feet long by 50 feet wide, standing perhaps 40 feet high. Within it is a single chamber. There are no windows, and the walls inside are decorated with a fantastic abstract pattern.

At one end of the chamber is a huge idol, carved roughly from a single slab of stone. A thorough examination (and a successful Difficult: Observation roll) will reveal that the idol is hollow, concealing a loudspeaker apparatus and a strange machine. Inventors having an Ether Knowledge of 35 or more may decipher the device's purpose—it is a mind-control ray. A cleverly camouflaged power cable leads from the idol through a hole in the back wall of the chamber. Outside, it snakes a few hundred yards to a cave.

The 400 Martian cultists meet at the ruins just after sunset on the day of the Wind Lord. They assemble inside the one surviving structure, lighting up the interior with torches. An elderly Martian in priests' robes bows before the huge idol. The priest is Lord Voreeth, and he leads the crowd in a chant, calling upon the gods for aid against the British.

Suddenly, an eerie light fills the chamber, and the stone idol begins to "speak": "I am pleased, my children. The aliens fear the wrath of the people. Strike at them again. Slay them, destroy their ships and smash their alien rule. Be fearless in battle, be merciless, and if you are captured, be silent. Go, and let the blood of the aliens run in the streets!"

Everyone in the building (including the PCs) feels a strange dizzy sensation. PCs must make a successful Difficult: Intelligence roll, or they will be utterly convinced of the truth of the idol's words! Affected characters can roll once every hour to see if they can break the hypnotic control; otherwise, they must follow the idol's instructions.

After a bit more chanting in honor of the gods, the cultists disperse and return home. There will be a riot in Gorovaan that night, and several lives will be lost.

CONCLUSION

The cave outside the cultists' meeting hall is where Sigismund Hartmann has hidden his ether flyer. Hartmann is a Lithuanian anarchist and inventor who has perfected a mind-control ray, which he is using to stir up unrest. An approach by stealth will take him by surprise. If the PCs have had to fight it out with the thugs guarding the ruins, Hartmann will be ready for intruders and will have his lightning cannon ready to fire out the cave mouth. Though he cannot really use it to hit individual targets, anyone entering the cave mouth will be hit and incinerated on a 1D6 roll of 1. Otherwise, he and his associates will fight long enough to escape aboard the ether flyer. The four crewmembers are all Experienced NPCs, armed with knives and light revolvers.

The ether flyer is a 40-ton liftwood ship, equipped with Hartmann's own ether propellor (power value 5, efficiency 35). It has a boiler of power value 6 and carries a crew of five. The ship is armed with Hartmann's lightning cannon. It has an ether/combustion laboratory, a conservatory, batteries of power level 1 with one day's endurance, an airscrew of power value 1, and two tons of cargo space. The flyer has an interplanetary speed of 4.4 million miles per day and an airspeed of 10. It has 1 hull hit in aerial combat.

If the PCs reveal the sinister anar-

chist plot, Hartmann will flee. Without frequent doses of mind control, the cultists will gradually lose their fanaticism, and the unrest will die down. Capturing Hartmann will bring great renown to the PCs and will provoke a strong reaction in Gorovaan against the cult. Lord Dundas will see that the player characters are suitably rewarded for their deeds.

Sir Charles Eglantine (Trained NPC)

Eglantine is district commissioner for Gorovaan and as such is the highest ranking British official in town. He dislikes his current post and has been trying to impress his superiors in order to get a better position. Consequently, he has been downplaying the unrest in Gorovaan. He will not be very keen on having outsiders sent in to deal with the situation.

Attribute Skill

Str: 3 Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged)

Agl: 1 Marksmanship 2 (rifle)

End: 4 Wilderness Travel 3 (mapping)

Int: 2 Observation 2

Chr: 6 Eloquence 7, Bargaining 2, Linguistics 3 (Parhooni, Koline, French), Theatrics 1

Soc: 5 Riding 5 (horse), Leadership 2, Pilot 1 (steam flyer)

Motives: Fair, Ambitious, Boastful.

Appearance: Eglantine is a distinguished-looking man with a slight speech impediment and a tendency to bump into things. He always tries to act as if he is in control of the situation, even when he is not. He can be very charming when he wishes to be and is great fun at parties.

Lord Voreeth (Trained NPC)

Lord Voreeth is an extremely wealthy Martian nobleman. He has always believed in cooperating with the British, but has been brainwashed by Hartmann into supporting the cult. Normally, Lord Voreeth is chiefly interested in expanding his wealth and power, but under Hartmann's influence, he has become fanatically opposed to the British.

Attribute Skill

Str: 1 Close Combat 2 (polearm)

Agl: 2 Stealth 1

End: 4 Wilderness Travel 4 (mountaineering), Fieldcraft 1

Int: 5 Observation 4

Chr: 3 Eloquence 3, Bargaining 2, Linguistics 3 (Hellan, Koline, English)

Soc: 6 Riding 5 (gashant), Pilot 3 (cloudship), Leadership 2

Motives: Proud, Mercantile, Hatred (of British).

Appearance: Voreeth is very tall and slender, even for a Martian. He wears his gray hair long, like a Hill Martian, but always dresses impeccably in elegant robes. He is usually very intelligent, but Hartmann's brainwashing has made him dull and vague.

Sigismund Hartmann (Experienced NPC)

Like all anarchists, Hartmann hates authority, and he especially detests monarchies. Since Britain is the world's leading power, it is his natural target. Hartmann is something of a coward and prefers to work in secret, behind the scenes, rather than in person.

Attribute Skill

Str: 3 Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 3 (edged)

Agl: 5 Stealth 4, Mechanics 3 (electricity), Crime 2 (forgery), Marksmanship 1 (pistol)

End: 1

Int: 6 Observation 5, Science 4 (physics), Engineering 2 (naval architecture)

Chr: 3 Eloquence 2, Theatrics 1, Linguistics 2 (Russian, English)

Soc: 3 Riding 2 (horse), Leadership 2, Medicine 1

Research Areas: Transportation 7, Biochemistry 7, Ether 35, Metallurgy 9, Precision Machinery 7, Power Production 6, Combustion 11.

Inventions: Ether propellor (reliability 5), lightning cannon (reliability 2), mind-control ray (reliability 4).

Motives: Hatred (of authority), Coward, Ruthless.

Appearance: Hartmann does not look like a fanatical anarchist. He is small and slim, neatly groomed, and wears thick spectacles. He smokes foul Bulgarian cigars and speaks with a heavy accent. ♀

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NELSON

TOM FLEET *and His* STEAM COLOSSUS



The player characters have been invited to visit the noted inventor Tom Fleet at his home in Nevada. Though just a lad, Fleet attracted widespread fame when he patented a highly efficient steam turbine. Since then, the press has christened him the "Boy Wonder of the Far West." For months, rumors have circulated that he is about to reveal some astounding new device.

If any PCs are scientists or inventors, then it is easy to explain why Fleet has invited them to see his new invention. If the player characters know Cyrus Grant (from the Luna adventure in the **Space: 1889** rulebook), then Grant can arrange the meeting. Reporters can be there as the result of string-pulling by their publishers. And it is entirely reasonable for Fleet to invite adventurers who have become famous through their exploits.

HARMONY RANCH

Fleet lives on the Harmony Ranch in the Sierra Nevada mountains, not far from Carson City, Nevada. The ranch is a working spread, owned by Fleet's backer and friend, "Tex" MacRoss. MacRoss supplies capital for Fleet's projects and has put a workshop at the boy's disposal. The ranch is full of amazing labor-saving gadgets dreamed up by the boy. Fleet and his sister, Nell, reside in the ranch's main house with MacRoss and a Japanese houseboy who does the cooking and laundry.

Arrival at the Ranch: Carson City is on the main rail line, so getting there is fairly simple. (The referee can add buffalo stampedes, Indian attacks and natural disasters to make the trip an interesting one.) It is a hard day's ride from town to the ranch, so the PCs will arrive late in the evening, dead tired from their trip. MacRoss and Fleet will greet the party and offer them refreshments, but before long everyone will head off to bed.

STEEL GIANTS

After the visitors have had a good night's sleep and a hearty breakfast, Fleet will lead the way to his workshop. The doors of the building swing open by themselves as the party approaches ("a little thingamajig I put together a while back," Fleet explains), revealing

an astounding sight. Within the building loom two huge, man-shaped machines.

"Ladies and gentlemen," Fleet says, "may I present to you—the steam colossus!" Climbing aboard one of the titanic devices, he starts the engine, and the mechanical giant strides ponderously out of the workshop.

"From this day forward, no job will be too big to tackle!" Fleet says expansively. "The steam colossus can level mountains, redirect rivers and dig lakes. A single one can do the work of an army of men. Would anyone care to step aboard and try it out?"

Fleet's steam colossus is a man-shaped robot, about 30 feet tall. The machine mimics the movements of its operator via a pantagraph apparatus, amplified by steam and hydraulic power. The colossus walks at a speed of 15 miles per hour, and it can lift and carry up to five tons. Its fuel bunker holds one ton of coal, enough for 12 hours of continuous operation. The steel skin has an armor value of 1. There are two versions of the steam colossus—the Steam Soldier (armed with a Hotchkiss rotating cannon and two Gatling guns) and the Steam Worker (which carries only a single Gatling for protection).

To invent a steam colossus requires a Transportation research area knowledge level of 30. The device has an experimental success number of 5. The walking speed of a colossus in miles per hour is three times the device's Reliability, and it can lift a weight in tons equal to its Reliability.

Operation

Anyone with a Piloting skill of 2 or better can easily operate a steam colossus. Otherwise, it is a Formidable task of Agility to avoid crashing the machine into things or falling to the ground. In normal use, the colossus requires a crew of two—one tends the engines while the other pilots the craft. The pilot operates the arms. The engineer also repairs damage and fights fires caused during combat. Each weapon also requires a gunner.

Combat: Combat with a steam colossus is conducted in much the same manner as aerial combat, on a grid of 200-yard hexes with 30-second turns.

Turn Sequence: The turn sequence is the same as for aerial combat, as described on pages 102-107 of the

basic **Space: 1889** rulebook or in **Sky Galleons of Mars**.

Movement: Each colossus has a number of movement points equal to one-fifth of its speed in miles per hour. A colossus spends 1 movement point to enter a hex. A machine may change its facing by 60 degrees each time it moves, or can remain in the same hex and change facing by expending 1 movement point per 60 degrees of change.

Collisions: If one steam colossus runs into another, damage is determined according to the normal **Sky Galleons** collision rules. It is possible for a colossus to collide with an aerial vessel at Very Low altitude. A colossus may also run into various inanimate objects by mischance.

Trees have Hull Size 1; buildings have one size level per story; and rocks and cliffs have Hull Size 6. In situations where the collision rules specify a Loss of Trim result, substitute a knockdown, as described below.

Climbing: To climb an incline, a steam colossus must spend 1 additional movement point. Going downhill requires no extra effort. A colossus cannot go up cliffs and is destroyed by falling down them.

Attacks

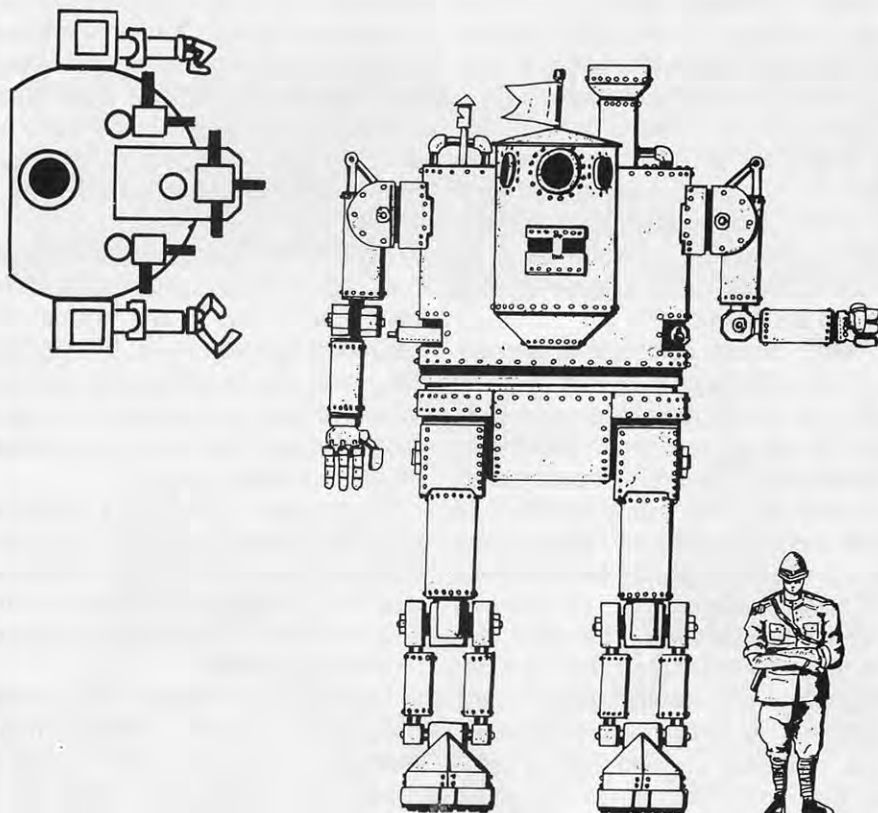
A steam colossus can attack three ways—with guns, hand-to-hand, or with thrown objects. The Steam Soldier model is armed with a one-pound HRC and two .50-caliber Gatling guns. The Steam Worker carries a single 1" Gatling.

Gun Combat: Gunfire is resolved as described in the aerial combat rules. Hits are resolved normally, and damage is rolled on the damage tables on the following pages.

Hand-to-Hand Combat: Unarmed attacks by a steam colossus are resolved in the same manner as a gun attack. Each arm has a maximum range of zero hexes and hits on a roll of 5 or 6. Arms have a Damage Value of 2 and a Penetration of 0. Each arm can only attack every other round, and a colossus cannot attack with both arms at once. A colossus cannot make hand-to-hand attacks against humans on foot, but can attack aerial craft at Very Low altitude.

Thrown Objects: A colossus with

Steam Soldier



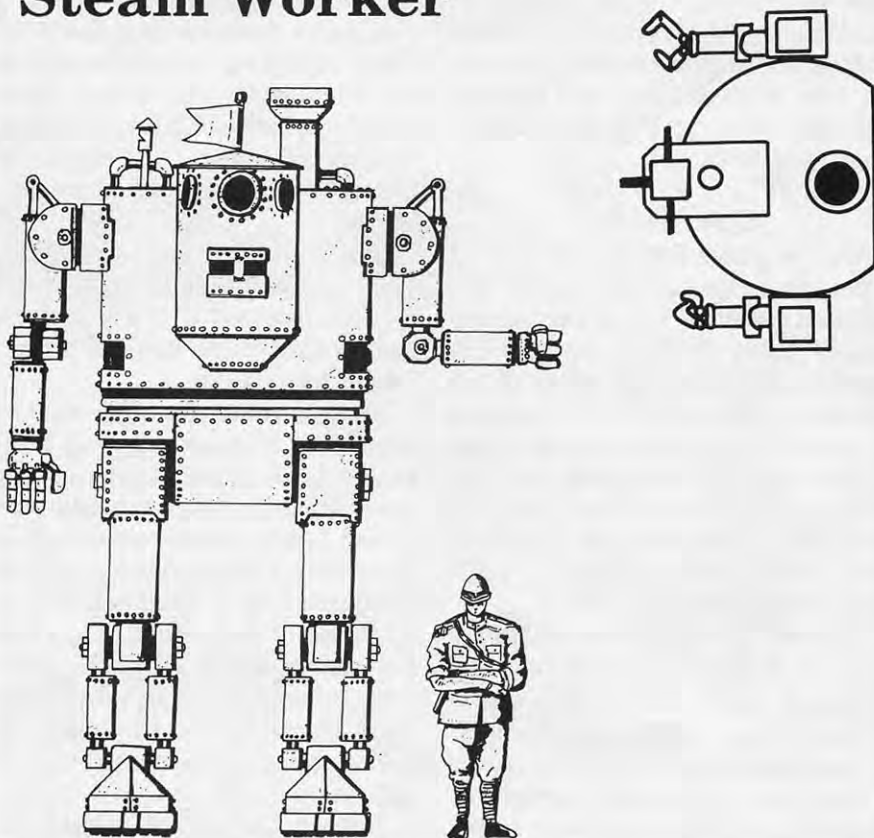
two functioning arms can throw large objects, such as boulders or logs, at opponents. The colossus must spend one turn picking up the object and cannot attack at all that turn. The object can be held until used, but a machine holding something cannot attack hand-to-hand. Thrown objects have a maximum range of two hexes, and hit on a roll of 6 only. They have Damage Value 2, with Penetration 1. Thrown objects automatically cause a knockdown (see below).

Against opponents on foot, thrown objects are nearly useless. They do normal damage to buildings and inanimate objects. Against aerial flyers, thrown objects cause a Loss of Trim critical hit instead of a knockdown.

Armor and Penetration: Armor follows the existing aerial flyer rules. The following components are considered to be normally protected by armor—crew, magazine, controls, and boiler. Guns can be armored. The Steam Soldier's one-pound HRC is in an armored mount, as is the Steam Worker's Gatling gun.

Small Arms Fire: Attacks by antipersonnel weapons are resolved normally. Note that most colossus crew positions are protected by armor, making small arms largely ineffective.

Steam Worker



Damage

When a steam colossus is hit by any attack, roll 1D6 and consult the following table. Results marked with an asterisk are identical to those in the basic aerial combat rules.

Hits	
Roll	Result
1	Crew
2	Arm
3	Arm
4	Gun*
5	Body
6	Critical

Crew: The shot kills a number of crewmembers equal to the DV of the firing weapon. The player controlling the colossus determines who is killed. A colossus without an operator cannot move or use its arms. One without an engineer can function normally, but there is nobody to repair damage and fight fires.

Arm: One of the colossus' arms is

rendered inoperable (roll a die to determine which arm). Anything being carried in that arm is dropped. If a colossus has no functioning arms, reroll.

Body: The hull of the colossus absorbs the damage. If no body hits remain, reroll the damage.

Critical: Roll 2D6 on the Critical Hits Table, below.

Critical Hits

Roll	Result
2	Magazine*
3	Controls
4	Boiler*
5	Legs
6	Knockdown
7	Fire*
8	Knockdown
9	Legs
10	Magazine*
11	Controls
12	Boiler*

Controls: The control compartment is hit. The operator is killed, and the craft cannot move until another crewmember (if any) can take over. It takes one turn for someone to take over the controls.

Legs: The legs have been hit. The machine's speed is reduced by the DV of the firing gun. A colossus whose speed is reduced to 0 automatically suffers a knockdown.

Knockdown: The colossus has been knocked over and must spend the next turn getting up. During this time, it can neither move nor fire weapons.

COLOSSAL THEFT

After the adventurers spend a long and fascinating day playing with the steam colossus, the group returns to the main house for a grand dinner. MacRoss has ordered a case of champagne from San Francisco, and the party becomes very merry indeed. At last, in the wee hours of the morning, everyone staggers off to bed.

Gas!: Once everyone is in bed, the houseboy, Hiroshi Kurita, will spray some of Fleet's sleep gas into each bedroom.

The gas has a Reliability of 4. A character must make an Impossible: Observation roll to be awakened by the sound of the gas, then an Impossible: Endurance roll to hold his breath long enough to get out of the room.

Once Kurita has gassed the household, he proceeds to the workshop and starts up the Steam Soldier, chugging off into the night. He has arranged to meet a Japanese merchant ship at an isolated cove on the California coast. Kurita plans to take the steam colossus back to Japan, where it can be duplicated by engineers, producing an invincible army of steel giants.

CLASH OF THE TITANS

Unless one of the party members managed to avoid the effects of the sleep gas, the first anyone in the ranch house will learn of the theft will be at dawn, when one of the hands comes racing in. "Mr. Fleet! Mr. Fleet! Yer cast-iron man's been took!" Characters making a Difficult: Intellect roll will notice that Kurita is gone, as well.

Cut to the Chase: Fleet will immediately propose going after the stolen colossus. Since there may be trouble, he suggests taking the Steam Worker. If one of the player characters has a Pilot skill of 3 or greater, Fleet will suggest that the PC operate the colossus. Otherwise, Fleet will pilot the machine, but he still needs a crew to man the engines and guns. (If Fleet drives the Steam Worker, the referee may want to have a player take over Fleet's character for the battle with Kurita.) MacRoss suggests that the pursuers use a shortcut through the mountains which Kurita will not know of—"Saddle up, boys, and head 'em off at the pass!"

High Noon: If the pursuers follow MacRoss' suggestion, and make a Routine: Mapping roll, they can indeed intercept Kurita in the mountains. Naturally, he won't give up without a fight. If a copy of *Sky Galleons of Mars* is available, use the desert map for the battle site; the contour lines represent different altitude levels.

Rocks and other things to throw are freely available.

Because Kurita is operating the Steam Soldier by himself, he must fill all the crew positions and must switch between stations from turn to turn. While in the pilot's seat, he can move and attack with the arms; in the gunner's station, he can use one gun. So even though the Steam Soldier is more heavily armed than the Steam Worker, the odds will be about even.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs manage to thwart Kurita's attempt to steal the Steam Soldier, they will have earned Fleet's gratitude. He will certainly invite them to see all his inventions in the future (and will probably get them involved in more adventures). Once the press gets hold of the story, the player characters will earn some Renown points for foiling the plot. American characters will earn a point for Heroism and a point for Service to the Nation; foreigners will only earn a point of Heroism. MacRoss will offer a more practical reward—a 10% share in the royalties from the steam colossus, divided evenly among the adventurers.

Of course, the Japanese government will probably remember the characters in the future, as well.

Tom Fleet (Green NPC)

Tom Fleet is only 17 years old, but he already has an international reputation as an inventor. Raised in a San Francisco orphanage, he was a voracious reader and began tinkering with machinery at an early age. His first patent was for a steam turbine, now widely used in industry. At age 15, he perfected a solar boiler design which the Cunard Interplanetary Line adopted for its ether flyers. Since then, his yellow-press reputation as the "Boy Wonder of the Far West" has made him shy of publicity.

Motives: Knowledge, Adventure-some, Honest.

Appearance: Fleet is a tall, lanky adolescent, with a mop of tousled red hair and a freckled face. He almost always wears oil-spotted work clothes. Fleet tends to be bashful around strangers, particularly women.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 1 (bashing)
Agil: 4	Stealth 3, Mechanics 4 (steam)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (foraging)
Int: 6	Observation 6, Science 4 (physics), Engineering 4 (naval architecture), Gunnery 1 (machineguns)
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (horse), Piloting 1 (steam colossus)

Research Areas: Transportation 31, Biochemistry 16, Ether 6, Metallurgy 7, Precision Machinery 8, Power Production 18, Combustion 8.

Inventions: Steam colossus (Reliability 5), sleep gas (Reliability 4), solar boiler (Reliability 6), torpedo (Reliability 1), steam turbine (Reliability 6) and ether propellor (Reliability 5).

Hiroshi Kurita (Experienced NPC)

Hiroshi Kurita is the houseboy at the Harmony Ranch—he has worked there for six months. Hiroshi does the cooking, cleaning and laundry in the big house, and tends the garden. He is also a lieutenant commander in the Imperial Japanese Navy, sent to find out what new inventions Fleet is working on. Once his charade is over, Kurita will be revealed as a well-trained, highly intelligent man, extremely dedicated to his mission.

His English is actually quite good—he was educated at Cambridge.

Kurita has been brought up to view disgrace as worse than death, so he will fight to the death if his mission is at stake.

Motives: Loyal (to Japan), Aggressive, Proud.

Appearance: Kurita is small and slender, though agile and wiry. He pretends to be humble and a bit stupid, and speaks garbled broken English while undercover.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 3 (edged)
Agil: 5	Stealth 4, Mechanics 2 (steam), Marksmanship 3 (pistol), Crime 2 (lock-picking)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 4	Observation 4, Science 1 (physics)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Linguistics 2 (English, Chinese), Theatrics 2
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (horse), Leadership 1, Piloting 2 (steamships)

*In the United States or Australia, treat Kurita's Social Level as 1 (due to anti-Japanese prejudice).

Robert "Tex" MacRoss (Trained NPC)

"Tex" MacRoss hails originally from Pittsburgh, where he made a fortune in

the coal business. MacRoss encountered Fleet while in San Francisco and quickly saw the boy's astounding talent. He became Fleet's friend and patron. MacRoss handles the business side of things, leaving Fleet free to invent.

Motives: Mercantile, Steady, Boastful.

Appearance: "Tex" MacRoss is a large, cheerful man, who dresses in colorful western-style clothes. Because his hair is going thin, he wears his white 10-gallon hat everywhere, even at dinner.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agil: 3	Stealth 2, Mechanics 2 (steam), Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 3	Observation 2, Science 1 (physics)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Bargaining 5, Linguistics 1 (Spanish)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 3, Piloting 1 (sailing ship) Ω



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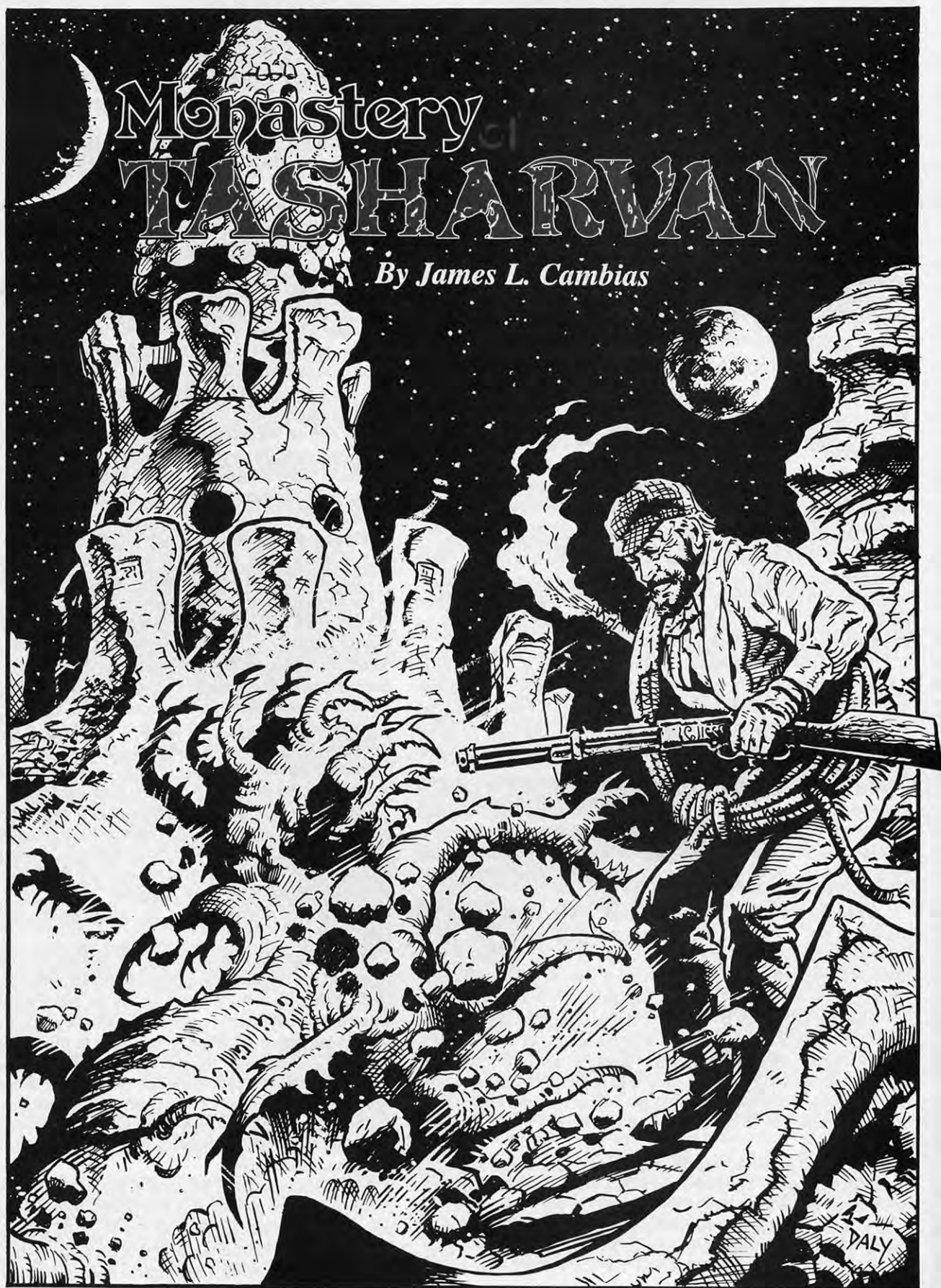
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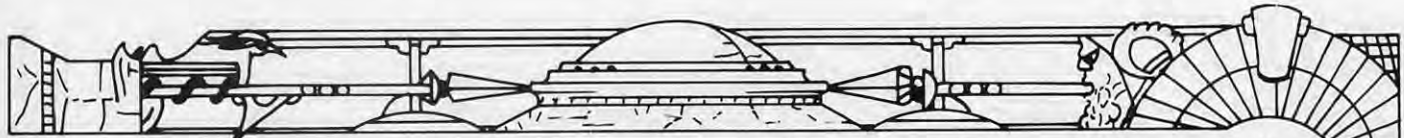
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Monastery

TASHARVAN

By James L. Cambias



When I returned to my rooms from the Explorer's Club, I told my Martian batman to pack my bags for a trip. "We're going to explore an old monastery up north. Tasharvan, it's called. Why, what's wrong, Thaneet?"

His face had taken on an expression of profound sadness. "Alas, I must seek another master. For if you go to that place, you will certainly die!"

Professor Charles Dyer approaches the PCs in Syrtis Major. He is organizing an expedition to explore the abandoned monastery of Tasharvan, which lies between Dioscuria and Cydonia. Dyer has heard that the characters are experienced explorers, and would like them to come along. The university will provide a stipend of £1 per diem and will cover all expenses.

According to chronicles in the old Imperial Library at Syrtis Major, Tasharvan was the headquarters of a sect devoted to preserving the scientific knowledge of the ancient Martians. The order flourished for centuries, surviving even after the Dioscuria-Cydonia Canal dried up, leaving its headquarters in the middle of a desert. The Seldon emperors and other princes supported the order in exchange for technical assistance and advice. About 2000 years ago, the monastery was abandoned. All the scholars at Tasharvan disappeared, and parties visiting it failed to return. Caravans following the old canal bed began avoiding the place, and stories circulated telling of ghosts and monsters. If even half the old chronicles are true, the monastery could hold scientific secrets of incalculable value.

EXPEDITION

Professor Dyer, a noted archaeologist, leads the Cambridge University expedition to the monastery of Tasharvan. Dyer is no mere treasure-hunter. He plans to survey the monastery systematically, photographing each room, cataloguing each item and proceeding downward from the top, floor by floor. The group consists of Dyer, the PCs and several Martian workers. Big Jack Slade, a big-game hunter and explorer, has been hired as a guide. The expedition will travel aboard a small steam flyer donated by the Royal Martian Geographic Society.

The expedition is equipped with a full assortment of camping gear, enough canned food for two months, surveying apparatus, digging tools, four cameras and hundreds of photographic plates. Because of the danger from High Martians and desert nomads, the expedition has two Lee-Metford rifles, two Winchester lever-action rifles, a Holland & Holland heavy double rifle and two 12-gauge shotguns. The flyer has a five-barrel Nordenfiet machinegun. The PCs may bring their own personal weapons.

From Syrtis Major, the little ship heads north along the canals to Coloe, then west to Dioscuria, where the flyer refuels, and takes on extra supplies and water. Encounters and adventures en route may be added at the referee's discretion.

TASHARVAN

The monastery of Tasharvan stands along the dead canal bed between Ismenilus and Cydon (400 miles west of Ismenilus). The region is an arid steppe, the border between the polar tundra and the vast deserts to the south.

The monastery is a looming complex, heavily fortified, carved from a granite outcrop overlooking the canal. The facility has suffered from the ravages of time. Many of the structures on top of the rock have collapsed. The main entrance at ground level is blocked by a mass of rubble from a fallen tower, so the only way in is from the top.

Entry Level

The buildings atop the monastery complex have suffered from 2000 years of exposure to the elements. What scavengers have not stolen, the wind has reduced to dust. All the rooms are empty.

Courtyard: The flyer is moored in the large open area.

Camp: Dyer will make camp atop the monastery, sheltered in one of the time-worn buildings just off the courtyard. The location affords protection from desert animals and nomads, so posting watches at night is unnecessary.

Auditorium: This large, domed building is an auditorium or temple, with fascinating and beautiful murals portraying allegorical figures or gods representing the Martian arts and sciences. Dyer sets up his working materials in this room, photographing, cataloging and packing up items for transport.

Lower Levels

The lower levels of the monastery are very well preserved. Except for the rooms exposed to the fierce winds, most of the chambers are perfectly intact. Those with noteworthy contents are described below.

Room 1: This small room is barricaded shut from the inside. Getting in requires some work with an axe. The room contains the dried bodies of six Hill Martian nomads. A Routine: Observation task roll indicates suicide as the cause of death.

Room 2: This room contains the cleaned skeletons of four Hill Martians. Their remaining weapons and equipment are identical to the six in the first room, but they seem to have died violently.

Room 3: This room apparently served the monks as a bathing-chamber for ritual purification. It still holds water—apparently the bath is spring-fed—and would make an ideal water supply for the expedition.

Room 4: This is one of five storerooms near the old kitchens. While the others hold only the corroded remnants of food, this one contains tightly sealed stone jars of chemicals. The chemicals include nitric acid, hydrochloric acid, glucose solution, distilled water, ammonia, mercury, kerosene, powdered sulfur (about 50 pounds), sodium hydroxide and hydrogen peroxide. Each requires a Routine: Chemistry roll to identify. Note that the acids, the sodium hydroxide and the peroxide can all cause damage if touched.

Room 5: This small room appears to be a temple or shrine of some sort. There is an altar in the center of the room, with an elaborate crystal and bronze case on top of it. Within the case is a strange relic—the skull of an unknown creature. If removed from the case or handled, it will crumble to dust.

Room 6: This large room appears to be a temple and is decorated with statues of four unknown Martian gods. The doors have all been barricaded, but a large hole has been made in the floor—from beneath. The room contains the picked skeletons of 12 Martians. Anyone making a Formidable: Observation roll will notice traces of powdered sulfur on the floor outside the barricaded doors.

Room 7: Of four library chambers, this is the only one that has not been completely ruined by centuries of wind. The books are all works of ancient Martian architecture and engineering, mostly concerned with the construction of cities and fortifications.

Room 8: This chamber was apparently the infirmary. It contains a set of surprisingly modern surgical instruments. There are also some handwritten medical tomes in old Martian dialect. A stone tank in one corner holds enough sleep gas to fill the room. Anyone breathing the gas must make an Impossible: Endurance roll to avoid falling asleep for an hour.

Room 9: This room appears to be an armory. It holds 24 pikes, 12 swords, 12 crossbows and 12 muskets. Only the swords and pikes are usable. The room opens onto a series of passages running alongside the entry halls, with concealed firing ports for crossbows or flame sprayers.

Room 10: This cell was the living area of the scientist who created the Thing (see page 83). It contains his notebooks, written in the obscure Khallan technical dialect. Anyone reading them gains three extra Biochemistry research dice, and discovers the Thing's vulnerability to sulfur by making a Difficult: Biology or Chemistry task roll.

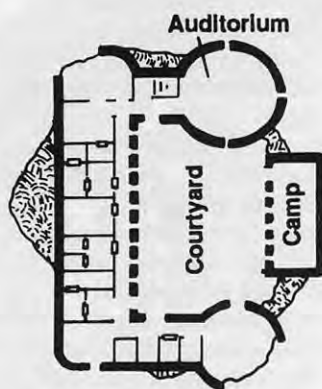
Room 11: This bedroom has been barricaded shut from within. It holds the dried mummies of three monks. Two appear to have been violently killed. They show signs of cannibalism to anyone making a Formidable: Observation roll. The third appears to be a suicide.

Room 12: This chamber's domed ceiling depicts the constellations as they were 5000 years ago. The room contains an elaborate and corroded brass orrery. Curiously, the orrery has three extra planets beyond Neptune! The chamber immediately to the north contains sacramental vestments, including a garment the PCs may recognize as a vacuum suit.

Room 13: Fed by an underground spring, the cistern was the main water supply

of the monastery. Observant individuals notice puddles of water on the floor between the edge of the pool and the door. The small room to the north is an icehouse. The Thing spends most of its time in the cistern, under the water and tucked neatly into the deepest part. In the dark room, the creature is almost impossible to spot.

Entry Level



Room 14: This chamber holds the monastery's treasures. Entry is through a small chamber with two doors, decorated with small allegorical figures of the arts and sciences. The small chamber is a trap. To get into the main treasury, characters must allow the outer door to close, then press the images of the 10 gods in the order in which they appear around the walls of the temple on the surface level. If the images are pressed in the wrong order once, nothing happens. After a second failure, the ceiling starts to descend. It requires an Impossible: Strength roll to open the outer door by force; the inner door cannot be forced open without dynamite.

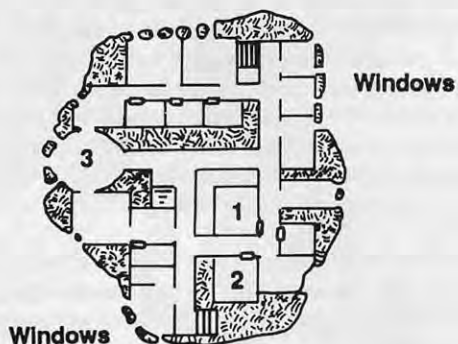
Within the treasury are gold, relics and jewels worth £1000, plus the archives of the monastery, written on metal scrolls. One of the relics is an ancient Martian ray pistol. It has a range of 1000 yards, fires four times per turn, and does three wounds per hit. Firing will explode the gun on a 2D6 roll of 2. Each shot fired increases the chance by 1. The gun will explode with a power of 2.

Room 15: The researcher using this lab was trying to build a freeze ray, and his half-finished device still occupies the center of the room. Activating it requires an Easy: Electricity or Physics roll. On a failed roll, nothing happens. On a successful roll, the machine can be turned on—in which case it immediately shorts out and destroys itself. Anyone studying the device gets one Ether research die.

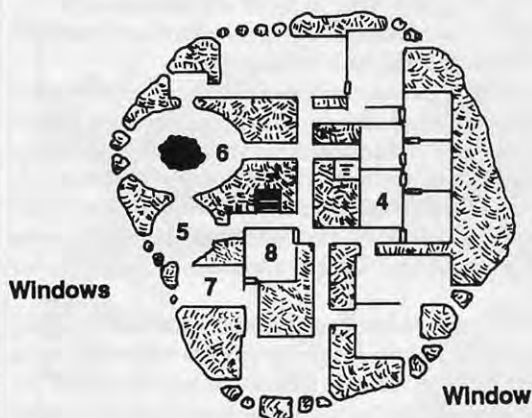
Room 16: This lab has a wall of cages containing the bones of small animals. Its purpose is unknown.

Room 17: This was the lab where the Thing was created. The room is such a shambles that nothing of value can be learned by inspection. Two skeletons

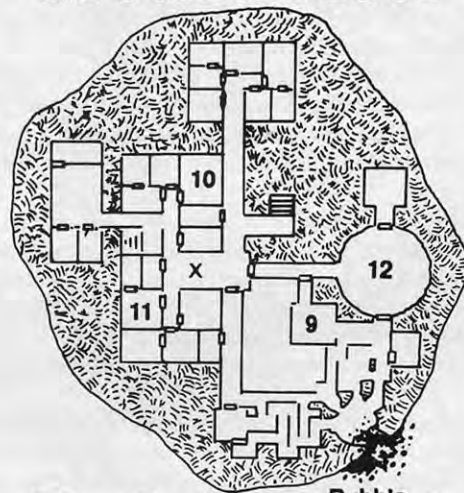
Third Floor



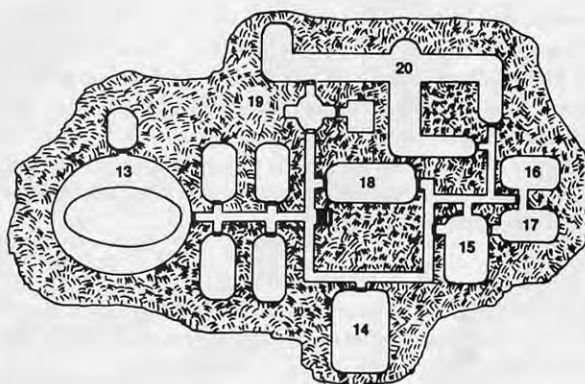
Second Floor



Ground Floor



Underground



lie amidst the rubble, completely crushed.

Room 18: The wine cellar holds over 100 bottles of Martian wines, all gone to vinegar and completely undrinkable.

Room 19: In this embalming room and funeral temple, bodies were prepared for placement in the crypt. Large jars of resin and scented herbs stand against one wall.

Room 20: For centuries, all the dead monks were mummified and placed in this crypt complex. The Thing has gone through the tomb, devouring the bodies and scattering the bones and shrouds upon the floor. Gold ornaments and jewelry worth approximately £50 are strewn amid the bones.

SLADE'S PLAN

Big Jack Slade is more interested in the pursuit of wealth than the pursuit of knowledge. While the expedition is surveying the upper floors of the monastery, he recruits two Martians for a small project of his own. One evening, after everyone has gone to bed, Slade and his henchmen slip away and go looking for valuables in the lower levels of the complex. The first anyone learns of this is when horrible screams sound from down inside the rock, awakening everyone in camp. Dyer decides to lead a search party, leaving one person behind to watch the camp.

The search party finds the crushed body of one Martian at the spot marked X on the Ground Floor map. Slade and the other Martian are nowhere to be found—in panic, they fled downward, and they are now hiding out in the chamber adjoining room 13.

Dyer and the PCs may wander through the complex before eventually encountering the creature. When it does appear, the Thing will attack suddenly, perhaps killing one or more NPC before anyone can react. Gunfire will drive it away, but only temporarily. Its regenerative powers make killing it very difficult.

DEFEATING THE THING

The party can try to rescue Big Jack and the Martian, destroy the Thing, or abandon the monastery and flee aboard the steam flyer. If the PCs have learned of the Thing's vulnerability to sulfur, then destroying it only requires finding a way to hit the monster with enough sulfur to kill it. If they do not know about its weakness, the adventurers may try to exterminate the Thing through sheer firepower. This may or may not succeed. The flyer's Nordenfelt may give the party the edge.

If all else fails, the PCs may simply decide to flee for their lives aboard the steam flyer, leaving the monastery to guard its secrets amid the desert sands. Perhaps there really are some things man was not meant to know.

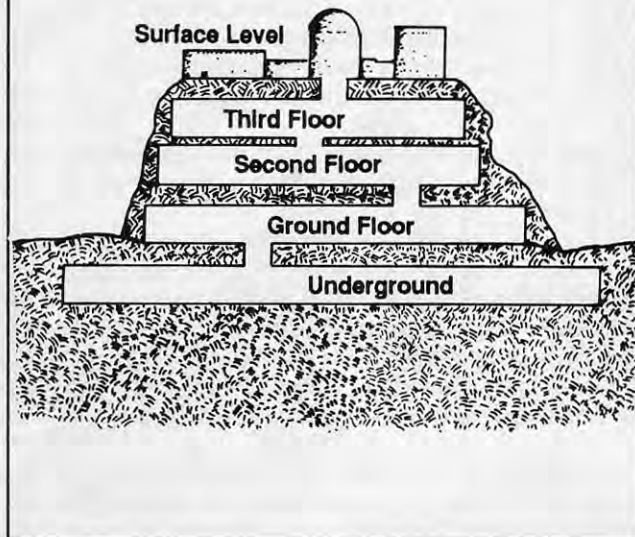
THE THING

The Thing was created thousands of years ago by one of the scholars of Tasharvan in an attempt to make artificial life. Unfortunately, he succeeded. The Thing killed all the monks or drove them away. For the past few centuries, it has lived in the monastery, remaining dormant for years at a time, preying on anything that enters the complex. The Thing appears as a horrible mass of squirming, slime-covered organs and wriggling tentacles. Dozens of huge, red eyes peer from its amorphous body. Wet, toothless mouths gape and suck on every side.

The Thing's huge body covers four hexes, and the monster has a Move of 20. It can attack by grabbing with up to four tentacles, crushing victims with its body or bludgeoning them with a large pseudopod (treat as a tail). The Thing has 16 hit points and regenerates two wounds each turn. It has an armor value of 2 against unarmed or bashing attacks. It is immune to all poisons or gases, with one exception—sulfur has a powerful corrosive effect on it. A pound of sulfur touching the Thing will cause 1D6 wounds, which cannot be regenerated.

Weapons: Tentacles (4, 4, 2, 3), Crush (1, 2, 0, 4) and Tail (1, 3, 3, 2). The Thing can also use its tentacles to grab victims, with a Strength of 7. Grabbed victims can then be crushed automatically. The Thing can secrete a thick, gluey mucus over anyone hit by a crush or tentacle attack. The mucus will halve the victim's Agility.

Side View



PROFESSOR CHARLES DYER (GREEN NPC)

A professor of archaeology at Cambridge University, Dyer is rapidly making a name for himself as a leader in the field. Rejecting the older school of flamboyant, treasure-hunting archaeologists, Dyer has pioneered the use of careful, methodical techniques in excavating ancient sites. Despite his great intellect and scientific expertise, he can be somewhat gullible.

Motives: Knowledge, Careful.

Appearance: Dyer is a tall, slender, ascetic-looking man. He is naturally quiet and reveals little about himself. He seldom gets excited or upset.

AttributeSkills

Str:	2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 1 (edged)
Agil:	2	Stealth 1
End:	4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mapping), Marksmanship 1 (rifle)
Int:	6	Observation 7, Science 6 (archaeology), Engineering 2 (earthworks)
Chr:	3	Eloquence 2, Linguistics 4 (French, Khallan, Parhooni, Umbran)
Soc:	4	Riding 3 (horse), Pilot 1 (steam flyer)

BIG JACK SLADE (TRAINED NPC)

Big Jack Slade is an Australian who came to Mars seeking wealth and excitement. He makes a marginal living by hunting rare animals and serving as a guide. Slade dreams of striking it rich and retiring to a life of luxury. He seldom worries about trifles like the law, and he keeps his word only when he has to.

Motives: Greedy, Liar.

Appearance: Slade is a huge man, surprisingly nimble for his size. He is always very hearty and friendly—and is quick to ask favors of new-found friends. Slade is never without his large hunting knife and elephant gun.

AttributeSkills

Str:	5	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat 3 (edged)
Agil:	5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 4 (rifle), Crime 1 (forgery)
End:	5	Wilderness Travel 6 (foraging), Fieldcraft 3, Tracking 3, Swimming 1
Int:	1	
Chr:	3	Eloquence 2, Linguistics 2 (Koline, Umbran)
Soc:	2	Riding 1 (horse), Piloting 1 (steam flyer), Leadership 1 Ω

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CHALLENGE 63

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Dark Angel of the Night

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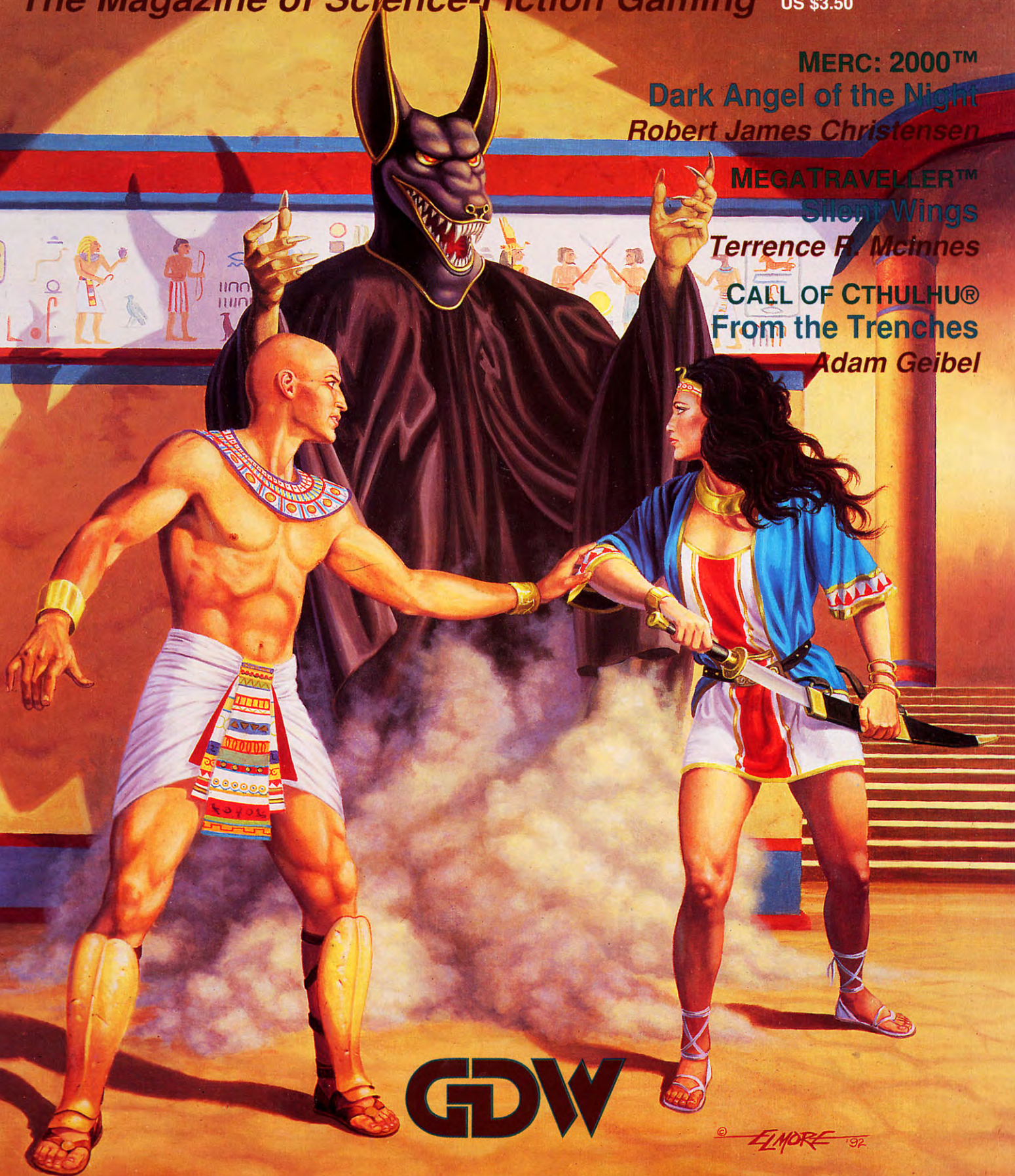
Silent Wings

Terrence R. McInnes

CALL OF CTHULHU®

From the Trenches

Adam Geibel





I was reading the Martian Gazette in the lounge of the Explorers' Club at Syrtis Major when Blackstone found me.

"Crispin, you ink-stained wretch! Just the man I was looking for!"

"Eh? Come to repay that fiver I lent you?"

He laughed at that. "No, the dear old government's sending me off into the desert. Seems the Hill Martians up near Gorovaan have been misbehaving—raiding caravans and such. Evidently their medicine man's been telling them some mumbo-jumbo about being invulnerable to our bullets. I'm being sent to quiet them down. Care to come along and represent the press?"

"I think I might. How many men are you taking?"

"Just one."

"One man?! What is he—a miracle-worker?"

"You might say that, yes."

The Plakteshaan, one of the nomadic tribes of the Isidis desert, recently started attacking caravans and outlying settlements in the northern part of the British colony on Mars. From captives it has been learned that the tribe's shaman claims his magic will bring victory for the Hill Martians and prevent the British from retaliating.

Because of the Oenotrian War, the British government lacks the necessary troops to mount a full-scale punitive expedition. Instead, the governor-general has devised an ingenious plan. He is sending a noted stage magician, The Great Wheldrake, to show the Plakteshaan that British magic is superior to their shaman's tricks.

Naturally, Wheldrake needs guides, guards and assistants, so the governor-general is asking the PCs to accompany the expedition. In addition to Wheldrake and the PCs, the government is sending half-dozen

MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR

By James L. Cambias

cavalrymen as protection. Any reasonable supplies required by the characters can be provided. A package of gifts for the tribal leaders, worth £100, is being sent by the government. The entire party will be mounted on gashants, with remounts and pack animals. Characters who insist on being paid will receive £500 if the mission succeeds.

The expedition will be under the command of whichever PC has the highest military rank.

If no PCs are officers, then Blackstone will be in charge. The six cavalrymen are Martians equipped with modern weapons, mounted on gashants; they are under Blackstone's command.

JOURNEY NORTH

The expedition can travel by canal boat from Syrtis Major to Gorovaan, then set out overland to the east. There will be no trouble within British territory, and the party can stock up on last-minute supplies in Gorovaan.

The hill country east of Gorovaan is not entirely safe. The referee should roll normally for encounters. Nomad encounters are with members of friendly tribes, who respect British power and will not molest the characters. Bandit encounters indicate contact with the Plakteshaan tribe. If the expedition reaches the desert, all nomad encounters will be with the Plakteshaan.

During the journey, the PCs have ample opportunity to get acquainted with The Great Wheldrake and the other members of the expedition. If any PCs are women, Wheldrake will invite the ladies to act as his assistants during the performance for the Hill Martians. Otherwise, he will recruit the character with the highest combined Agility and Intellect.

PLAKTESHAAN

The Plakteshaan are a tribe of Hill Martians who inhabit the Isidis desert east of Gorovaan. The tribesmen live by herding half-wild gashants, hunting, trapping and occasionally raiding settled communities. They are not British subjects, but until recently they did not attack the colony for fear of reprisals. The tribe speaks the Nepenthi dialect, and many members understand Koline and Parhooni.

Making Contact: First contact with the Plakteshaan will be with a band of 10 to 15 warriors (depending on the size of the expedition). They are armed with muskets and sabers, and are mounted on gashants. The leader of the band is Kakeer, the son of the tribe's chieftain. He and his warriors will try to intimidate the party, threatening the group and demanding exorbitant tribute. The PCs will have to negotiate carefully with Kakeer in order to get safe passage to the tribe's encampment; this is a formidable task of Bargaining or Eloquence. The PCs should remember that they are on a diplomatic

mission—if a fight breaks out, they have probably failed.

Tribal Camp: The Plakteshaan camp is a group of large leather tents and wagons, surrounded by herds of gashants. In all, there are 230 people in the camp: 90 men, 100 women, and 40 children. All the men are warriors—when a tribesman can no longer fight, he wanders off into the desert to die. At any given time, there are 10 to 20 men out watching the herds.

The tents are arranged in a circle, and in the center is the chief's pavilion. A crowd of onlookers will gather as the expedition is escorted through the camp to the chief. Some of the warriors will brandish their weapons and shout insults at the foreigners.

Meeting the Chief: Shreegdad, the leader of the tribe, will meet the party in his tent. If there has been no trouble, he will be reasonably polite. If the PCs have any gifts to give him, Shreegdad will be more friendly and will place the characters under his protection while in the camp. He will place a tent at the disposal of the party and invite the visitors to a feast that evening.

FEAST

The feast is held outdoors, in the center of the camp. Some young gashants are slaughtered and roasted, and the tribe members hack off pieces with their knives to gnaw on. The meat is accompanied by a strong home-brewed wine and a few desert plants. The young warriors of the tribe gather around the gashants as they are killed, to drink the fresh blood. Any PC who decides to join them will gain respect in the eyes of the Plakteshaan.

Shaman's Curse:

The tribal shaman, Magadozriid, will be at the feast. He is easily recognizable by his ragged wool robe festooned with fetishes and charms. During the feast, he will suddenly stand before Wheldrake and point a carved bone at the magician, saying, "You have dared to challenge me with your puny magics, Red Man, and you will fail. Dine well, for you will not live to dine again." A hush falls over the company as the shaman stalks away.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

The feast will last long into the night. As the PCs and Wheldrake prepare to bed down for the night, the magician will suddenly complain that he is feeling sick. The sickness gets worse until he suddenly passes out. A Routine: Medicine or Biology skill roll will indicate that Wheldrake has been poisoned! A Difficult: Medicine, Biology or Chemistry skill roll is needed to save his life.

Even if the PCs are able to save Wheldrake's life, the poison will still weaken him. He can barely sit up—performing magic is out of the question. Wheldrake will not recover from the poison for at least a week.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

The party must find a way to go through with the magic show; to admit defeat would immeasurably strengthen the shaman's prestige. One of the PCs must take over as magician. If Wheldrake is still alive, he can tell the characters how to use some of his illusions; otherwise, they must improvise a magic show using their own skills.

Wheldrake's Illusions: Wheldrake has two pieces of stage apparatus for magic illusions. One is a coffin, to be used in the illusion of sawing a person in half. The other is a cabinet used to make people disappear. Both devices require a Difficult: Agility roll on the part of the magician's assistant, as both tricks involve the subject contorting himself to fit into a small space.

Improvised Magic: PCs may be able to

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improvise a magic show using their skills. The referee should encourage the players to come up with their own ideas for tricks. Some suggestions follow: Pickpocket skill allows the character to palm small items and make them appear or disappear. Lockpicking can be used in an escape routine. Observation can be employed to do "psychic" readings of individuals, by deducing things from their appearance. Machinist skill will let the characters figure out how to use Wheldrake's stage equipment if he is incapacitated. Characters with Explosives or Chemistry can create smoke and flash powders; chemists can also do tricks based on color changes and chemical reactions.

The effectiveness of the act depends as much on a magician's stage presence as on the tricks. The performer's Eloquence will influence the audience's reception of the show. Theatrics skill allows the magician to misdirect the audience's attention during tricks and helps him increase the effectiveness of all the illusions.

Medical skill can enable the magician to perform "miraculous cures" of ailments using modern medical techniques. Similarly, any small invention can be used to produce startling effects. One thing which will not impress the Hill Martians is any demonstration involving liftwood or other flying machines; flying is old hat to Martians.

SHAMAN'S ILLUSIONS

Magadozriid can put on a fairly impressive magic show himself. The referee should encourage the players to figure out how the shaman's tricks are performed and try to duplicate them to show there is nothing he can do that the British cannot.

Possession by Spirits: Magadozriid becomes possessed by the ghosts of tribal ancestors. He shakes, froths at the mouth and speaks in strange voices, requiring a Formidable: Theatrics roll and a good knowledge of tribal history. This is one case where the PCs probably cannot beat Magadozriid. It would require an Impossible skill roll in both Archaeology and speaking Nepenthi for a PC to be convincingly "possessed."

Magical Healing: The shaman does much magical medicine, mainly consisting of meaningless passes and dances. However, he does do a very impressive magical surgery routine in which he seemingly plunges his hand into the patient's body and removes chunks of bloody tissue, without breaking the skin. Actually, he is using sleight of hand (Pickpocket skill) to conceal raw gashant meat in his hand. A PC could do the same.

Other Tricks: Magadozriid has a number of other minor tricks, including making a small creature disappear, producing items from the air by sleight of hand and picking pockets. He is very shrewd and adaptable, and will plan his tricks for maximum effect.

AFTER THE SHOW

The referee should let the players make up their own magic show and perform it, evaluating its effectiveness as follows: For each successful trick, give the PCs 1 point. For each failed trick, subtract 2 points. For a successful Eloquence or Theatrics roll for the entire performance, give 1 additional point. For each trick of Magadozriid's that the characters can duplicate, give 2 points. For each trick they cannot duplicate, subtract 1 point. And for each illusion of theirs that Magadozriid can copy, subtract 2 points. The resulting number is the die roll needed for success. If the PCs make the roll, the Plakteshaan will be sufficiently impressed by British magic to stop their raids. If the PCs fail, they must make a second roll to avoid being attacked by the tribe.

THE GREAT WHELDRAKE (GREEN NPC)

The Great Wheldrake (his real name is Alf Biggle) is a fairly good stage magician. He maintains that his skill is unequalled on three planets and six continents. Wheldrake is always interested in making money, but he can be swayed by appeals to his considerable vanity.

Att.	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 1 (bashing)
Agil: 6	Stealth 5, Crime 5 (lockpicking), Mechanics 1 (machinist)
End: 1	
Int: 4	Observation 3
Chr: 5	Eloquence 6, Theatrics 4, Linguistics 3 (French, Parhooni, Koline)
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (horse), Leadership 1

Motives: Boastful, Mercantile.

Appearance: The Great Wheldrake is a tall, distinguished-looking man with dark hair and flashing eyes. He dresses well and is always well-groomed. Nevertheless, there is always a fraudulent look about him.

CAPT. BLACKSTONE (EXPERIENCED NPC)

Captain Reginald Blackstone is a young man of good family, who has become a competent and well-respected officer in his years on Mars. He leads a troop of Martian cavalry and has become quite devoted to his men—and they to him. Though perhaps not as intelligent as some officers, Blackstone is brave and devoted to his work.

Att.	Skills
Str: 5	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat 3 (edged)
Agil: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 3 (pistol)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 3 (mapping), Fieldcraft 1
Int: 3	Observation 3

Chr: 3 Eloquence 2, Linguistics 2 (Parhooni, Koline)
Soc: 4 Riding 4 (horse), Leadership 2

Motives: Responsible, Loyal.

Appearance: Blackstone is a large, muscular man with elaborate whiskers. His uniform and equipment are in perfect order.

MAGADOZRIID (GREEN NPC)

Magadozriid is the shaman and healer for the Plakteshaan tribe. His magical powers are tricks, used to influence the tribe and enrich himself. An intelligent man, he realized that the Plakteshaan could raid the rich British colony during the war without opposition. He will do everything in his power to defeat the PCs. He speaks only Nepenthi.

Att.	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 1 (edged)
Agil: 5	Stealth 4, Crime 5 (pickpocket), Marksmanship 1 (bow)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 2 (foraging)
Int: 6	Observation 6, Science 1 (biology)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Theatrics 3
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (gashant), Medicine 3

Motives: Ruthless, Arrogant.

Appearance: Magadozriid is an old, bent Martian with stringy gray hair and a tangled beard. He dresses in a bizarre assortment of ragged robes, animal skins and scraps of cloth, all festooned with charms and magical symbols. But his gaze is sharp and alert, missing nothing.

SHREEGDAD (VETERAN NPC)

Shreegdad is the chief of the Plakteshaan. He is a mighty warrior and a good leader in battle, but is only an average administrator. He is no match for Magadozriid's cleverness and fears the shaman's occult powers. Like all Hill Martians, he has a strong belief in fairness and honesty, and he will react furiously if he learns he has been tricked or lied to. His native language is Nepenthi.

Att.	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 4 (polearm)
Agil: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 1 (bow)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 3 (foraging), Fieldcraft 2
Int: 3	Observation 2
Chr: 3	Eloquence 3, Linguistics 1 (Koline)
Soc: 6	Riding 6 (gashant), Leadership 4

Motives: Proud, Aggressive.

Appearance: Shreegdad is very dignified and impressive-looking. He is quite strong for a Martian and is his tribe's greatest warrior. The chief wears the skin of a steppe tiger as a badge of office. Ω

CHALLENGE 64

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The PCs learn that a local fortress villa has a krolik pen. Krolik meat is a rare delicacy, valuable on the black market of those wishing to impress their dinner guests (or those simply curious to taste it). If the PCs can break in, steal some kroliks and get out, they can sell the meat on the black market for a tidy sum—say, 10/— per krolik.

APPROACH

The PCs must organize their approach to the villa, ideally under the cover of darkness. The journey will not be too difficult as the villa is only a mile or so from the outskirts of the Canal Martian city where the PCs are currently based.

The villa stands on a low hill a few hundred yards from a main canal. If desired, the referee can roll for encounters along the way using the standard **Space: 1889** encounter tables.

RETRIEVAL

The PCs must also organize their own escape route. This leg of the trip will be more difficult than the approach, as the villa guards will probably be in pursuit. Additionally, the PCs may be encumbered with a number of wildly thrashing kroliks. Again, the referee may roll for encounters, if desired.

MAP DESCRIPTION

The map shows the standard Martian fortress villa from **Space: 1889** in suitable surroundings. It can be located on the outskirts of any convenient Martian city, depending on where the PCs are currently located.

The krolik run is in the courtyard, between the northeastern gun tower and the main gate.

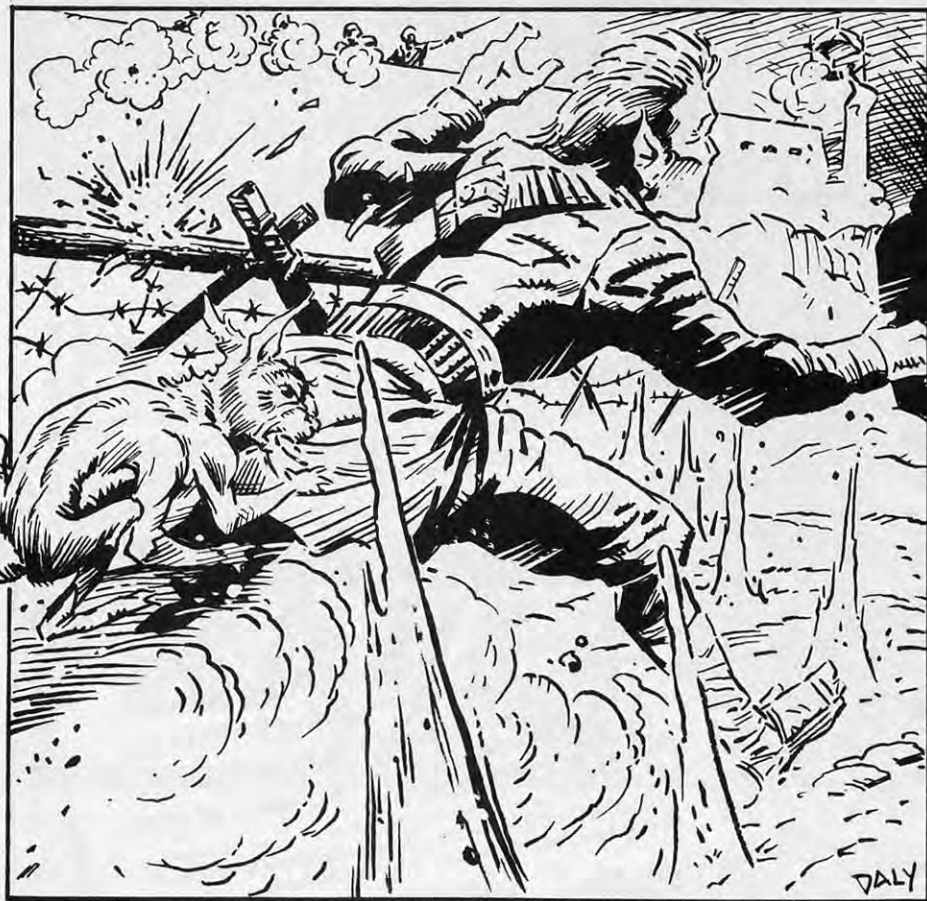
REFEREEING THE SCENARIO

Kroliks are very similar to Earth rabbits, and the referee should use rabbits as a model for answering any questions raised by the PCs on krolik behavior. However, these creatures have six legs and much shorter ears.

Detailed statistics are not really necessary, but the animals weigh about 10 pounds each.

Once the PCs are in the pen, catching a krolik is a Difficult: Agility task which takes a character's complete attention for one combat round.

Unless the beast is immediately killed (any PC with an edged weapon can do this simply by stating so), its frantic at-



tempts to escape make it count as 40 pounds of weight for encumbrance purposes.

The PCs can make their getaway wrestling with live krolleks (and the scenario is much funnier if they do), but those of a practical frame of mind will despatch the animals first.

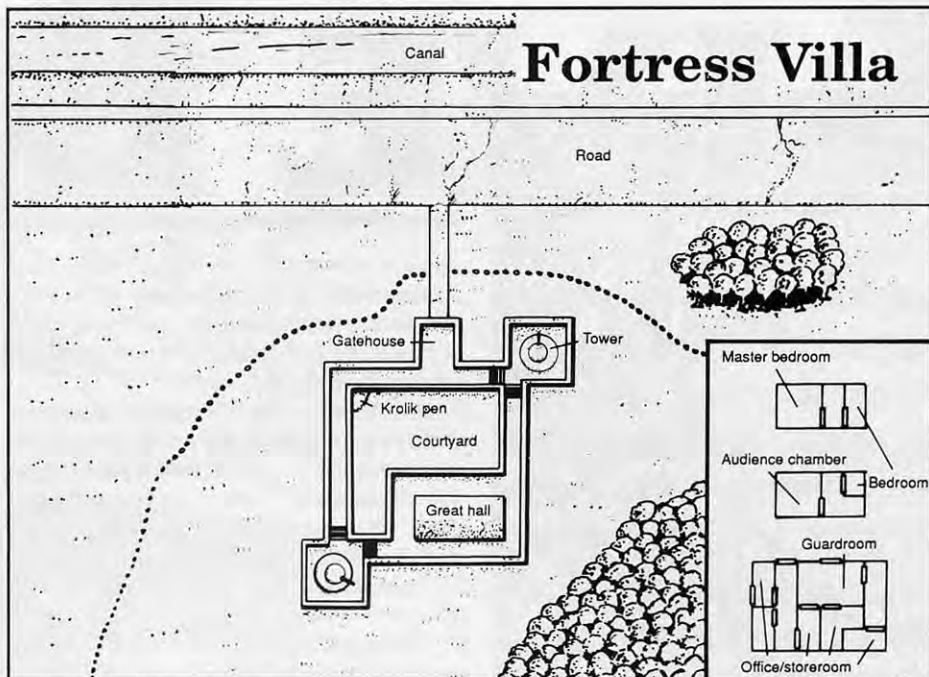
Krolleks can (and will) bite and scratch furiously. But while these assaults are painful, they do only superficial damage—not enough to count in game terms.

NPCS

Kaashneek is the ideal NPC to alert PCs to this business opportunity. His stats and description can be found in **Space: 1889** on page 42.

For those running the second scenario in other game systems—a TL4 **Mega-Traveller** world springs to mind as a viable alternative setting—Kaashneek is a cheerful, streetwise orphan from the local slums with no taste in clothing and a weakness for crazy get-rich-quick schemes. He has continually pestered the PCs until they agreed to take him on as a local guide or party mascot, and has proven valuable for his contacts in the local underworld.

For other NPCs, use the human stock NPC characteristics in the **Space: 1889** quick reference charts. The Martians en-



countered are similar enough not to need separate statistics.

ALTERNATIVES AND VARIANTS

If the PCs are too honorable to undertake this adventure as thieves, they can be invited to dinner at the villa on the night that a band of NPC Canal Martians attempt to steal the krollek. Their host may

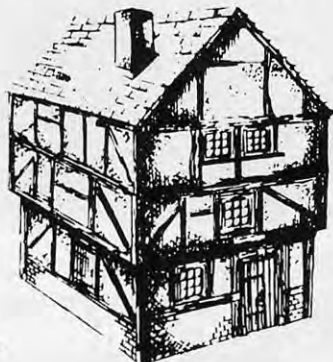
ask the PCs to help round up krolleks set loose by the thieves.

If you can't resist the idea of your PCs fighting wriggling krolleks all the way home (I couldn't), advise them that their buyer wants the krolleks alive. Truly sadistic referees will have the krolleks make loud embarrassing cries at inopportune moments (e.g., when the PCs are sneaking back into town with "nothing to declare"). Ω

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MOON OF MADNESS

BY JAMES L. CAMBIAS

Hartmann's rapid breathing resounded inside the vacuum suit helmet as he fled across the barren landscape. Behind him, he could see his pursuers emerging from the cave. Ahead lay the ether flyer—and safety. But when he finally reached the ship, he could see the airlock gaping open, the heavy door torn from its hinges. A shadow blocked the sunlight. Hartmann turned, drawing his pistol. "You'll pay for this!" he screamed, firing wildly. But neither words nor bullets had any effect.

Four weeks ago, an Austro-German expedition landed on Phobos, using a new rocket motor. The explorers were only supposed to remain on Phobos for two weeks. They are now a fortnight overdue, and the Germans and Austrians are worried. Emperor Franz Josef is offering a reward of £5000 for their rescue. The English have a ship at Syrtis Major which can land on Phobos, and they are sending it to learn what happened to the group. Seasoned adventurers are needed.





RESCUE PARTY

The PCs will be travelling aboard the Royal Navy's 100-ton ether flyer *H.M.S. Bellona*. The *Bellona* is outfitted with biochemistry and geology laboratories, and carries a three-pound Hotchkiss rotating cannon. *Bellona* can carry up to eight passengers, with a cargo capacity of 10 tons. Airspeed is 6, and interplanetary speed is 3. The *Bellona* is fitted with a Scott-Ridley rocket motor, which allows landings on airless bodies the size of Luna or smaller. The commander is Captain Horatio Cornett.

The ether flyer is fully stocked with a month's supply of preserved food, climbing equipment, ropes and other gear which explorers might need. The PCs must supply their own weapons, plus any unusual items they want to bring along. The ship carries 12 experimental vacuum suits; these are self-contained suits with a four-hour oxygen supply.

TRAVEL TO PHOBOS

The ascent to orbit is a fairly routine trip. The *Bellona* climbs to the upper atmosphere using her liftwood panels, then the ether propeller accelerates her to orbital velocity. Once that is done, the ship must match orbits with Phobos. This is a Difficult task of Piloting. If any PCs have a higher skill than Captain Cornett, he will gladly turn the helm over to the expert.

As the *Bellona* maneuvers near the moon, the PCs will be able to get a good look at Phobos. It is roughly potato-shaped, about 17 miles long by 13 miles wide. At one end gapes the enormous pit of Stickney Crater, six miles across. The *Kaiserin Viktoria* was supposed to land at the opposite end of Phobos, and it is there that the rescue mission will search.

Landing: The really tricky part of the trip is the landing on Phobos. The Scott-Ridley rocket motor is a new and delicate device. Landing with it is a Formidable task of Piloting skill. If the roll fails, the ship crashes—see the Turbulence/Meteor Damage Table in the rulebook to determine what happens.

Exploring Phobos: Once the *Bellona* has landed, the PCs will probably want to go exploring. The extremely low gravity of Phobos makes getting around very difficult. Even in their vacuum suits, the PCs can move in huge leaps, but they must make Routine Agility rolls to avoid smashing into rocks or landing badly. On a failed roll, characters suffer one wound.

The small size of the moon also means it is very easy to get out of sight of the ship—the horizon is only 200 yards

away. Characters who do not mark their way will get lost unless they make a Difficult roll of Mapping or Intellect.

LOST EXPEDITION

The *Kaiserin Viktoria* is only a mile or so away from the *Bellona*'s landing spot. The ship's large gasbag is deflated and stowed neatly on top. From a distance, it looks perfectly intact. But when the rescuers approach, they will see that something terrible has happened. A dead man in a vacuum suit lies at the base of the gangway; his nametag identifies him as Ernst Hartmann. The airtight doors have been torn open, and the interior of the ether flyer is cold and airless.

Within, the ship is severely damaged. The bodies of six crewmembers lie frozen and stiff. Strangely, much of the cargo and some of the ship's furnishings are missing. The laboratory and the common room have been stripped clean. Two of the crew cannot be found—Anton Vorstein and Elsie Radek. Even their personal belongings and the furniture from their cabins have been removed from the *Kaiserin Viktoria*.

The door is locked from the outside, and a robot is always on guard.

Journal: A thorough search of the ship will uncover Captain Sigmund Prot's journal in his cabin. The last entry is dated eight days after the expedition landed:

"Monday. Today we discovered a cave at the bottom of the crater, two kilometers north of the landing site. Vorstein, Hartmann and Fraulein Radek will explore it in search of geological specimens. I still consider it unwise for a woman to go venturing into unknown territory, but Elsie insists."

CAVE

If the PCs find Prot's journal, they may want to investigate the cave he mentions. It lies at the bottom of a small crater north of the landing site. On a Routine Intelligence roll, a PC will notice that the cave is perfectly circular—very unusual for a natural formation. A Difficult Observation or Tracking roll will reveal footprints around the entrance—

far more than just a few explorers would make. They are nearly twice the size of human tracks.

Descending into the cave is fairly easy in the low gravity. The shaft ends about 10 yards down, and there is a metal door set in one wall. A lever set in the center of the door will open it, but moving the lever is a Formidable task of Strength (up to two characters may combine their Strengths for the task).

COMPLEX

A series of large rooms and tunnels have been carved beneath the surface of Phobos by the ancient Martians. All the chambers are lit by glowing panels set in the ceilings. Unless specified, all doors are unlocked. Opening a locked door requires an Impossible Lockpicking skill roll or an Impossible Strength task.

Room A: This room contains some old Martian equipment, including six vacuum suits. There are also two suits from the *Kaiserin Viktoria*—Anton Vorstein's and Elsie Radek's. An airtight connects to the cave.

Room B: If Vorstein takes any PCs prisoner, they will be confined here. The door is locked from the outside, and a robot will be on guard. There are three cots in the room.

Room C: Vorstein uses this room as his living quarters. Many of the furnishings from the ship (including the pipe organ) have been set up here.

Room D: Vorstein sleeps here, and the room contains all his personal effects.

Room E: This room has been set up as living quarters for Elsie Radek. She is not allowed to leave without a robot escort. The door is locked from the outside, and a robot is always on guard.

Room G: This chamber contains the life-support equipment for the complex, including a glass tank filled with green plants.

Room H: This spherical room contains the power plant that runs the complex. Its workings are mysterious. A large crystal sits in a metal framework, surrounded by cables and copper grids. This contraption is the source of the broadcast power which supplies the robots—it requires a Formidable Electricity or Physics skill roll to recognize its function. Characters who study the plant for a full day and make a Formidable Intellect roll can gain an extra research die in Power Production. The door to this room is locked.

Room I: This is Vorstein's laboratory. Several long tables hold an array of complicated scientific apparatus, both Terran and Martian. Characters with

sufficient Ether knowledge may recognize a lightning cannon and a weather control ray. Those with Combustion knowledge will see a sample of detonite. At one end is the cerebral amplifier. Vorstein works here; when he is gone, the door is locked.

Room J: This room holds all the robots not in use, plus the machine to control them. Vorstein has programmed the robots to respond to a small device which he carries, and the programming can only be overridden by the control machine. Operating it is an Impossible task of Intellect. The door to this room is locked.

MEETING VORSTEIN

Vorstein will be aware of anyone entering the complex—teltales in the laboratory show when the airlock is in use. He will allow intruders to wander about for a while, then will send five robots to disarm them and bring them to him. If the PCs manage to damage a robot, two others will be sent to replace it. The robots will confiscate all guns, but will leave swords and knives.

"Greetings, my friends," Vorstein will address visitors. "I trust you were not alarmed by my servants. They will now show you to your quarters. I request you to dine with me in an hour; at that time I will answer all your questions."

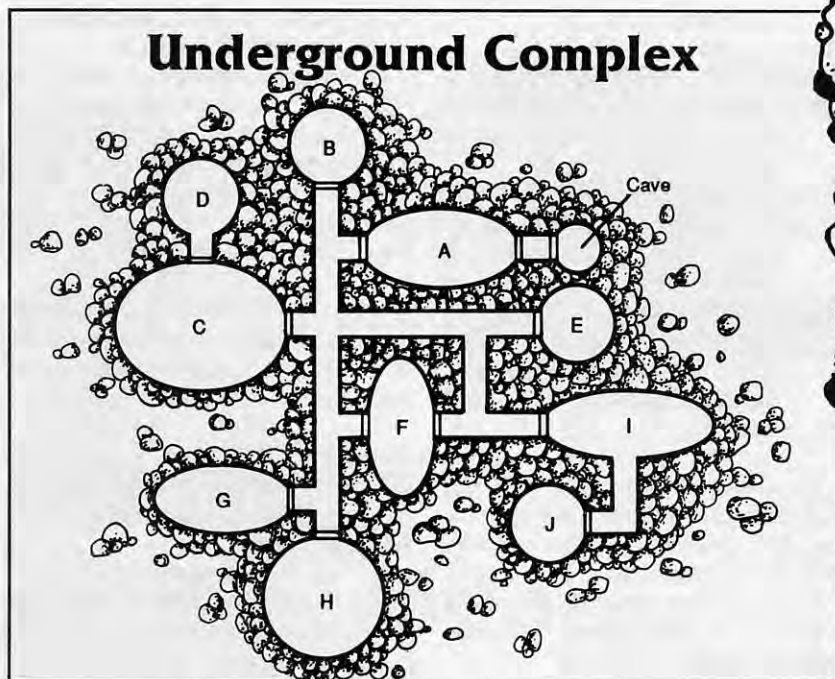
The robots will lead the PCs to Room B and lock them in. If the characters try to fight the robots, they will learn quickly that it is better to cooperate.

Dinner with the Doctor: After an hour, the robots will release the PCs and lead them to Vorstein's living quarters, where a meal has been prepared from supplies removed from the ether flyer. Vorstein presides at the head of the table, and Elsie Radek sits beside him. Each guest has a robot guard positioned behind his chair.

"I'm so glad you could attend," beams Vorstein. "But now to business: I require your ether flyer. The *Kaiserin Viktoria* was damaged, and repairs would take an inconveniently long time. Since I deduce you are not the entire crew, it will be necessary to persuade those on-board your ship to cooperate with me. So I am afraid you must remain here as hostages. I do apologize for the inconvenience." With that, he calmly starts to eat.

The characters cannot talk Vorstein out of his plan, and he will ignore any questions about why he needs the ship. When the meal is done, he will go to the lab, leaving the PCs with Elsie and the robots.

Elsie's Story: Elsie Radek can tell



the adventurers what happened. She explored the cave along with Vorstein and Hartmann, and they managed to open the airlock and enter the complex. In the laboratory, Vorstein activated a mysterious device which affected his brain. It gave him a vastly increased intellect, but drove him mad. He quickly learned to operate the ancient machinery and activated the robots. When Hartmann tried to warn the others, Vorstein sent the robots to stop him. Since then he has kept Elsie in the complex, promising to make her his consort when he becomes ruler of the Solar System. He has inventions which could make him incredibly powerful—weather control rays, lightning cannons and other devices. Civilization is in danger.

DEFEATING VORSTEIN

After hearing Elsie Radek's story, the PCs will probably want to stop Vorstein. Though mad, he is still incredibly intelligent, and the robots obey him alone. The referee should encourage the players to devise their own plans. Here are some possibilities.

A Woman's Touch: Despite all the changes he has been through, Vorstein is still a man. If Elsie Radek (or a comely female PC) shows a romantic interest in him, he might let his guard down. The others might then get the robot control device away from him.

Covert Operations: If any of the PCs are skilled at Stealth and Lock-picking, it might be possible to reach the robot control room, lab or power plant. At the control room, the robots can be reprogrammed to ignore Vorstein's con-

trol device. At the power plant, the energy broadcaster can be shut off. In the lab are several advanced weapons which could destroy the robots.

Selling Out: Adventurers who are good at Theatrics might convince Vorstein that they wish to join him. This might be used to gain access to one of the sensitive areas described above.

Escape: The characters may simply try to get out of the complex. If they succeed, Vorstein will send the robots after them, resulting in a tense chase across the surface of Phobos. The *Bellona's* Hotchkiss cannon can probably stop the robots, but an attack on the complex must face Vorstein's lightning cannon and detonite.

Waiting: Though the PCs don't know it, the cerebral amplifier's effect is only temporary. Vorstein's increased intelligence will wear off in another week; this may provide the adventurers with an opportunity.

CEREBRAL AMPLIFIER

The cerebral amplifier is a large device consisting of a metal chair topped by a crystal and copper dome. Thick cables lead to large banks of equipment surrounding the chair. When used, the device raises a character's Intellect by 1D6. The effect lasts a month. If it is used by a non-Martian, there is a -2 penalty to the reliability roll. If a character whose INT has already been raised tries to increase it still further, there is an additional -2 penalty. The amplifier has a base reliability of 4.

On a failed reliability roll, there are several possible side effects (roll 1D6 minus modified reliability):



SIDE EFFECTS

Roll	Result
0-	No effect. Intelligence is not raised.
1	Brain damage. Intelligence is reduced by 1D6.
2	Amnesia. Intelligence is raised, but patient's memory is erased.
3	Injury. Intelligence is raised, but patient suffers 1D6 wounds.
4	Insanity. Intelligence is raised, but patient becomes insane.
5+	Serious injury. Intelligence is raised, but patient suffers 2D6 wounds.

Recovery from physical injuries and brain damage takes place at the normal rate. Amnesia wears off after a month. Insanity is permanent.

Inventing a cerebral amplifier requires a Biochemistry knowledge of 36; the reliability modifier is 5.

ROBOTS

The ancient Martians left 10 robots in the complex to maintain it until the builders return. These are highly advanced humanoid machines, far more sophisticated than the clumsy mechanical men some inventors have constructed.

The robots have Strength 8 and Agility 4. They can take 14 wounds before being disabled and have Armor Value 3. In combat, they have an effective Fisticuffs skill of 6.

Controls: The robots are controlled by two devices—the large control machine in Room K and a small unit which Vorstein wears on his wrist. The portable device allows him to monitor and command all the robots, wherever they are in the complex.

The robots can remember up to three commands at once.

Usually one command is related to operating the complex, such as "monitor and maintain the power plant." Vorstein has established the second command as "obey commands given by the wearer of the portable control device." The third slot is left for orders from Vorstein, such as "disarm the intruders in the complex and bring them to me."

The robots are fairly intelligent, and will ask for clarification of contradictory or confusing orders. They understand only the ancient Martian dialect of Khallan.

Stations: At any given time, one robot is in Room H, one is in Room G, one is guarding Elsie in Room E, and two are with Vorstein, either in the lab or guarding him while he sleeps. The remaining five will be in Room K.

CAPTAIN HORATIO CORNETT (Trained NPC)

Captain Cornett is a well-respected Royal Navy officer who has led several exploring missions. He was with one of the first expeditions to Mercury and commanded one of the missions to the asteroid belt. Now he has been given the *Bellona* to survey the moons of Mars.

He is not very congenial, but keeps a distance between himself and those he commands to compensate for the fact that he is naturally shy.

Attribute Skills

Str:	2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agil:	3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 3 (rifle)
End:	5	Wilderness Travel 6 (mapping), Fieldcraft 1, Swimming 1
Int:	4	Observation 4, Science 1 (physics)
Chr:	2	Eloquence 1, Linguistics 2 (English, Parhooni, Koline)
Soc:	5	Riding 4 (horse), Leadership 3, Pilot 4 (ether flyer)

Motives: Adventuresome, Proud, Frugal.

Appearance: Cornett is a tall, lanky fellow with a full beard. His uniform is old, but always neatly mended and pressed.

These are highly advanced humanoid machines.

ANTON VORSTEIN (Novice NPC)

Vorstein was the most brilliant inventor in Austria. His rocket motor made the Phobos expedition possible. But his insatiable curiosity led to tragedy when he tried out the cerebral amplifier.

Now he is much more intelligent than normal humans, but he is totally insane. He plans to make himself ruler of the Solar System and hopes to create a new form of superintelligent humans. He has always been attracted to Elsie Radek and now plans to make her his queen.

Attribute Skills

Str:	2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Agil:	6	Stealth 5, Mechanics 2 (steam)
End:	3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mapping)
Int:	10	Observation 9, Science 6 (physics), Engineering 4 (naval architecture)
Chr:	1	Linguistics 3 (English, German, Khallan)
Soc:	4	Riding 3 (horse), Pilot 1 (ether flyer)

Motives: Mad, Knowledge, Love (for Elsie Radek).

Appearance: Vorstein is a small, slender man with a high forehead and intense eyes. He wears a small mustache. Vorstein usually dresses in a lab coat.

Research Areas: Biochemistry 15, Ether 35, Geology/Metallurgy 17, Flight 14, Precision 11, Power 19, Combustion 27.

Inventions: Etherometer (reliability 5), lightning cannon (reliability 4), weather control ray (reliability 1), rocket motor (reliability 4), detonite (reliability 2).

ELSIE RADEK (Green NPC)

Elsie is an intelligent and adventuresome woman, who has defied social conventions by getting a scientific education and accompanying the Phobos expedition. As a woman in a male-dominated field, she is not adverse to using her looks and charm to get what she wants. Elsie has expensive tastes and enjoys the best of everything.

Attribute Skills

Str:	1	Close Combat 1 (edged)
Agil:	3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 1 (pistol), Crime 1 (pick pocket)
End:	2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mountaineering)
Int:	5	Observation 5, Science 4 (archaeology), Engineering 2 (explosives)
Chr:	6	Eloquence 6, Linguistics 4 (German, English, French, Turkish, Hungarian), Theatrics 2
Soc:	4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 1, Pilot 1 (ether flyer)

Motives: Adventuresome, Ambitious, Spendthrift.

Appearance: Elsie Radek is a very beautiful woman, with dark red hair and pale gray eyes. She speaks with a charming Hungarian accent, and she always dresses in stylish and expensive clothes. Elsie usually carries a small dagger concealed in her stocking. Ω

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**Journey to
a high mountain
deep in the heart
of the Amazon
rain forest
to discover the**

SECRET of the LOST CITY

By James L. Cambias

Old Witherspoon took me aside as soon as I entered the Reform Club. "Gregson, you simply must have a word with young Wilde. He's off his head—going on about some hare-brained trip to South America—in a blimp, no less! Some nonsense about lost cities."

"As a matter of fact, old boy, I've already spoken with him about it."

"Thank heaven! You're about the only chap he'll listen to. I tried to talk him out of it, but he wouldn't hear a word. Young people!"

"Well, you won't have to listen to any more talk about Wilde's trip—we're leaving this afternoon."

The PCs are contacted by a friend named Ernest Wilde. He has inherited a strange old manuscript from his late uncle, who spent several years in Brazil. The document is purportedly the journal of a Spanish conquistador who discovered a high mountain deep in the heart of the Amazon rain forest. The local Indians spoke of a great city on top.

Wilde has decided to mount an expedition to see if the account is true. He has scraped together almost enough money to buy an airship and fly to Brazil to look for this city. If the PCs can contribute the remaining £1000, they are welcome to come along.

Wilde's late uncle Algernon acquired the old manuscript while in Brazil. It is apparently the log of a Spanish conquistador, Juan Hernandez Orlando de Vizcaya, and tells of an expedition from Peru into the Amazon jungles in 1540. The section that inspired Ernest is as follows:

July 12: We have reached a river which the Indians call Xingo. Half the men have come down with fever. To the south is a great mountain; the Indians claim that there is a city atop it, rich in gold and precious stones.

July 15: I have sent young Diego and Father Gomez, along with five soldiers and some Indians, to find a way up the mountain and seek the city there.

July 19: One of the Indians I sent with Diego has returned. He says the party found a narrow cleft leading up the mountain. When they reached the top, an earthquake made the walls of the cleft collapse. This wretch fled, abandoning the others. If Diego and Gomez still live, there is no way to reach them. I have decided to leave this pestilent place and continue downriver.

VOYAGE

Ernest has arranged to purchase a

small Italian patrol blimp. The blimp weighs 83 tons (Hull Size 1). It has an oil-fired engine and carries 30 tons of fuel (60 days' supply). There are five crewmembers, 15 tons of cargo and space for four passengers. The ship can reach Very High altitude, has a Speed of 6, and costs £6080. Wilde has armed it with a 1" Gatling gun.

The expedition will travel by steamer to Rio de Janeiro. There, the PCs can spend some time sightseeing and getting supplies. Once everything is ready, and the blimp has been inflated and fueled, the party sets out. Ernest plans to head northwest across the Matto Grosso highlands to the source of the Xingu River, then follow it until it joins the Amazon, looking for the mountain mentioned in the manuscript.

After a few days spent following the course of the Xingu as it winds sluggishly through the dense jungle, a violent storm strikes. There is no safe place to land, so the pilot must ride it out. The airship is tossed by gusts as bolts of lightning flash outside. Suddenly, a break in the clouds reveals a mountain looming up before the ship!

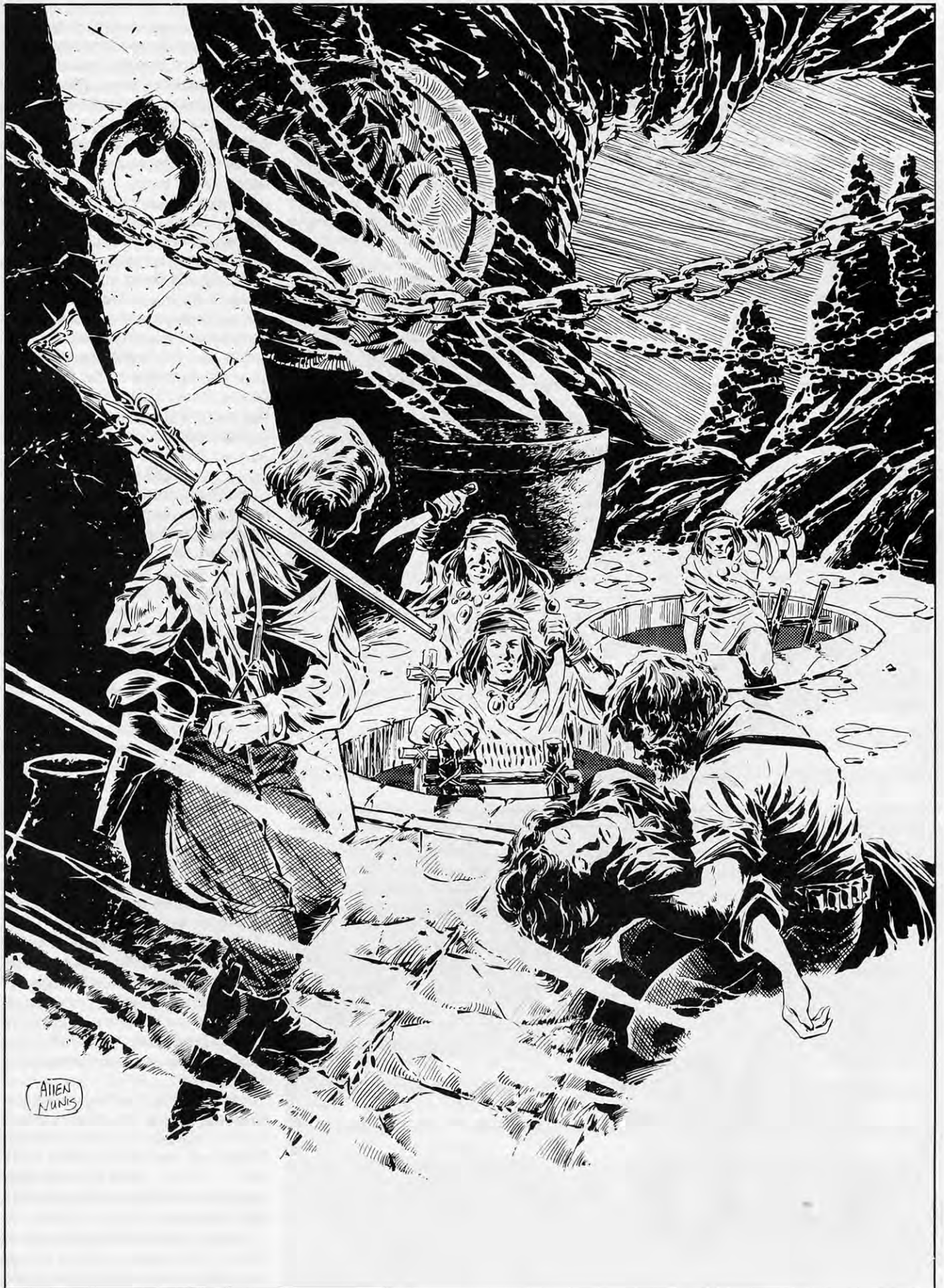
There is no time for the pilot to react, and the blimp crashes on a broad plateau atop the mountain. Each passenger must make a Difficult: Agility roll to avoid suffering one wound from the impact. An inspection of the airship reveals that the gasbag is intact, but the propeller and steering gear are smashed. "We'll need help to repair this," says Ernest. "I hope that Spaniard's log told the truth."

PLATEAU

When the storm has passed, the PCs can get out and look around. The top of the mountain is a plateau surrounded by high walls of rock—obviously the crater of an extinct volcano. The gentle slopes are covered with forest and meadows. In the distance, a city is visible, surrounded by cultivated fields.

Welcoming Committee: As the explorers survey the valley, six soldiers appear, led by a man wearing priest's robes and a steel breastplate, topped by an elaborate headdress depicting the Sun. Two of the soldiers have smoothbore carbines; the rest have crossbows. (Crossbows differ from other bows in that they need two actions to reload, and have a required Strength of 1 and a Save number of 1.) The troops wear no armor. All the soldiers are Indians, but their leader is at least partly European.

"Greetings to you, my Lords," says the priest in oddly accented Spanish.



"The arrival of your flying ship was seen by many, and the archbishop has sent me to bid you welcome to the Holy Principality of Xacaja."

City: The soldiers lead the PCs across the plateau to the city. There are perhaps 5000 inhabitants, and almost all of them are Indians. The buildings are all made of stone, with high-peaked roofs in the style of the Incas. Dominating the town is a fantastic building, a combination of cathedral and castle, mingling Incan architecture with Gothic and Baroque styles. The priest leads the party through the gates of the structure into a huge audience hall.

RULER

Seated on an elaborate golden throne

is a wizened old man wearing crimson robes and a huge gold headdress. "I am Viceroy-Archbishop Ignatius Solar. You are welcome to Xacaja, strangers."

The archbishop seems quite friendly and offers the PCs a suite of rooms in his palace. Any supplies they need to repair the blimp will be provided. He is very curious about the outside world, and is particularly interested in the welfare of Spain and the Church.

History: If the PCs ask about the history of Xacaja, the archbishop will tell them the official history:

"This kingdom was discovered by Archbishop Enrique Gomez, who led an expedition here in 1540. He led a small force into this land through a narrow cleft in the mountain walls. But as soon

as he entered, an earthquake caused the cleft to collapse, sealing Xacaja off from the outside world from that day to this. He found this city under the rule of wicked and unholy kings. With his small band of Spaniards, he defeated them, bringing the benefits of holy rule. Since then, his successors have governed in the name of the pope and the king of Spain."

Delays: While the PCs enjoy their stay in Xacaja, seeing the sights and conversing with the archbishop, a problem becomes apparent. The repairs to the blimp are being mysteriously delayed. Tools are defective, parts are incorrectly made, and work proceeds at an excruciatingly slow pace. It almost seems as if this is a deliberate ploy to keep the explorers in Xacaja—but of course, the archbishop assures the PCs that everything possible is being done to help them.

ASSASSIN

After the characters have been guests in the palace for a few days, they are attacked. One night, a PC is awakened by an intruder in his bedroom. The PC has just enough time to cry out before the assassin attacks! The killer is a Trained NPC armed with a knife. He will fight until wounded, then try to escape.

Naturally, the commotion brings the guards running, and the archbishop arrives soon after the assassin is captured or killed. "This is obviously the work of the Freemasons!" he proclaims. "They are the enemies of order and religion. I will have extra men placed around your rooms."

MASONS

The next day, one of the PCs finds a small slip of paper tucked into one shoe. It is a note: "Your lives are in danger. Come to the falls of La Trinidad at midnight if you wish to live."

Hidden Cave: The waterfall called La Trinidad is not far from the city. To get there, the adventurers must slip past the guards assigned to "protect" them and evade the soldiers who patrol the streets at night. Roll 1D6 each hour. On a roll of 1, the group will encounter a patrol.

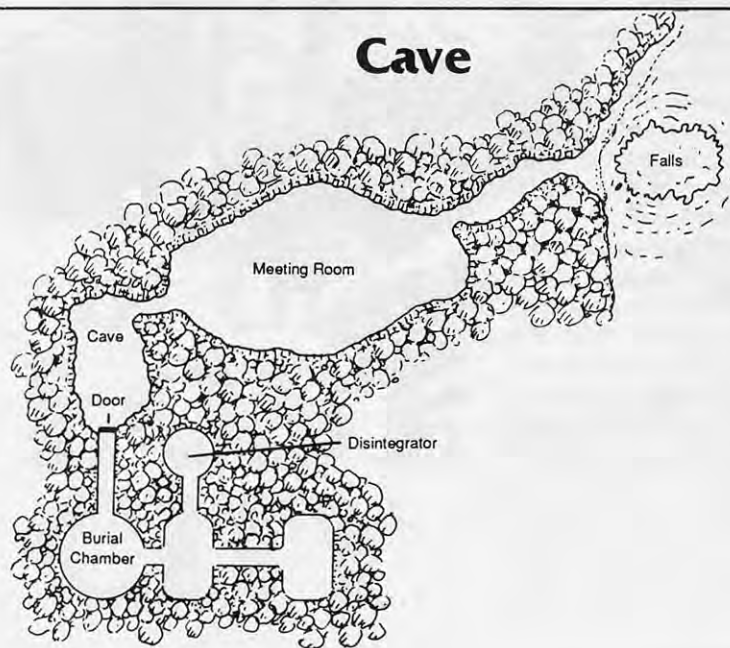
Near the falls, a man in peasant garb emerges from the undergrowth and hails the PCs. "Have you come alone? Good. Follow me." He leads the PCs to the base of the falls, where a narrow ledge leads back behind the falling water to a hidden tunnel.

Meeting: The tunnel leads back about 10 feet to a large cave, where 20 men are gathered. A small fire in the center of

Xacaja



Cave



the chamber casts weird shadows on the walls. A man wearing a leather apron steps forward to address the PCs.

"Welcome, strangers. We are the Xacaja Lodge of Freemasons, founded by the true discoverer of this land, Captain Hernando Diego, who was murdered by the false priest Gomez. For 300 years we have fought the tyranny of the wicked and unholy archbishops. You must know that your visit has greatly disturbed Archbishop Solar—he fears that contact with the outside world will end his rule. The assassin who attacked you was one of his men. The people of Xacaja have little reason to love the archbishop; only his soldiers keep him on the throne. With the help of you and your flying ship, we may be able to defeat him and bring liberty to the land. Will you help us?"

If the PCs agree, the Masons will show them a cache of muskets they have accumulated. If the adventurers decide not to help the Masons, the lodge members will still be willing to help the PCs escape from the valley, as they believe contact with the rest of the world will help their cause.

MILITIA ATTACK

Just then, a sentry rushes in. "The archbishop's men are coming! They..." His words are cut short as he falls with a crossbow bolt in the back. Soldiers are coming in through the cave entrance. The Masons and the PCs must fight them off. The battle rapidly becomes a wild melee.

Trapped!: When most of the soldiers inside the cave have been defeated, there is a thunderous explosion from the cave mouth. Some of the archbishop's men have set off a gunpowder mine, causing the entrance to collapse. The Masons and the PCs are sealed inside. (If any PCs remained at the palace, the archbishop will do nothing until morning, when he will report that the others were killed by Masons. A few days later, he will destroy the blimp with another bomb.)

GATE OF DEMONS

The bomb blast completely seals off the cave, and the mass of fallen rock is too great for the PCs and the Masons to clear. But there is a small passage at the rear of the cavern. The Masons will not enter it—"that way leads to the gate of Hell."

If the PCs explore the tunnel, they will soon discover that the Masons are not entirely wrong. At the end of the passage is a heavy metal door, with a strange and demonic face depicted on

it. Wilde recognizes the visage as that of a Martian. Below the face is a diagram, showing 10 concentric circles. A formidable: Intellect roll is needed to recognize it as a schematic of the Solar System (the referee may show the players the illustration and let them try to figure

it out). Pressing the fourth planet depicted will cause the door to open.

Tomb: Beyond the door is a complex of chambers carved out of solid rock. The first is a burial chamber, containing the mummified bodies of 12 Martians, wrapped in shrouds. An Easy: Biology,

ERNEST WILDE (Trained NPC)

Ernest Wilde is a young, upper-class Englishman. He spends most of his time idling at the Drones Club in London. But every now and then, he goes out into the world in search of adventure. Wilde has bagged dinosaurs on Venus, fought aerial pirates on Mars and scaled mountains in Tibet. He is very brave, possibly because he is slightly stupid.

Attributes Skills

Str:	4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl:	1	Marksmanship 2 (pistol)
End:	6	Wilderness Travel 6 (mountaineering), Swimming 1, Tracking 1
Int:	2	Observation 1, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr:	3	Eloquence 3, Linguistics 4 (French, German, Portuguese, Parhooni)
Soc:	5	Riding 5, Leadership 2, Pilot 2 (zeppelin)

Motives: Adventuresome, Spendthrift.

Appearance: Wilde is a tall, good-looking young man with fair hair and a pleasant, if somewhat vacant, expression. He speaks with a slight lisp and has an unsuccessful mustache.

IGNATIUS SOLAR (Green NPC)

Archbishop Solar is the absolute ruler of Xacaja, heir to a line of theocratic rulers dating back to Father Gomez. He is not especially clever, but he does understand that to keep power he must ruthlessly suppress all dissent. The last thing he wants is outsiders interfering with his government. When he is not oppressing his subjects, Solar amuses himself in various depraved ways.

Attributes Skills

Str:	2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 1 (edged weapon)
Agl:	5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 4 (rifle)
End:	1	
Int:	3	Observation 3
Chr:	4	Eloquence 4, Theatrics 2
Soc:	6	Riding 5, Leadership 6

Motives: Ruthless, Liar.

Appearance: Archbishop Solar is a wizened, inbred old man of pure Spanish descent. His shriveled form is almost completely hidden by his elaborate robes and giant headdress. Despite his age, Solar still moves with surprising quickness.

JUAN CHAMAC (Trained NPC)

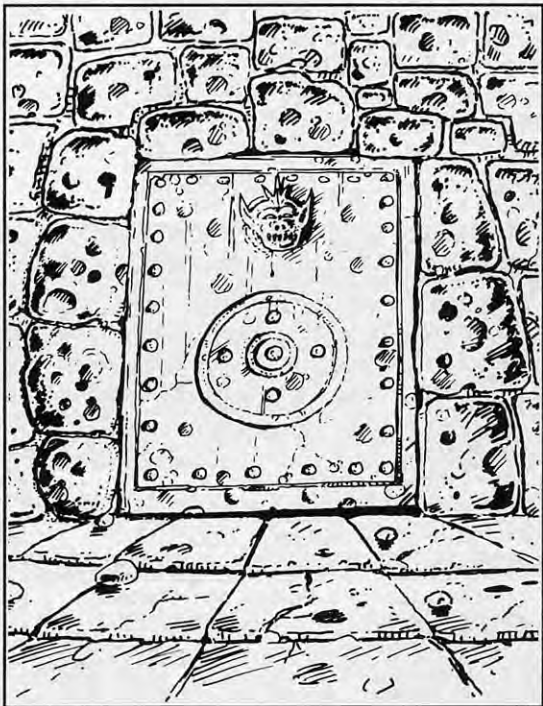
Juan Chamac is the grand master of the Xacaja Lodge of Freemasons. As such, he is the leader of the rebels against the archbishop. Chamac wants the PCs to help overthrow the archbishop, but if they aren't interested, he will still help them escape from Xacaja.

Attributes Skills

Str:	3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl:	3	Stealth 3, Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End:	5	Wilderness Travel 5 (mountaineering), Tracking 2, Fieldcraft 3
Int:	5	Observation 4
Chr:	3	Eloquence 2
Soc:	2	Riding 1, Leadership 1

Motives: Steady, Fair.

Appearance: Chamac is a small, barrel-chested man with strongly Indian features and calm dark eyes. He wears the clothing of a humble peasant but is never without a concealed dagger.



Medicine or Archaeology roll reveals that the bodies have been here more than 1000 years. The other chambers hold a variety of strange objects, including what look like fragments of an ether propeller. The last chamber holds a large tripod-mounted device which looks like a gun.

Disintegrator: Figuring out how to operate the strange, gun-like device requires a Difficult: Electricity skill roll,

or an Impossible: Intellect roll. When fired, it disintegrates a large hole in the stone wall before it (if any PCs or NPCs are standing in front of the machine, they vanish without a trace). The disintegrator has barely enough charge to drill through the fallen rock blocking the cave entrance. It will take six turns to do so, and each turn there is a one in six chance that the disintegrator will fail. To repair it is an Impossible: Electricity or Physics task.

Inventors who want to build their own disintegrator must have an Ether or Power Production knowledge level of 39; the initial reliability modifier is 5. A disintegrator weighs 15 tons and costs £20,000. It requires 10 Power Points per turn to operate. The range of a disintegrator is 100 yards times its Reliability, and it does damage equal to twice its Reliability. It ignores armor.

ESCAPE

If the PCs succeed in getting out of the cave, they must still repair the blimp and leave Xacaja, which will not be easy with the archbishop's men hunting them. The players may come up with a solution of their own. If not, consider the following options:

Revolutionary Development: The Masons have a plan—with the help of the PCs, they will attack the archbishop's palace and overthrow him. If the PCs agree to this idea, the Gatling gun on

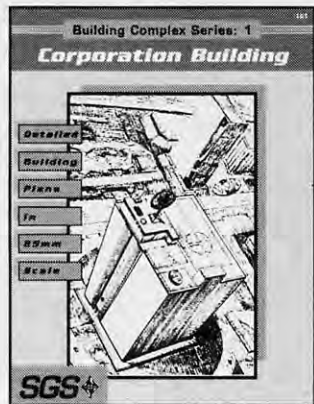
the blimp could prove decisive. The archbishop has 180 soldiers and six cannon (treat as Martian light cannon). The NPCs are Green; half are armed with muskets and half with crossbows. The Masons can raise 60 Trained rebels armed with muskets, and another 60 Green followers equipped with clubs and spears.

Over the Edge of the World: It may be that the PCs will decide to leave Xacaja rather than help the rebels. If they cannot get their blimp fixed, they will have to get out on foot. The rock walls surrounding Xacaja must be climbed—a Formidable: Mountaineering roll with the proper ropes, pitons and axes, and an Impossible task without gear. Once at the top of the walls, the adventurers must still climb down a nearly vertical slope 3000 feet high. A separate Mountaineering roll is needed for each 100-yard increment.

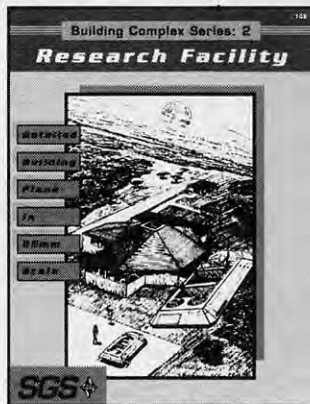
EPILOG

If the player characters assist the Masons in overthrowing the archbishop, the new government will do everything possible to get the blimp repaired. If the PCs leave Xacaja with the archbishop in power, they may wish to return and help end his rule. Award points of Renown based on the final outcome. The discovery of relics should intrigue scientists, and a follow-up expedition might be in order. Ω

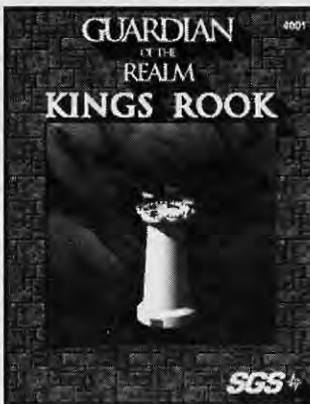
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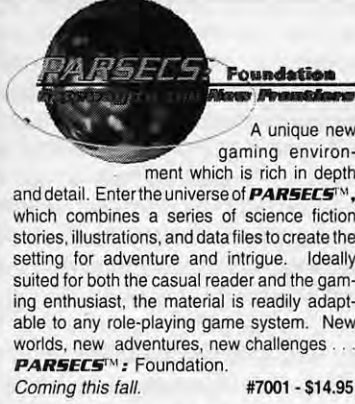
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GDW

To Rescue

One of the great satisfactions of the Victorian Era setting in **Space: 1889** is that of roleplaying in a more civilized time. In such a milieu, gentlemanly conduct is as valued as machismo—often more so! A gentleman can go farther and impress more of the right people than a macho he-man. The action-oriented types modify their behavior to act in a somewhat respectable fashion, unless they want to be considered boors, lower-class brawlers, upstarts etc. Even Americans practice some sort of manners.

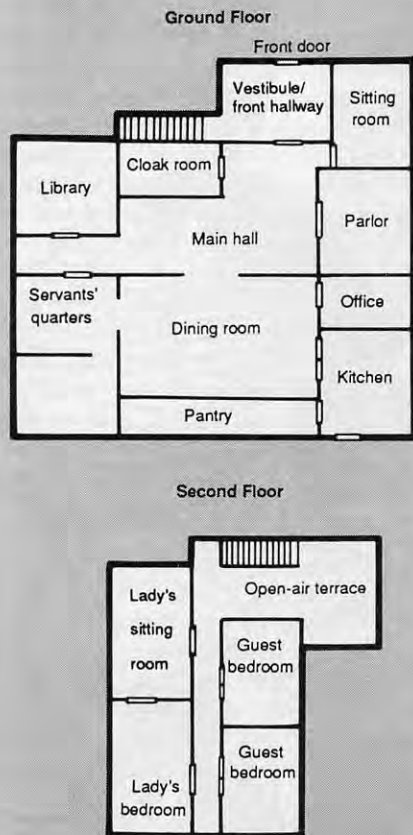
Of course, this does not mean the age has no place for the adventurer, the man-among-men, the hero. Indeed, there's something courtly about the era which encourages a sort of swashbuckling spirit and inspires the gallant explorer, the person who ventures into the unknown and faces untold dangers with eagerness and civility. Even the stories of the American West are filled with heroes of this stripe—their manners may not be up to those required for an audience with Her Majesty, but they have hearts of gold underneath their buckskins and grimy shirts.

A Lady Fair

By Craig Sheeley



The House of Jean LeClerc



True, the hardheadedness and pragmatism that make the worlds go round still underlies the deeds of dignified derring-do. However lacking in romance, the fact remains that life goes on, and someone has to do the actual work, no matter how dirty. This is the sort of thing that motivates a great deal of explorers, before Marco Polo and Columbus on to the present—after all, they weren't out travelling for their health or curiosity. No, it is the promise of cold, hard cash that pries most great discoverers and explorers from their homes and sends them into the mysterious boundaries of known space.

The planets, Mars and Venus, collect all types, including the hardened bottom-line entrepreneur and the boisterous wide-eyed romantic. Mars in particular holds promise of great wealth—if the streets of America are paved with gold, then those of Mars are paved with liftwood. This naturally attracts a large number of people seeking new frontiers and freedom from the growing social regulation of Earth—much to the Martians' dismay. For these are the very sort of people human society is most happy to lose—the troublemakers, the

rebels, those whose very existence threatens entrenched authority and status quo—dreamers, dissidents, nonconformists, idealists, ruffians, loners, vagabonds, con artists, thrill-seekers, opportunists and so on. In short, the very sort of people most often described in roleplaying games as PCs.

ANOTHER NIGHT, ANOTHER FIGHT

This adventure requires that the PCs have, or can lay their hands on, an aerial vessel of some sort. The adventure begins in one of the outer cities—Avenel, Moeris Lacus, Karkarham, Meepsoor, perhaps even in Oenotria or Crocea, if the adventurers are able to go to those cities.

While the adventurers are enjoying a quiet meal in a Martian public house on a dull night,

they run afoul of some ill feelings. The signs are there for all to see. While the adventurers sit and eat, they are favored with poisonous glares from various corners of the room, and several natives mutter darkly to each other. Finally, one of them can contain his ire no longer and hurls a drinking mug (luckily made of hardwood, not pewter—metals are too rare on Mars for that sort of thing). It's just off target and lands in the middle of one of the adventurer's meals (optimally in a large bowl of soup, for the spatter effect).

This turns into the signal to commence a mass melee. At least 10 of the native patrons surge to their feet and fall upon the aliens, hurling more mugs, wooden plates and wooden utensils, then following up the barrage by closing to fisticuff range. No weapons are in use, but the adventurers are outnumbered and battered by the tsunami of tableware (treat the attacking Martians as Green NPCs with Brawling skill 1, and treat the crockery as rocks, doing 1 point of temporary damage per hit).

After two rounds of melee, a new commotion is added, at the outside of the brawl. Several people seem intent

on making their way to the player characters, cracking a few heads in the process. After a few natives drop to the floor with knots on their heads, the rest drop the adventurers and flee, scattering through the doors.

The PCs' benefactor sheathes his sword and offers one of them a hand up.

"I apologize for the actions of my countrymen," he says in fluent, if accented, English. "Permit me to assist you. I am Murrat."

Some of the PCs (those more familiar with Martian society) may well suspect that Murrat is leaving off a title of some sort. The fellow is average size for a Canal Martian—that is to say, around 62 centimeters—smoothly handsome in a Martian sort of way. He is attired in durable but fairly wealthy clothing, with a long-sword hanging from his opposite shoulder, in the method used by medieval knights. He is accompanied by five other Martians, who are dressed in the same fashion, save that their clothing is not as richly constructed. They also have long-swords at their sides and look like they know how to use them.

A TALE OF HEARTACHE

Murrat reseats the adventurers at his own table and calls for the landlord to bring another dinner for them.

"I must apologize for the actions of my people," he says. "They are ignorant and often see no farther than the ends of their noses. Distant inequities become a personal thing when they perceive a chance to revenge themselves. They see redmen, any redmen, as representatives of the troubles your people have brought to our planet."

Murrat shrugs his shoulders and buries his nose in a mug of the local liquor. When he sets the mug down, he chuckles wryly and continues his tale: "Strange that I should assist you. For I have a more direct reason than any man in this house to hate redmen. But being an educated man, I know that you are not the redmen who have wronged me."

"The redmen war on the league of city-states. In the midst of this war, pirates from both sides find easy prey, since the warships that usually sweep them from the skies are busy elsewhere. I believe it is your custom to call them privateers. We have glamorous names for them as well, but state-sponsored or not, they are still pirates. Some are good men at heart; many are not. It was my chance to fall foul of the latter."

"There is a lady, of one of the city-states, who has me at the most severe disadvantage in nature: She has my heart. I was wooing her, ever so slowly,

with decorum, for such a thing is not done lightly or crudely! She had many suitors, and making a choice was fraught with delicacy, because of the repercussions. So I strove to win her, and dreamed of her at my side. But alas, this came to an abrupt end. She left on a journey and did not return. Heart-stricken, I set in search of her, to discover her fate. And I learned that her ship had been taken by one of the aerial scourges; she is in the hands of redman pirates.

"She is still alive. I have been able to discover that! But she is held captive deep inside the redman lands, indirectly guarded by English forces as well as those of the pirates. You see, the pirate has a powerful redman backer, who profits from the depredations of the pirate ship—there are always such people, among my folk as well as yours—and they covet my lady, for she is beautiful, young and cultured.

"I would give everything I have, everything I am, to deliver her from her captors. I have learned more than their identities; news of the pirate captain's character, and that of his master, have also reached me. And that news is not good. If these tales are true, then she suffers indignities and agonies that should not even be inflicted on an animal, much less a delicate lady of her breeding. To release her from that fate, I offer my rank, my fortunes, my life, without hesitation.

"I have come to this city to pursue this quest. I know where she is held, and I know who is holding her, but the war intervenes—I would not be allowed into the guarded cities of the redmen to succor her. Ah, if I only knew a redman who had a sky ship! I would happily make him a wealthy man and become a pauper to save Lady Alianni." By now his eyes have filled with tears, and he must pause to recover his composure.

OFFER

After hearing this, the PCs may very well be interested in assisting Murrat in his quest, either for love (in the case of the romantics) or for money (in the case of those whose blood flows gold). Should the PCs offer their aid, Murrat accepts their offer fervently. For those wanting proof of reward, he reaches into his purse and draws out a handful of Martian jewelry, easily worth £200.

"There is a cask of this in my possession, the heirlooms of my family," he says. "It is yours when Alianni is rescued!" He gives the PCs the jewels he has on him as collateral.

Once the bargain is struck, Murrat lays out what he knows. Alianni is being

held in the city of Parhoon, in the house of Jean LeClerc. The pirate who captured her is Black Jack Tar Kirk Arithon. The PCs have never heard of either.

Murrat proposes that he and his men accompany the adventurers north to Parhoon, travelling incognito on their skyship as crew. Once in Parhoon, they can find the house of LeClerc and swoop down upon it, surprising the guards and liberating Alianni. He welcomes suggestions from the adventurers on how to go about the rescue, but he insists on staging it with the skyship fairly close by for a quick getaway.

JOURNEY

Travelling north in these war-ridden times is perilous, like taking a ship to the West Indies 300 years earlier. Agreed, the adventurers will be going north, away from the general hostilities, but they still risk running afoul of unscrupulous pirates preying on the shipping lanes and High Martian raiders from the Astusapes Highlands. With a ship, the journey should only take two to three days, but there is still the chance of meeting trouble on the way.

Use the standard one in six chance of an aerial encounter, as outlined in *Space: 1889*, but on the last day of travel, the adventurers are ambushed as they near Parhoon. About 50 miles from the city, a concealed High Martian screw galley rises to do battle with the adventurers! The High Martians have caught the adventurers by surprise, and the adventurers are in danger of the bestial attackers overwhelming them immediately. Have each player character make an Observation task roll against a target of 16; anyone who succeeds spots the High Martians at a range of 600 yards. Otherwise, one of Murrat's henchmen sounds the alarm as the screw galley swoops up at 400 yards!

The High Martians have one *Clearsight* screw galley (if the adventurers have a ship larger than 300 tons, the High Martians have two *Clearsight* galleys). Their intent is to board and capture the PCs' ship rather than blast it—with their flight ability, the High Martians have an advantage in such assaults.

The PCs are caught flat-footed. They cannot change course or fire any weapons for one combat turn, while they call the crew to the deck and load their weapons (treat slow-firing weapons as completely unloaded—for instance, it would take the adventurers' crew two turns to load a rogue gun or other slow-firing weapon). Murrat and his henchmen do heroic duty, fighting off the High Martians with their swords and firing

muzzle-loading rifles into the boarders. They will not use their concealed revolvers unless extremely pressed.

The High Martians use as many troops as they can spare from the galley's operation—this means the captain (a Veteran NPC) and 10 warriors (Experienced NPCs), leaving two gun crews, six maneuver crew, the deck crew and the bridge crew aboard the galley. The High Martians are fearless but will retreat if the captain is killed. When the Martians retreat or are destroyed, the galley's remaining two guns open fire, and the galley swings away at speed 3.

PARHOON HO!

Arrival at Parhoon is properly paranoid—the adventurers' ship is met by an obviously rearmed and refurbished *Clearsight* (converted to steam power, speed 3, armed with two 4S guns fore and aft and two Hotchkiss 6-pdrs on the wings, and carrying 20 marines) flying the Union Jack. The lieutenant in charge orders the PCs' ship to stand down for boarding and inspection. He and his marines look through the ship's holds carefully, and check out the PCs' papers and credentials. Unless he finds something terribly amiss (like evidence of anarchist activity, armed High Martians lurking belowdecks, etc.), he clears the ship and returns to patrol. If trouble starts, the marines have their rifles fitted with bayonets and are ready to fight. Times are tense in Parhoon.

The PCs find out just how tense once they get on the ground. High Martian pirate attacks from the northwest have made everyone edgy, unsure of when they'll strike next. The cloudship taverns ring with stories of attacks and threats from unknown quarters. The PCs' experience on the way into Parhoon is yet another incident of a sort that has become too common of late.

Gathering information on the house of Jean LeClerc is easy. Any resident can direct the adventurers there. The house is located on a hill just on the outskirts of town—"but you won't get in," the adventurers are told. "The master of the house is a recluse and doesn't go out. And he sees no one, at least not during the day. (Dark, furtive glance.) Although he does have folk in at nights. He locks up the bulldog first, see?" Apparently the master of the house is none too fond of trespassers.

GENTLEMAN'S ADVANTAGE

If the adventurers have friends in high places who would have clearance to secret information (naval intelligence officers, high-ranking diplomats, etc.),

Murrat Deltot (Elite NPC)

Murrat Deltot is an Oenotrian noble, residing in the city-state of Deltoton. He is only a minor noble, of a rank corresponding with the knights of feudal Europe, a warrior by trade. His business has not been profitable since the British arrived, so his fortunes have dipped. In Deltoton, Murrat's name is dark. He has never been caught perpetrating any evil enterprises, but rumor serves well enough—the word on the streets is that trusting Murrat is like trusting an eelowaan, because sooner or later he turns on you. And rumor has it right.

Murrat has studied the British, questioning captives, meeting merchants, sneaking into British cities to observe and meet his enemies. He believes that he understands them well and can fool them with greater ease than he fools his own people. He is charismatic, a good actor and consummate liar. His greatest weakness is his ego. His success—the fact that he's never been caught—has gone to his head. He thinks he's superior to everyone, and he resents anyone who demonstrates superiority to him. When he's busy with one of his schemes, he sticks to whatever part he's playing—for instance, with the British, he stays polite and mildly subservient. But once the masquerade is over, he makes his disdain apparent, gloating over his victory.

Attributes Skills

Str:	4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 3, Close Combat 5 (edged weapon)
Agil:	5	Stealth 4, Crime 3 (forgery), Marksman 3 (pistol)
End:	3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mapping), Fieldcraft 1, Tracking 2
Int:	6	Observation 4, Gunnery 2 (muzzle-loading cannon)
Cha:	5	Eloquence 5, Theatrics 4, Bargaining 4, Linguistics 4 (High Oenotrian, English, Parhooni, Koline)
Soc:	5	Riding 3 (gashant), Piloting 2 (cloudship), Leadership 4

Motives: Ruthless, Arrogant, Aggressive.

Appearance: Murrat is a polished item. He is moderately tall, smoothly handsome—his features lack the usual strength of Martian facial topology, making him look close to human—and always clean. His manners are excellent, his conversation witty, his demeanor friendly. That is, until he decides he doesn't need you any more. He carries his broadsword (treat as a cutlass) more as a rod of office than as a weapon, though he can use it. He hides a light revolver under his tunic.

Retainers: Murrat's men are loyal to him (they have to be—they've done so many foul deeds that a word from him would result in their painful execution). They are Veteran NPCs, with broadswords (cutlasses) and light pistols hidden beneath their tunics. They obey Murrat's orders.

and if they press for information on the house of Jean LeClerc, they meet with suspicion. If the adventurers tell Murrat's story, the informant is shocked. If the adventurers are known to be bad sorts (American traders usually fit in this category), the informant will assure them that Murrat's story is correct—then will swing into action after the adventurers leave, moving Alianni from the house and doubling the garrison.

If, however, the adventurers are known to be straight arrows and worthy of HMS government's trust, the informant sets them straight immediately:

house of Jean LeClerc are full of the sort of furniture and clutter that is now fondly referred to as "Victorian." This reduces effective movement to one-fourth normal. Anyone moving faster than this must make a Difficult: Agility test (target level 12) to avoid falling over hassocks, throw rugs, end tables, secretaries, etc. Anyone passing this test may move at one-half normal movement rate.

Lady Alianni is heavily guarded. The admiralty has placed some of its best troops here to protect her. The house itself is surrounded by an eight-foot high wall, and a large bulldog with a nasty

"Good grief! This fellow has gotten news of one of the navy's closest secrets! It is true that Kirk Arithon took a cloudship and captured Lady Alianni. However, he's a bonafide privateer working for HMS government. She was brought here for safe-keeping, as a prisoner of war. The house is actually the admiralty's, and she's a guest of the admiral. She's being treated according to her station, which is quite well, don't you know."

If the adventurers seem baffled, the informant smiles and enlightens them. "Alianni is one of the wealthiest property owners in the city of Deltoton. She's quite a power in Oenotrian politics and has always been somewhat opposed to the war—bad for business and all that. We're holding her for the right moment; when the Oenotrians start to lose influence, we offer to release her if the city-state of Deltoton will withdraw from the war. What with her wealth and position, it's a fair bet."

The informant has no knowledge of Murrat Deltot or what his game is.

THE HOUSE OF JEAN LECLERC

The rooms in the

temper is allowed to run loose at night in the enclosure. Statistics for the bulldog are as follows: *Size:* 1x1 *Move:* L40 *Wounds:* 2 *Save:* 1 *Weight:* 75 pounds *Weapons:* Teeth (2,2,0,2).

There are 10 guards at the residence, plus the staff of the butler, the cook and the maid. The house staff are treated as Trained NPCs, while the guards are Experienced NPCs. The guards are usually stationed in the following fashion—one at the vestibule/front hall, one at the back door in the kitchen and two on the upper landing at the top of the stairs. The others are either asleep in the upper guest bedroom/bunk room or lounging about. The guards are armed with Lee-Metford rifles and bayonets; the upper landing has a Maxim gun on a tripod that can be deployed out onto the terrace.

There is a guard officer present, who sleeps in the other guest bedroom. He has a heavy revolver and is an Elite NPC.

Lady Alianni spends most of her time in her sitting room or bedroom, attended by her personal maid (a Canal Martian, captured with her). She is treated well and is fairly well liked by the guards.

ESCAPE AND SUCCESS

Murrat uses every argument to enlist the PCs' active aid in the rescue—mentioning that he and his crew assisted during the pirate engagement, playing on their sympathies, even pointing out that if Alianni doesn't make it back from the rescue, the adventurers don't get the cask of jewels.

Alianni will go with her rescuers, glad to escape her imprisonment. She is less than happy to see Murrat, whom she considers somewhat odious, but she will go along with him in order to return to Deltoton. True to his word, Murrat will give the adventurers a cask of jewels once they return him to any Oenotrian city. The jewels are quite real and quite valuable, worth another £2000 (he keeps his word because now that he has Alianni in his power, £2000 is a drop in the bucket).

Of course, if the adventurers actually did invade the house and steal a prisoner from the admiralty, it's likely that they are now *persona non grata*, as well as having a price on their heads.

If they might have discovered his game before the rescue, HMS government might not be averse to laying its hands on Murrat and questioning him a little.

Someone of Murrat's talents might even be turned into a double agent. Ω

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SCIENCE MARCHES ON

This article introduces new inventions for Space:1889.

Some are suitable for PC inventors to create, while others will probably be the products of evil mad scientist NPCs.

Referees may find some of these inventions to be useful points of departure for adventures.

By James L. Cambias

Devices are grouped by Research Area. The required minimum knowledge level and experimental success numbers are listed in parentheses after the name of each device.

TRANSPORTATION

Horseless Carriage: (2,1). Some of these can already be seen on the streets of London and Paris. A horseless carriage is simply an internal-combustion engine mounted on a chassis, with a transmission. Its speed in miles per hour is equal to twice its Reliability. Horseless carriages burn about one pound of petroleum for every mile travelled, and they have a 20-pound fuel supply. They have room for three passengers or 500 pounds of cargo, and require a crew of one. *Weight:* 2 tons. *Price:* £400.

Bathysphere: (15,2). A very sturdy steel sphere equipped with air tanks and thick windows, which is lowered into the deep ocean by cable. It can reach a depth in miles equal to its Reliability and can stay down for six hours. A bathysphere has room for four passengers. *Weight:* 10 tons. *Price:* £1000.

Motor-Bicycle: (18,2). A two-wheeled motorized vehicle, powered by a small internal-combustion engine. It requires a successful Routine: Agility task to learn how to ride one without falling over. They have a speed in miles per hour equal to twice their Reliability, and they consume a gallon of petroleum every 10 miles travelled. Motor-bicycles require one driver, and they can accommodate one passenger or 100 pounds of cargo. *Weight:* 200 pounds. *Price:* £250.

ELECTRICITY

Magnetic Levitation: (23,3). A method of suspending objects above a special magnetic track. This can be used to create wheel-less railways and similar fantastic vehicles. A magnetic levitation device can support a ton of cargo times its Reliability and can propel vehicles at a speed of 60 mph. *Weight:* 1 ton (in addition to the track, which weighs 10 tons per mile of length). *Price:* £500 per power level, plus £100 per mile of track. *Power:* 1 per ton of cargo.

BIOCHEMISTRY

Animal Repellent: (18,3). A strong-smelling liquid which, when applied to the skin, repels a given type of animal. In general, each sort of animal repellent affects a single class of living creatures (i.e., fish, reptiles, mammals, etc.). The duration of a dose in hours is equal to the Reliability. *Weight:* A dose sufficient to coat a person weighs four ounces. *Price:* £1 per dose.

Regeneration Drug: (23,3). This amazing substance quickly repairs damage to the body. Each dose restores a number of wounds equal to the Reliability number. The drug takes 15 minutes to take effect, during which time the patient must be resting quietly.

The healing is permanent. The drug must be injected into the subject's veins. *Weight:* 5 doses per ounce. *Price:* £15 per dose.

Growth Serum: (34,3). This strange chemical produces amazing temporary growth in organisms. A dose makes the user double in height and gain eight times the initial weight. It requires two days to take effect, during which time the subject has an amazing appetite. The effect lasts a number of days equal to the Reliability, at which point the subject returns to normal over a period of two days. At full size, the individual's Strength and Endurance are doubled, while Agility is halved. The effect of two doses doubles the being's size yet again, but further doses merely prolong the effect. If the serum is given to a growing infant, the growth will be permanent. Users must make a successful Reliability roll to avoid suffering 1D6 damage. *Weight:* 1 dose per ounce. *Price:* £10 per dose.

Pseudo-Death Drug: (36,4). This mysterious substance causes living things to sink into a deathlike state. There is no heartbeat, no respiration, and the victim's body temperature drops. The patient needs no food and is unconscious. Physicians may notice that there is no rigor mortis or other sign of decay. The trance lasts for a number of days equal to Reliability and takes effect instantly upon injection. Persons using the drug must roll equal to or below Reliability to revive successfully—otherwise, the pseudo-death becomes the genuine article. *Weight:* 8 doses per ounce. *Price:* £6 per dose.

De-Evolution Drug: (36,4). This fiendish compound can actually regress a living organism back along the path of its evolutionary development—each dose taken will lower an individual one level on following scale:

Level	Evolutionary Development
1	Protoplasm, one-celled creatures
2	Plants
3	Invertebrates (insects, mollusks, worms, etc.)
4	Reptiles and amphibians
5	Avians or mammals
6	Intelligent beings
7	Superhuman intelligences

The subject must roll less than the Reliability of the drug to avoid an unpleasant death. The drug may be injected or taken orally—it has a strong and unpleasant taste which is difficult to disguise. *Weight:* 10 doses per ounce. *Price:* £4 per dose.

Evolution Serum: (37,5). This fantastic potion has the amazing effect of *advancing* the user along the evolutionary scale. Each dose moves the creature one level higher on the scale shown above. For each dose taken, the subject must roll under the Reli-

ability of the serum or expire horribly. Creatures will retain some of their original features as they are transformed; a turtle raised to human level would still have a shell and recognizable turtle features. It is possible to raise a being beyond level 7, but the results are left to the referee to determine. The serum must be injected directly. *Weight:* 10 doses per ounce. *Price:* £5 per dose.

Universal Solvent: (39,5). The universal solvent is very dangerous, for it can dissolve through any substance, given enough time. This makes it extremely difficult to keep for extended periods, as it must be continually transferred to new containers. A pint of universal solvent applied to a surface will dissolve matter as if it were an explosive with a power equal to the Reliability of the solvent. *Weight:* 1 pint weighs a pound. *Price:* £5 per pint.

Lift Hormone: (40,5). This synthetic drug duplicates the effects of a complex hormone present in High Martians, which stimulates the action of the lifting gland. One dose given to a Canal or Hill Martian will allow them to fly as easily as a High Martian. There are potential side effects—if a Martian using the drug fails the Reliability roll, he suffers one wound, and his lifting gland is permanently destroyed. The drug has no effect on Terrans or Lizard-men. *Weight:* 5 doses per ounce. *Price:* £20 per dose.

THE ETHER

Miniaturizer: (37,5). The miniaturizer can reduce the size of any object by a factor of two for each level of Reliability. Thus, a miniaturizer of Reliability 3 would reduce objects to one-eighth of their original size. The effect lasts 12 hours. While miniaturized, an individual's Strength, Endurance and Hit Points are reduced by the level of the miniaturization (keeping all fractions). *Weight:* 1 ton. *Price:* £20,000.

Teleportation Device: (43,5). The teleportation machine consists of two booths. Objects placed in one booth can be instantaneously transported to the other, no matter what distance separates them. The device's range is based on the Reliability, as given in the following table:

Reliability	Range
1	150 yards
2	1 mile
3	100 miles
4	10,000 miles
5	1 million miles
6	100 million miles

To operate, the transmitting booth must be supplied with one power factor for each level of distance to the receiver. It can send 500 pounds of material. *Weight:* Each booth weighs 1000 pounds. *Price:* £10,000 per booth.

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Superluminal Propeller: (44,5). The superluminal propeller is a type of ether propeller capable of driving an ether flyer at speeds above that of light, making it possible to reach other stars. A superluminal propeller is similar in most respects to an ordinary ether propeller, with a power level equal to Reliability, and an efficiency equal to 20+(3xReliability). The only difference is that the speed value ([power levelxefficiency]+lifted mass) *squared* gives the speed in multiples of the speed of light. So if the vessel's speed value is 2, it can achieve four times the speed of light. Superluminal propellers cannot work within 10 million miles of a planet. This means that a vessel must still have an ordinary ether propeller in addition to the superluminal drive. **Weight:** 4 tons per power level. **Price:** £10,000 per speed value.

OPTICS

Night Photographic Plates: (27,3). Night photographic plates are sensitive to infrared light, rather than visible light, allowing the operator to take photographs in darkness. Of course, the plates must be developed in a darkroom before the images can be seen. **Weight:** 8 plates weigh 1 pound. **Price:** Each plate costs £1.

Optic Fibers: (30,2). Optic fibers are curious filaments which transmit light, thus allowing individuals to see around corners or down long shafts. Other useful applications are left to the players and referee.

Weight: 3 feet of quarter-inch optic fiber weighs 1 pound. **Price:** £1 per pound.

GEOLOGY AND METALLURGY

Nonadhesive

Surface: (24,1). An amazing substance with the extremely useful property that nothing can stick to it. Possible applications include cookware, and vehicles for use in the muddy regions of Venus. **Weight:** Negligible. **Price:** Covering an object with nonadhesive surface adds 10% to the price of the item.

Monofilament: (30,2). Monofilament is an extremely thin cable with a variety of uses and some associated dangers. A single

strand of monofilament has a tensile strength of 100 pounds; additional fibers add their capacity. Because of its thinness, monofilament can seriously injure persons handling it. A strand of monofilament is a perfect blade, capable of cutting through almost any substance like a wire through cheese. **Weight:** 100 feet of monofilament weighs half a pound. **Price:** £1 per foot.

FLIGHT

Ornithopter: (27,5). An ornithopter is a flying machine that mimics the flight of birds. An ornithopter is thus capable of vertical takeoff and landing, and can fly at a speed of 40 mph plus 10 times the Reliability of the device. Ornithopters can carry a pilot and either one passenger or 200 pounds of cargo. **Weight:** 1000 pounds. **Price:** £100. **Fuel:** 20 pounds of gasoline per hour; normal fuel capacity is 100 pounds.

PRECISION MACHINERY

Kinetographic Camera: (17,2). A fascinating device which records movement on long reels of celluloid film. When the films are developed and run at the proper speed, moving images can be seen. The device must be cranked by hand. **Weight:** 25 pounds. A reel of film weighs 2 pounds per 15 minutes of running time. **Price:** A camera costs £20, and film costs 5d per minute of running time.

Air Gun: (23,3). A firearm similar to an ordinary rifle, which uses compressed air rather than powder to propel the bullets. This makes the air gun utterly silent and smokeless. The disadvantage is that the weapon's air tank must be filled using a large compressor, making it unsuitable for field use. An air gun has the firing characteristics of a lever-action carbine in all respects. It can hold enough compressed air to fire a complete magazine of six shots. **Weight:** 10 pounds. **Price:** £150.

COMBUSTION

Rocket Rifle: (27,2). This weapon is particularly useful for low-gravity environments, where the recoil from an ordinary weapon would be troublesome. A rocket rifle fires small solid-fuel rockets, thus eliminating recoil and the need for a heavy barrel. Its rate of fire is 1, and it must be reloaded after every shot. It inflicts a wound of 1 and has no required Strength. The range is 100 yards. **Weight:** 5 pounds. **Price:** £3. The ammunition costs 10/- for each shot.

Incendiary Bullets: (17,2). These bullets, impregnated with phosphorus or some similar chemical, are especially effective against highly flammable targets (such as zeppelins). Objects hit by incendiary bullets have a chance of catching fire equal to the Reliability of the bullets. The effect on living targets is normal. **Price:** £1 per 50 rounds. Ω

The PCs are summoned to the British Legation in Syrtis Major. There, they are told that a European, Lawrence Carson, has been kidnapped by Hill Martians—steppe nomads of the Nepenthes-

Thoth Steppe. The British Legation is aware of the situation because a Hill Martian nomad delivered a ransom note. The PCs are asked, in the queen's name, to rescue the poor chap before something unspeakable happens to him. It is possible that German agents are behind this ungentlemanly scheme.

Should any cad in the party require a reward beyond that of knowing he has served the queen and rescued a fellow Englishman from the clutches of the local barbarians, the legation will reluc-

tantly pay him £30—and do their best to make him feel thoroughly guilty about it.

APPROACH

The legation gives the group a map showing the general location of the nomads' campsite (use the map on page 164 of *Space: 1889*). The campsite is in the hex due west of the city of Thoth. The party needs to make its way there, then locate nomad camp. The PCs must devise their own plan for rescuing Carson. The legation has told them that Carson is a sound fellow, who can be counted on to keep his head in a crisis.

RETRIEVAL

During the trip out, the referee should roll for encounters normally using the tables in the rulebook. After accomplishing their mission, the adventurers

will make their way back to Syrtis Major, hopefully with Carson or a letter from him explaining the situation. Normal encounter rolls are appropriate. Should the party have angered the steppe nomads (say by perforating a number of them with heavy revolvers in a fit of pique), those worthies will follow them as far as Shastapsh, where the local British garrison will dissuade them from further pursuit.

MAP

The map is taken from the Shutterbug scenario card in *Twilight Encounters* (or *Twilight: 2000* second edition), as it can be used as a generic temporary encampment in almost any time period or campaign. It is reproduced here for your convenience.

When the characters arrive, there are



Exogamous

only 20-30 Hill Martians present, though several hundred more will arrive for a wedding feast over the next few days. So the longer the PCs take making their move, the more outnumbered they will be. The guards are expecting some Red Men to attend as Carson's guests, so they will be friendly toward the PCs unless attacked. The PCs should not know this at first, so they will probably either sneak in or launch an assault. Sentry positions are marked on the map.

The tribe's chief and his daughter, Kallinak, are in tent 4; Carson is in tent 6. If the would-be rescuers observe the camp for a while before making their approach, they will see Carson wandering around the place freely and without concern, apparently on friendly terms with the Martians, especially with an attractive and richly dressed girl.

REFEREEING THE SCENARIO

Running this scenario may give PCs the impression that humans and Martians can intermarry, in the tradition of pulp writers such as Edgar Rice Burroughs. If you don't like this approach, you may want to devise an alternative plot line.

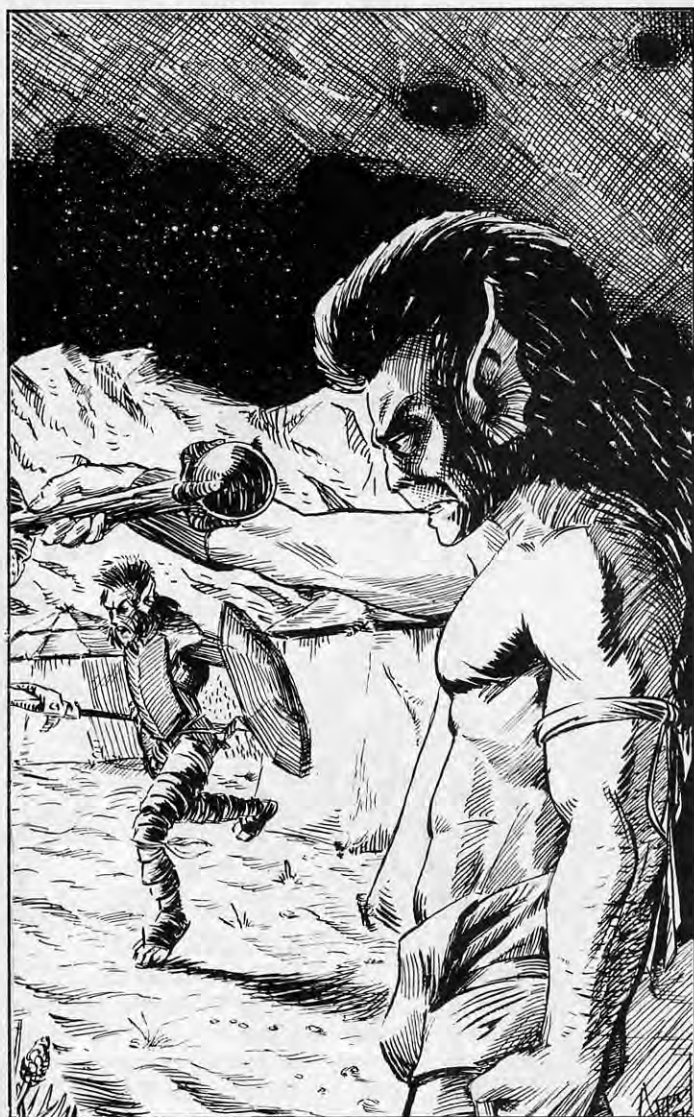
For the truth is that Carson has not been kidnapped—he has "gone native," marrying into the steppe nomads. The "ransom note," in a dialect poorly understood by the British, is in fact an invitation to Carson's wedding to a Hill Martian princess. Carson's explanatory covering note was lost by the courier on the way to Syrtis Major, and his explanation was not understood.

While he poses as a footloose adventurer and explorer, Carson is in fact a foreign office agent on a delicate mis-

sion among the nomads. It is this which explains the British Legation's interest in the affair, their suspicions of German involvement and their reluctance to simply send an aerial gunboat to blast the tribe into submission. However, neither Carson nor the legation planned on his romantic involvement with Kallinak.

If the PCs resolve the matter without bloodshed, the legation will officially be pleased that a strong bond had been forged between the nomads and the British by Carson's wedding, although he will be ostracized by some for going native. The tribe and the happy couple will treat them hospitably, and all will be well-disposed toward them in future encounters.

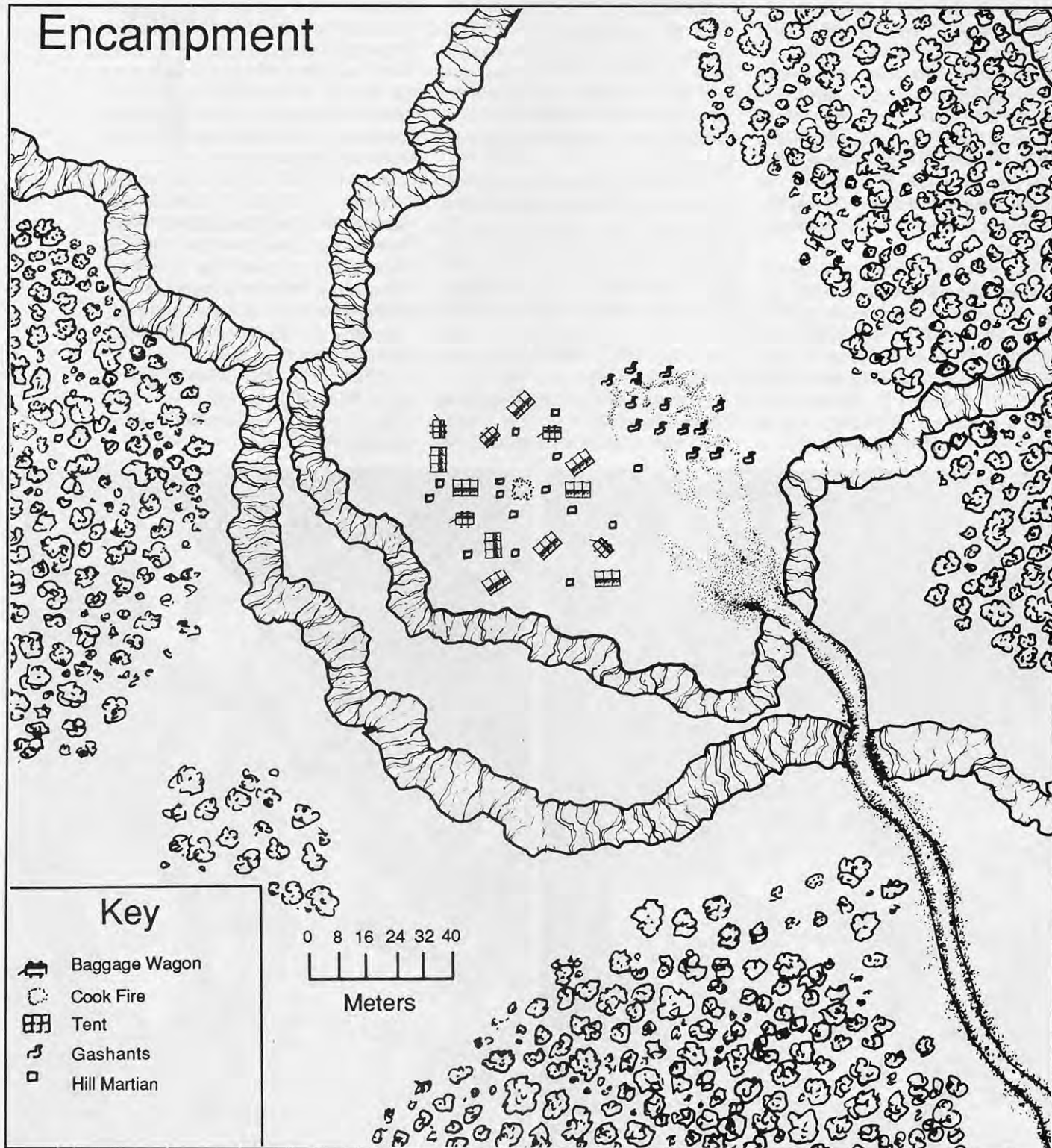
If the rescue attempt results in violence, especially if Kallinak is killed, the PCs will gain the nomads and Carson as bitter enemies.



Mating

By Andy Slack

Encampment



NPCs

Kidnapped European: Lawrence Carson is an Elite foreign office agent. His motivations are Leader, Aggressive. He is dressed as a Hill Martian warrior and is unarmored, but carries a heavy revolver and a saber. Carson's charisma has served him well and has caused the tribe to accept him. He feels the barbaric life-style suits him much better than that of the typical European, especially since his lowly birth will forever bar him from true power in Britain.

When the chief dies, Carson's marriage will give him control of the nomad tribe.

Hill Martian Princess: Kallinak is an Experienced Hill Martian. Her motivations are Arrogant, Adventurousome. As the chief's only child, Kallinak has been treated with deference since birth and has lacked for nothing. She has come to consider this her right and so appears arrogant. Kallinak has been trained in the arts of rulership and war, which has given her a taste for adventure and the confidence to undertake it.

ALTERNATIVES AND VARIANTS

Should your group prefer a genuine kidnapping, assume that the steppe nomad chief intends to forcibly marry Carson to his daughter. This will mean he does not need to pay for his daughter's dowry. Furthermore, under local (Thoth) law, the son-in-law is responsible for supporting all his bride's relatives—and is Carson not an off-worlder, therefore by definition incredibly rich? Ω

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with Van der Brugg

MELAS: PORTRAIT

*Ruled by the Belgian Coprates Company,
the Martian city of Melas is very corrupt,
and bribery is required to get anything done.
Among the demoralized Martians who live there,
anything can be had for a price.*

By James L. Cambias

Melas is the capital of the Upper Coprates Valley, one of the strongholds of colonial power on Mars. Its population is 101,700 (including 9100 Terrans). Ruled by the Belgian Coprates Company, the city is very corrupt—bribery is required to get anything done. Among the demoralized Martians, anything can be had for a price.

Nonetheless, Melas is quite prosperous. It was always an agricultural center, specializing in the production of *gumme*, the Martian rubber substitute. The coming of the Belgians has made Melas a major trading center, and many natives have grown rich. The inhabitants are understandably hostile toward Terrans. But the brutal methods used to suppress unrest ensure that this hostility is kept private.

HISTORY

For centuries, Melas was a subject of Po-poo-hanna-kitai (now New Amsterdam). It became independent 400 years ago, after a revolt led by the Krojoser family of nobles. The family ruled Melas until 1876, when beings from Earth arrived in the valley. Initially, the Belgian scientific and trading expeditions were met with curiosity and nervous hospitality. This changed to enmity as the traders began resorting to outright theft of supplies and valuables.

In 1879, Melasian forces attacked the expeditions, and for a time it seemed that the Terrans might be driven away. But King Leopold responded by establishing the Belgian Legion, an army of adventurers and mercenaries. The le-

gion took the field in 1880, and a series of battles eventually led to the capture of Melas in 1883. In fact, Leopold did not want to conquer the valley—he would have preferred to bully local rulers into cooperating, thus saving an enormous expense. But the ham-fisted methods of the legion prevented a peaceful resolution.

In 1885, the Upper Coprates Republic was established under the rule of the Coprates Company. Other European powers recognized the new state, under a general agreement defining “spheres of interest” on Mars and Venus. Remnants of the old Melasian Army continue a campaign of guerrilla raids against the Belgians.

COPRATES COMPANY

The Coprates Company (Société General du Coprates) is a publicly held corporation. King Leopold has a 50% controlling interest. The company holds a monopoly on commerce in and out of the Upper Coprates. All cargo to and from Earth is carried on company ether flyers, and all cloudship or canal shipping must pay the company's tariffs. It owns and operates all the *gumme* plantations in the Upper Coprates, and collects a head tax from villages and cities. The plantations are worked by prisoners and forced-labor draftees, under dreadful conditions.

In the Lower Coprates (which is a protectorate of Belgium), its monopolies are limited. Other Belgian firms engage in *gumme* production and processing, and trade is allowed to both Belgian and non-Belgian shippers. Nev-

ertheless, the Coprates Company controls most *gumme* production in the lower valley.

ARMED FORCES

Melas is garrisoned by a regiment of the Belgian Legion, four regiments of Coprates Company troops and a mercenary force of Hill Martian cavalry.

Belgian Legion: The Belgian Legion troops are humans of all nationalities. The Third Regiment, headquartered in Melas, is relatively well disciplined, with Good quality troops. It has 180 men, plus a troop of 20 cavalry and a battery of 12-pounder cannon. The regiment is quartered at the royal fortress, but one battalion is normally out in the field hunting rebels.

Coprates Company: Coprates Company troops are all Canal Martian—a mixture of mercenaries, landless peasants and draftees. Officers are all Terrans. Company troops are generally much more humane than the legion. They are of Green quality and are armed with rifle muskets. There are three infantry regiments and one cavalry regiment. Each occupies one fortress. A police force of 100 men (40 Terrans and 60 Martians) is headquartered at the palace; the men live in town and are armed with pistols and swords.

Mercenary Cavalry: The Hill Martian mercenary cavalry force consists of 300 men armed with bows, swords and lances. They are quartered at Fort Ghent and are of Fair quality. They have nothing but contempt for the natives of the valley.

Artillery: The artillery is grouped into five batteries. Forts Leopold, Ghent and

OF A MARTIAN CITY



Space: 1889

Waterloo each have a Rogue gun and two heavy cannon. One mobile battery of three light guns is based at Fort Albert, and another of three rod guns is based at Fort Louvain. The two gates each have a Mitrailleuse emplacement.

Fleet: Most of the city's ships were destroyed or went over to the rebels. Four fell into the company's hands. One *Swiftwood*-class kite has been re-fitted with modern weapons (a 4" short gun forward, two 3-pdr. Hotchkiss cannon on the wings, and a pair of Mitrailleuse machineguns broadside). It has a Trained quality Terran crew. The others (a *Swift Air* screw galley, a *Bloodrunner* kite and a *Sky Runner* galley) have Green Martian crews and Belgian officers. The Belgian government's three steam gunboats are based at Copratia, but frequently stop at Melas.

REBELS

When Melas fell to the Belgians, most of the army was sent to the *gumme* plantations. A junior member of the ruling dynasty, Count Ak-jo-taar, led a small force to safety in the mountains. They were joined by other remnants of the army and by untrained young Martians yearning to fight.

Currently, Ak-jo-taar commands 600 infantry, 300 cavalry and 10 cannon (four light, three heavy and three rod). Half are Excellent quality (the cavalry, artillery and 120 infantry), armed with rifle muskets and some modern rifles. The rest are Poor quality, and have smoothbore muskets and bows.

The rebels get most of their supplies by raiding plantations and company facilities. Other cities contribute some weapons and money. It is suspected that a gang of anarchists helped the count purchase modern guns from American dealers.

The bulk of the army is fanatically anti-Terran. There have been atrocities committed at remote outposts, and the Ground Cleanser cult's influence is strong. But Count Ak-jo-taar has realized that Terran public opinion is a potential weapon against the Belgians. So he tries to restrain his troops and works to improve his relations with vari-

Daytime Encounters

Type Encounter # Die Roll	Company 5	City 4	Slum 5	Outside 4
1	Soldiers	Soldiers	Thugs	Thugs
2	Police	Police	Beggar	Beggar
3	Official	Tourist	Sailors	Dealer
4	Merchant	Merchant	Merchant	Merchant
5	Official	Citizen	Thief	Thief
6	Accident	Accident	Accident	Accident

Nighttime Encounters

Type Encounter # Die Roll	Company 1	City 2	Slum 3	Outside 5
1	Soldiers	Soldiers	Thugs	Thugs
2	Soldiers	Police	Thugs	Beggar
3	Police	Police	Sailors	Dealer
4	Police	Citizen	Thief	Merchant
5	Official	Thief	Thief	Thief
6	Thief	Thugs	Beggar	Rebel

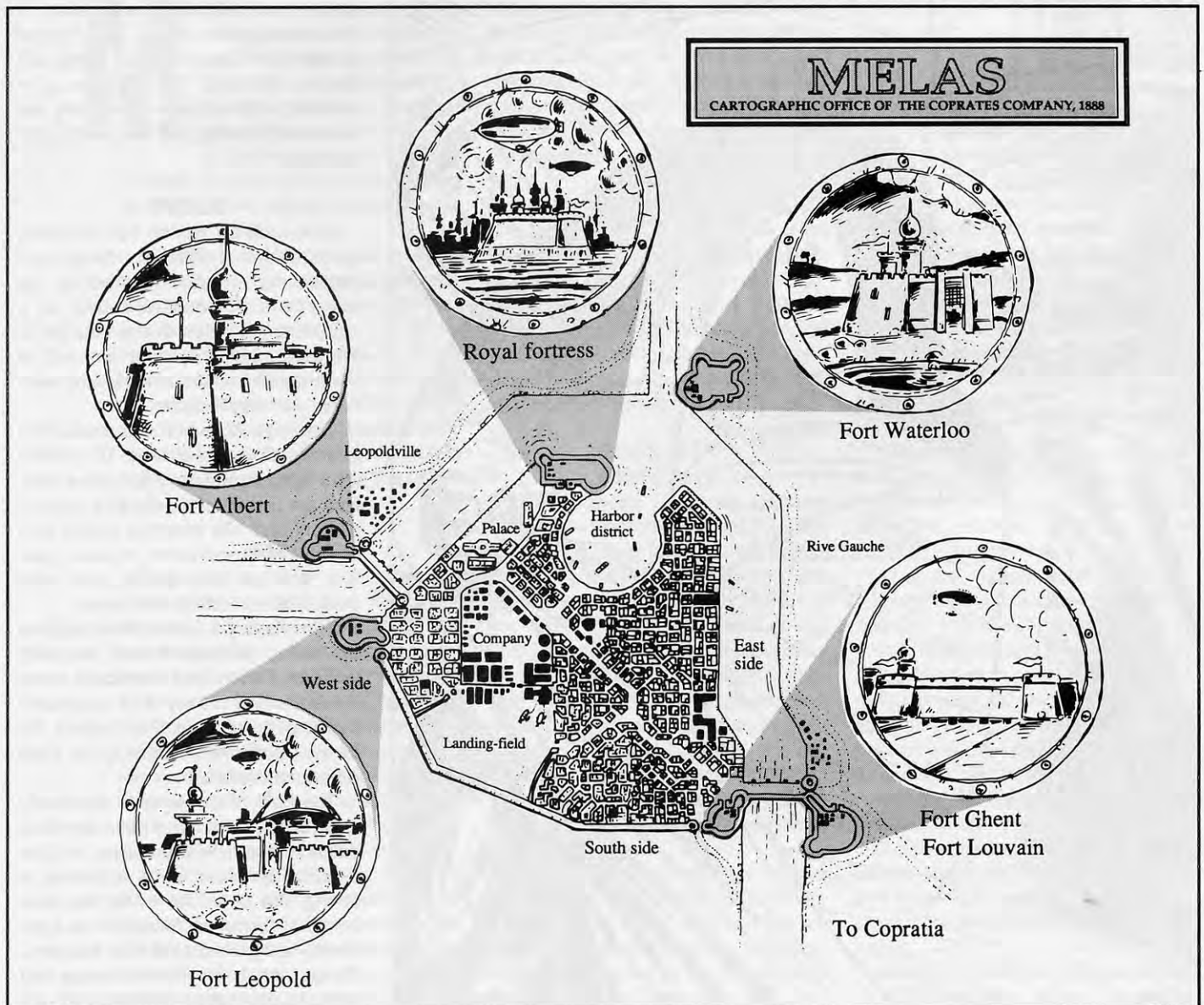
ous Terran organizations.

A network of rebel supporters exists in Melas, and from time to time an agent will slip into the city to get news of Belgian activities. The network may even include some Terrans within the company.

CITY DISTRICTS

Palace: Once the home of the Kro-jo-ser dynasty, the palace complex is now occupied by the governor-general and the upper-level administrative offices of the Coprates Company. The compound adjoins the royal fortress. Access is unrestricted—a stream of businessmen and officials goes in and out all day. The Tower of Gold, which once held the royal treasury, is now open to tourists and provides a splendid view of the city.

West Side: This region is home to the city's remaining aristocrats, along with newly rich merchants. Streets in



this section are named for the Martian virtues: Hope, Courage, Truth, Persistence, Honesty, etc. The British, French, American and German consulates are all in this neighborhood. At the end of Wisdom Street stands the Temple of the Sun.

Company Compound: During the final siege, the bombardment started a massive fire that destroyed much of the city's center. The Coprates Company walled off the area to serve as a base of operations. The compound holds the massive *gumme* processing plant, warehouses and living quarters for the company's Terran employees. Access is restricted to company employees or those on legitimate business, but a small bribe will get anyone in.

Landing Field: The landing field has doubled in size since the company took over. The remnants of Melas' cloudship fleet are based here, and the powerful Belgian steam gunboats are a frequent sight. The three drydocks here can build wooden ships up to Hull Size 10 but cannot construct steamships. There is a weekly packet service from Melas to New Amsterdam and Copratia.

Harbor District: The harbor basin was the work of ancient Martian engineers. It suffers from silting, and teams of laborers constantly dredge it. The port is usually full of *gumme* barges being unloaded. The company keeps a small steam launch armed with a Gatling gun here. Some industrial buildings are located along the canal, including the old bronze foundry, where the city's cannon and armaments were made.

South Side: The narrow and twisting streets of this area are home to the poorer citizens, many of whom are being forced out during the periodic army sweeps for rebels. Terrans should avoid this area, even during the day.

Market: In the center of town is the market square, where goods are sold on market day. Nearby stands the old Harvest Goddess temple complex, which has been converted into the Church of St. Albert.

"Rive Gauche" and "Leopoldville": Outside the city gates are two collections of hovels and shanties, inhabited by refugees, peasants evicted from their farms and exiles from the city. Both are hives of misery and vice.

East Side: This quiet part of town is inhabited by what remains of the middle class in Melas, along with increasing numbers of Terrans. The old Melasian Scientific Academy stands by the canal; it has no more students, but scholars from all over Mars still come to use the library.

ENCOUNTERS

The city has been divided into four regions: company (the palace, landing field and company compound), city (the east side, market and west side), slums (the harbor district and south side), and outside (Rive Gauche and Leopoldville).

Encounter Descriptions

Soldiers: A Belgian squad of either legion or company troops will question and harass suspicious-looking Martians, but will leave most Terrans alone.

Police: 2D6 city police, led by at

GEORGES FLAMANDE, GOVERNOR-GENERAL (GREEN NPC)

Flamande is in charge of all the Coprates Company's operations on Mars. His fundamental responsibility is to make a profit. Consequently, all his decisions are made on the basis of cost versus benefit. Anything that threatens the company is to be eliminated as efficiently as possible.

Motives: Mercantile, Ambitious.

Appearance: Flamande is a small, well-dressed man with a waxed mustache and goatee. He seldom lets himself get excited, and tries always to seem totally emotionless and controlled.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 1 (bashing)
Agl: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 1 (rifle)
End: 1	
Int: 6	Observation 6
Chr: 5	Eloquence 6, Bargaining 4, Linguistics 3 (English, Memnite, Thark), Theatrics 1
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 2

CAPTAIN JEAN TENBROEK (EXPERIENCED NPC)

Captain Tenbroek commands the Melas Police Force, and is in charge of maintaining order in the city and environs. He keeps a large network of informants and secret operatives to ferret out signs of revolt. Tenbroek is particularly cruel, but does his duty with great thoroughness and efficiency, letting nothing stand in his way. There is another side to Tenbroek, however. He is insatiably curious, and delights in unraveling puzzles and mysteries. He is particularly interested in Martian antiquities.

Motives: Ruthless, Knowledge.

Appearance: Tenbroek is a slightly overweight man who wheezes audibly in the thin Martian air. He has penetrating eyes and bushy eyebrows. Tenbroek prefers to dress casually in comfortable civilian clothes.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 3 (edged weapon)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 3 (pistol), Crime 2 (forgery)
End: 1	Fieldcraft 1, Tracking 2
Int: 5	Observation 5, Science 2 (archaeology)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Linguistics 1 (Memnite), Theatrics 1
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (horse), Leadership 2, Medicine 1

COUNT AK-JO-TAAR (TRAINED NPC)

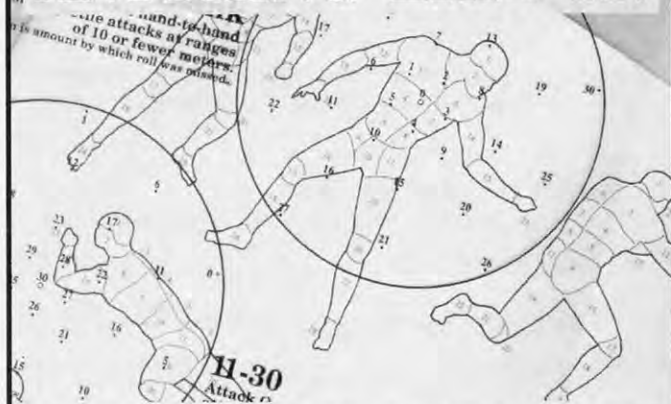
The count is one of the few surviving members of the ruling house of Melas. He currently leads the rebel army hiding out in the mountains. The count is determined to free Melas from the Belgians. He once hated all Terrans, but over the past few years has learned that not all are as bad as the ones who conquered his homeland.

Motives: Driven, Hatred (of Belgians).

Appearance: The count is small for a Martian, but one seldom notices this because of his overwhelming personal magnetism and intensity. He usually wears a much-used suit of battle armor or else dresses in the few elaborate garments that remain to him.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 2 (polearm)
Agl: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 1 (rifle)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (foraging), Fieldcraft 1
Int: 3	Observation 2, Gunnery 1 (muzzle-loading weapon)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 2 (Thaumasian, French)
Soc: 6	Riding 5 (gashant), Leadership 2

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Millennium's End is Chameleon Eclectic's trademark for its contemporary roleplaying system.

least one Terran officer. They will behave much like soldiers.

Merchant: Merchants vary from place to place. In company areas, merchants are Terrans interested in making deals. Elsewhere, they are Martians with something to sell. The quality and legality of what they are selling depends on the neighborhood.

Accident: The party witnesses an accident. This can be anything from a ruumet breehr running wild to a house fire. The adventurers may be called upon to help or even save their own lives.

Official: A company official performing his duties. Most will require a bribe to give any help or information to the player characters.

Thief: During the day, a thief encounter will be a lone pickpocket or purse-snatcher. At night, it will be a gang of 1D6

bandits armed with knives.

Tourist: One or more Terran tourists visiting Melas. Tourists may be competent adventurers or helpless "innocents abroad."

Citizen: An ordinary Martian resident of Melas. Citizens will avoid contact with Terrans and will not be very helpful unless paid.

Thugs: A band of 1D6 young Martians armed with clubs and knives. They are chiefly interested in beating up and robbing Terrans, but will not attack a well armed group.

Beggar: A lone Martian beggar, possibly diseased or deformed. Beggars are sometimes lookouts for gangs of thieves.

Sailors: A group of 1D6 Martian boatmen. During the day, they will be sober and grudgingly helpful if paid. At night, they will be drunk and hostile.

Dealer: A dealer in vice of any kind—pimps, drug dealers, illegal arms merchants or worse.

Rebel: One or more members of the rebel underground, usually in disguise (roll again to determine their disguise). Rebels are almost always hostile and well armed. Ω

For an exciting adventure in the city of Melas, don't miss "Treasure of Melas" by James L. Cambias in Challenge 70.

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Treasure of Melas

...You may search from the bronze dragon's egg 'till you run out of hope and persistence. Yet all you find is lifeless and cold, fit only for exiles or dead men.

By James L. Cambias

While in Syrtis Major, one of the player characters gets a letter from an old acquaintance named Simon Moon. Moon is a trader and adventurer who has been involved in odd bits of business all over Mars. He has been, at times, an explorer, mercenary, gun-runner, missionary, privateer, bounty hunter and bartender. The letter is brief and cryptic:

Dear (PC),

Being followed—no time. Keep papers safe until I claim them. Worth a fortune.

There are two other documents with the letter—a poem, written in some Martian language, and a much-worn commercial map of the city of Melas, in the Belgian Coprates.

Unfortunately, Moon will never reclaim the packet. In the evening edition of the *Martian Gazette* is a short item telling of the unfortunate death of Mr. Simon J. Moon. According to the police, Moon was found dead in an alley near the harbor district of Syrtis Major. He had been stabbed several times with a large knife. As yet, the police have no suspects.

POEM

The poem enclosed with the letter is written in the Memnite dialect (the dominant tongue in the Upper Coprates Valley). Using available resources in Syrtis Major, it is not hard to produce a decent translation:

*Truth lies hidden, and lies hide truth.
You may search far and wide and find nothing.
You may search from the house of Ak-taar-voon's love
to the place where the stars are collected.
Or else you may search from the bronze dragons' egg
'til you run out of hope and persistence.
Yet all you will find is lifeless and cold,
fit only for exiles or dead men.*

Nobody familiar with Martian literature can recognize the poem or shed any light on its meaning.

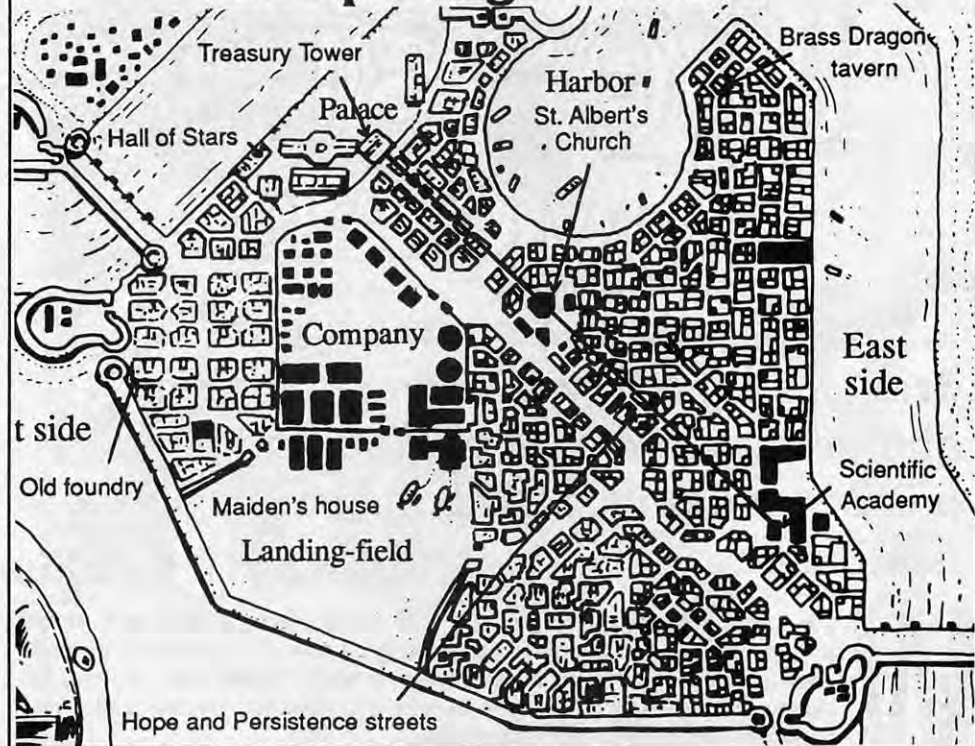
SINISTER VISITORS

If the player characters remain in Syrtis Major, a few nights after Moon's death they will be visited by a man named Gustave Brun. Brun wants to buy the documents which Moon sent to the PCs. He offers £1000 for them.

If the characters want to sell, Brun may be talked into raising his bid to £2000. If that isn't enough, he will sigh and depart. Two nights later, the home of the character to whom Moon sent the letter will be burgled by a pair of hired Martian thugs looking for the documents. If questioned, the robbers will claim they were hired by a short, heavy-set Earthman to find the poem.

Naturally, this sort of strange goings-on should encourage the adventurers to go to Melas

Interpreting the Poem



and get to the bottom of the matter. Otherwise, they will continue to be plagued by robberies and mysterious threats.

MELAS

Undoubtedly, the PCs will have several interesting adventures in the course of travelling to Melas. Once there, they can begin trying to find out why the poem is so important.

Shortly after their arrival, the player characters will get a message inviting them to meet with Captain Jean Tenbroek, head of the Melas Police. If they do not go, Tenbroek will send Sergeant Gustave Brun and some police to bring them by force.

At his office, Tenbroek informs the adventurers that he wants to tell them a little story. *"When the legion began final assault on the city of Melas in 1883, the prince resolved to hold out until the bitter end, though it was obvious that the city had no chance. To keep the crown and other regalia out of Terran hands, he concealed it somewhere in the city and hid clues to the location in a poem. Somehow, your friend Mr. Moon came into possession of that poem, and I believe you now have it. Let me be frank—it is useless to you. Only someone like myself with an intimate knowledge of the city can find the treasure. I offer you £2500 and passage back to Syrtis Major in exchange for the poem. If you do not sell it to me, your visit to*

Melas will not be a pleasant one."

If the PCs refuse to sell the poem, Tenbroek will indeed take steps to harass them. A police agent will follow the party members whenever they go out, and the characters' rooms will be searched frequently.

Captain Tenbroek will also have his spy Ta-na-roo attempt to ingratiate himself with the adventurers and report back on their progress. And if the PCs do violate any law while in Melas, they can be sure of spending some time locked up.

DECIPHERING THE POEM

The poem is a coded set of directions to the hidden Melassian regalia. There are four major clues—each refers to a specific location in the city, all noted on the referee's map. Lines drawn connecting the four spots will intersect at the treasure's hiding place. The clues were devised so that only a native Melassian could figure them out, thus protecting the treasure if the poem fell into Belgian hands.

First Clue: The third line of the poem mentions "the house of Ak-taar-voon's love." Most older Martian inhabitants of the city will recognize the name; Ak-taar-voon was the ruling prince from 1805 to 1823. But he never married and kept no harem. Some historical research, possibly at the Melas Academy, will reveal that the prince was an extremely rapacious and miserly ruler, who raised

taxes to the limit and cut spending to the bone. A little logic may lead the players to see that the line refers to the treasury tower on the palace grounds, where all the royal money (the prince's true love) was kept.

The player characters may encounter a red herring in their research: a talkative old Martian in the market square will tell them that the prince once fell in love with a beautiful low-born maiden. His family opposed the match and had her assassinated. In his grief, the prince swore never to love again. Her house was in the center of the district now occupied by the Coprates Company compound. The old Martian is lying—he just likes to tell tall stories to Earthmen.

Second Clue: The fourth line of the poem mentions a place "where the stars are collected." The key word is *stars*. The Melas Scientific Academy has a tall tower built for astrological observations. Anyone at the academy can tell the adventurers about the tower.

A fiendish referee might add the following red herring: one room at the palace is known as the Hall of Stars, and is decorated with hundreds of crystal stars set in the ceiling.

Third Clue: The fifth line of the poem mentions the "bronze dragon's egg." This is a very obscure clue. The "bronze dragons" refers to the old bronze cannons, which are decorated to look like fantastic dragon heads. The "egg" is the old foundry where the guns were cast. If the characters do any historical research about Melas, they may find a written reference to the dragon-shaped cannons. Otherwise, the adventurers might see some of the guns and notice their appearance. Once the "bronze dragons" have been identified, their egg should be deducible.

If it seems that the players are figuring out the clues too easily, the referee can add a diversion in the form of the Brass Dragon tavern, by the harbor mouth. The tavern is a favorite with bargemen, and can be dangerous for Terrans after dark.

Fourth Clue: The sixth line of the poem advises the reader to search "till you run out of hope and persistence." This refers to the intersection of Hope Street and Persistence Street, in the affluent west side of Melas. The players may notice the street names while visiting the British Consul, whose house is on Hope Street. And a good map of the city will have the street names marked.

HIDING PLACE

After the PCs have deciphered the clues in the poem, they must still find the

treasure's hiding place. The two bearings indicated by the four locations intersect at what was once a Martian temple, now used by the Belgians as St. Albert's Church.

Church: The church is a large domed building, built of massive stone blocks. Inside is a huge central chamber and a number of rooms off to the side. The old Martian idol depicting the Harvest Goddess has been removed. Most of the chambers are unused and empty. All of them once had elaborate decorations—mosaics, reliefs and statuary—but the Belgians looted the building thoroughly before turning it over to the church. Father Anton Lascaux lives in one room at the rear of the temple.

Stone: In a small room opening off the main temple chamber, the player characters will find a stone slab set in the floor, carved with the words "Truth lies hidden, and lies hide truth." That is the first line of the poem, and beneath the slab is hidden the regalia.

Treasure: The cache beneath the slab contains a crown, a golden sword and a bejeweled ceremonial robe. The three items are worth £15,000 intact, and the gold and jewels would bring £9000 separately.

Confrontation: Unless the adventurers have been extremely careful, Captain Tenbroek will know when they have found the treasure. He will send Sergeant Brun and a squad of police to confiscate the regalia. The player characters may have to battle the police to keep their treasure. Even if they evade the police, getting the treasure out of Melas could be an adventure in itself.

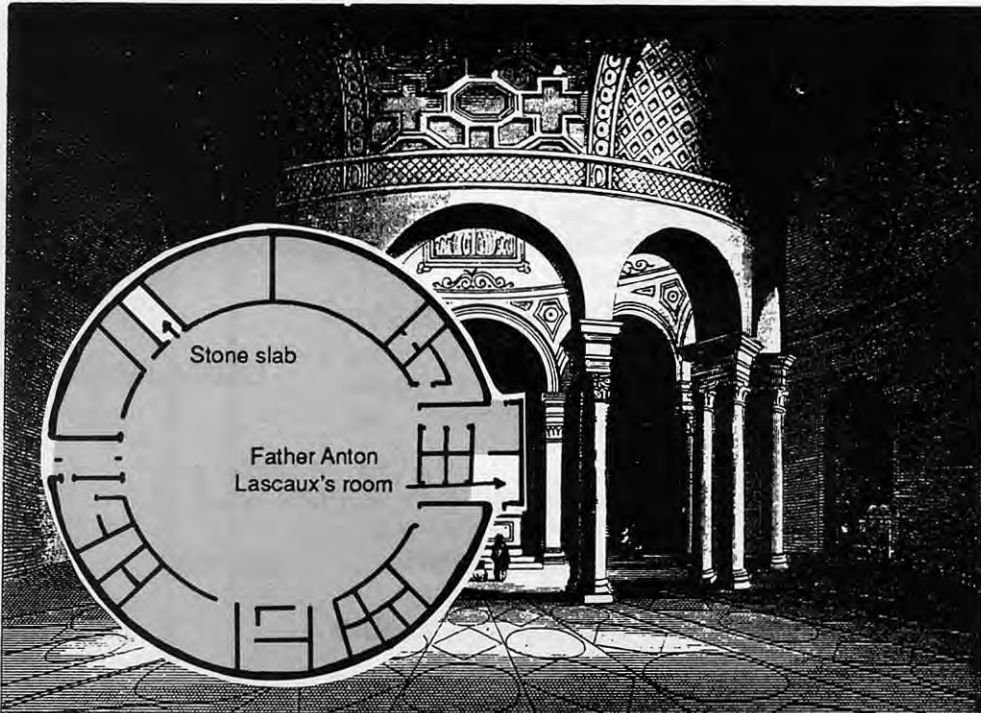
SERGEANT GUSTAVE BRUN

Sergeant Brun is in charge of the "special squad" of the Melas Police. His job is to eliminate rebels and their sympathizers by any means necessary. Sergeant Brun is totally loyal to Captain Tenbroek and will do anything the captain commands.

Motives: Loyal (to Captain Tenbroek), Aggressive.

Appearance: Brun is a short, barrel-shaped man, and is massively strong. His bullet-shaped head seems to rest directly on his wide shoulders. The sergeant wears a Coprates Company uniform and always goes armed. He speaks French with a Flemish accent.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 6	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 3 (edged weapon)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 2 (rifle), Crime 2 (pick locks)



End: 3	Wilderness Travel 3 (foraging), Fieldcraft 2
Int: 4	Observation 4, Gunnery 1 (machinegun)
Chr: 1	Linguistics 2 (Memnite, Koline), Theatrics 2
Soc: 2	Riding 1 (gashant), Leadership 1

TA-NA-ROO

Ta-na-roo is a young, innocent-looking Martian, who is Captain Tenbroek's most resourceful spy. He is totally amoral and doesn't care who he betrays so long as the price is right. His reports have sent scores of rebels to the gumme plantations. Captain Tenbroek has ordered him to attach himself to the party of PCs, as a servant or guide, and stay with them as they try to locate the treasure.

Motives: Mercantile, Liar.

Appearance: Ta-na-roo is painfully thin, even for a Martian, and his hair is long and unkempt. He wears ragged, cast-off clothes, held together with string. But he can be very charming, and is very useful as a guide to Melas. His native language is Memnite.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 1 (edged)
Agl: 6	Stealth 6, Crime 4 (pick pockets)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2
Int: 5	Observation 5
Chr: 4	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 3 (French, Thark, Koline), Theatrics 4, Bargaining 1
Soc: 1	

FATHER ANTON LASCAUX

Father Lascaux is the vicar of St. Albert's Church and is in charge of all Catholic missionary efforts in Melas. He is a kindly old man, who is terribly distressed by the brutality of the Coprates Company and the Belgian Legion. His missionary work has been very unsuccessful—the Martians consider him to be just another Terran come to enslave them. Father Lascaux has made an extensive study of antiquities in Melas and knows a great deal about the city's past.

Motives: Honest, Friendly.

Appearance: Father Lascaux is a tall and slender old man with snow-white hair and thick spectacles. He has a pleasant expression and speaks softly. He always wears a threadbare black cassock. Lascaux's native language is French.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	Fisticuffs 1
Agl: 2	Stealth 1
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mapping)
Int: 5	Observation 4, Science 4 (archaeology)
Chr: 6	Eloquence 6, Linguistics 4 (English, Memnite, Thark, Koline), Theatrics 1
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (horse), Leadership 2, Medicine 2

For background information on the Martian city of Melas, refer to "Melas" by James L. Cambias in *Challenge* 69.

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Secret of the Swamp

By James L. Cambias

I don't recall what madness induced me to accompany Dr. Blogsworth and Miss Peabody on their botanical expedition into the Mylomeroean Swamp. For two weeks I lived in damp clothes, with nothing to eat but tinned beef, nothing to drink but brown swamp water, and nothing to do but listen to the two of them bicker about their plant specimens. I decided the swamp was no place for an ambitious young officer of the Queen's army.

Then we found the burned village and the piled bodies, and it seemed as if I might have something to do after all.

The PCs have been persuaded to accompany a scientific expedition into the mist-shrouded backwaters of the Mylmeroean Swamp, north of the British colony on Mars.

The leader is Dr. Clement Blogsworth, a noted scientist, who is offering explorers £200 to join the expedition. (The adventure "The Lurker in the Moor," published in GDW's **More Tales From the Ether**, involves a trip into the Mylmeroean Swamp; at the referee's discretion, that scenario and this one can be combined.)

Expedition Plan: There will be six Terrans on the expedition, including Dr. Blogsworth and the PCs (extra Terrans will be NPC scientists). The party is taking food and supplies sufficient for four weeks of travel in the swamp. The entire expedition will travel in 10 collapsible canvas canoes, with 14 Martian bearers. The group will travel north from Syrtis Major aboard a commercial canal-boat. The referee should encourage the players to plan what supplies to bring, within the limits of what the bearers and the canoes can carry.

Goals: The expedition's purpose is to explore a large section of the swamp, gathering samples of plants and animals, mapping important terrain features, and establishing friendly relations with the swamp tribes.

WITHIN THE SWAMP

The Mylmeroean Swamp is a vast tract of land flooded by a rupture in the Mylarkt-Meroe Canal. It is heavily overgrown, and the waterways are almost always covered by fogs, so that aerial mapping is impossible. No city exerts control over the region, and the constantly shifting waterways are an ideal hideout for bandits and outcasts.

Travel in the Swamp: The published adventure "The Lurker in the Moor" contains an excellent map of the swamp and a description of travel conditions there. Referees lacking a copy of it can use the following simplified system to generate terrain. For each new 10-mile hex entered, roll on the table below for the actual ground condition.

Swamp Terrain

Roll	Result
1	Bog
2-3	Swamp
4	Lake
5	Grassland
6	Forest

Travel is standard for each terrain type. A hex contains a swamp dweller village on a roll of 6. These are mostly small settlements of only a few dozen, but on a second roll of 6, it is a permanent hamlet of 100 people.

Fever: For every day spent in the swamps, each member of the expedition has a 1 in 6 chance of contracting Martian Swamp Fever. Once infected, the sufferer must make an Endurance task roll each day to recover (Easy if resting and under a doctor's care; Routine if resting or under a doctor's care; Difficult if neither; injuries increase all rolls by one level of difficulty). While suffering from fever, a PC's physical stats are all reduced by 1, and he must make an Easy: Endurance roll to avoid suffering hallucinations.

ENCOUNTERS IN THE SWAMP

All encounters should be rolled on the table on page 209 of the basic rulebook. All "swamp pirate" and "swamp pirate camp" rolls should be replaced by one of the special encounters described below.

Suspicious Villagers: An ordinary settlement of two dozen tribesmen, but they are tremendously hostile to outsiders. The eight warriors and braves will attack the party, first with arrows and then with swords. The tribe will flee if defeated and will not negotiate.

Abandoned Village: The PCs come upon a large swamp village that has been completely abandoned. Nothing has been taken from the huts, and food has been left out to spoil, but there are no people anywhere around.

Creepy Feeling: All day the members of the expedition will have the feeling they are being watched. Characters may catch a glimpse of someone lurking in the underbrush, but no amount of searching can find the culprit.

Destroyed Village: A small settlement is the scene of a terrible massacre. A dozen bodies are scattered about, and all the huts have been looted and burned. There are no survivors.

PIRATE ATTACK

After the PCs have been exploring for a while and have had a chance to experience the special encounters, their camp is attacked by a large band of swamp pirates. There should be twice as many pirates as there are members of the expedition. The bandits will kill Martians but will try to take the Terrans alive as prisoners. As the bearers flee in panic and the pirates close in all around, the PCs should realize that surrender is their only option.

The pirates are all armed with cutlasses and rifle muskets, and are all Experienced NPCs. They fight with a discipline and tactical sense unusual for mere bandits.

When the characters have been captured, they will be securely tied and bundled into canoes for the trip back to the pirate camp. All the precious scientific specimens will be left behind.

SECRET BASE

The boat ride seemed to last an eternity. The ropes cut into my arms like knives, and my wound throbbed painfully, but the worst part of the journey was not knowing what lay at the end of it. From the look of my captors, it probably wouldn't be anything pleasant.

As the pirate canoes round a bend in the waterway, the PCs will be startled to see two Oenotrian cloudships moored at the pirate camp. All around the ships are numerous tents and temporary buildings, while teams of swamp dwellers labor to construct walls and defenses. The two cloudships are a *Hullcutter* and a *Sky Runner* class.

There are 40 swamp pirates living in tents and huts in the center of the camp, and 10 Oenotrian Marines are bivouacked in tents near the two ships. Some 60 swamp villagers have been forced to work at the base, and they sleep out in the open, guarded by pirates and Oenotrians.

To anyone with any military experience, the presence of Oenotrians here is a grave threat to the British colony. The two ships can raid traffic on the canal, blockading the spice trade and endangering the alliance with the Boreosyrtis League. And with much of the British aerial fleet patrolling to the south, the vessels could raid Parhoon and Gorovaan.

Captain Dasgaar: The PCs are dragged from the canoes and led through the camp to the big tent, where Dasgaar, the Oenotrian captain, and Katooq, the pirate chief, are waiting.

"What have we here?" exclaims Dasgaar sarcastically. "Red Men! And so very far from their little rat-hole in Syrtis Major, too. You should not have come here, Earthlings. The swamps belong to Martians, not to you. Now who are you and what are you doing here?"

Dasgaar proceeds to grill the PCs about why they are in the swamps. Anyone reluctant to talk will be encouraged by blows and kicks from the Oenotrian Marines guarding the captain. When he is at last satisfied with the

information, Dasgaar will gesture dismissively. "Take them away and confine them with the hostages until dinner-time. I think it would be amusing to be served by an Earthling. We can wait until tomorrow to execute them."

PRISONERS OF THE OENOTRIANS

The adventurers will be held prisoner aboard the big *Hullcutter*-class screw galley, along with eight tribal leaders from the swamp villages, who are being kept as hostages. The prisoners are locked in the ship's brig, which is guarded by two soldiers. The room has no windows, and the heavy door is bolted from the outside. The PCs will be searched thoroughly, and all tools, weapons or valuables will be taken from them.

Hostages: The eight tribal elders will tell the PCs that they and their people were rounded up by the Oenotrians and the pirates, and forced to build fortifications for the base. If the villagers try to resist, the Oenotrians will execute the hostages. The elders are all fearful and will not assist in any escape attempts, but will not betray the characters to the Oenotrians.

Discovery: A Routine: Observation skill roll will enable one of the adventurers to notice that one of the swamp

villager hostages is wearing a peculiar dried root around his neck (he says it is a charm against toothache). A Formidable: Biology roll will reveal that the root is actually a potent hallucinogen and soporific. (If none of the PCs can recognize the root, then Dr. Blogsworth will.)

If it could be introduced into the Oenotrian officers' dinner while the PCs are serving them, most of the leaders might be incapacitated, giving the adventurers a chance to escape.

SLAVES OF THE SWAMP PIRATES

That night, the PCs are removed from the cell and taken to the big tent, where the Oenotrians and the pirates are feasting. Captain Dasgaar and his 10 officers are there, along with Katooq and a dozen of his pirate henchmen. Four Oenotrian Marines and half a dozen pirates are on guard, and everyone is armed.

The Terrans are put to work carrying dishes, cleaning spilled wine, and performing humiliating menial tasks for the Martians. Dasgaar and the others make numerous rude jokes at the expense of the characters, and any women will be coarsely harassed.

Special Ingredient: If the PCs have the dried root in a powder, it requires a

Difficult: Agility roll to slip it into the food unnoticed. The drug takes about 15 minutes to take effect. The diners will start to seem drunk, with slurred speech and loss of coordination. Once the hallucinations begin, things will get interesting. The Martians may attack each other or the PCs; the guards may suspect treachery. Both the Oenotrians and the pirates are suspicious of each other anyway, and the drug could bring hidden feelings to the surface. If a brawl begins, the adventurers might be able to slip out of the tent unnoticed, or else attack one of the guards.

Other Methods: If the adventurers are not using the drug, they may still be able to sow dissent among their captors. It is easy to see that the pirates and Oenotrians don't quite trust each

other. Appropriate use of Theatrics and Eloquence could be quite effective. A suicidally brave PC might try a show of bravado, challenging one of the leaders to combat. Or else an attractive lady character might distract one of the pirate guards.

BREAKOUT

If the PCs get a chance to slip out of the dining tent, they have several options. They may simply flee on foot or try to rouse the swamp villagers in revolt. Or players may come up with a plan of their own.

Escape Into the Swamp: If the adventurers are all in good health and are skilled at wilderness travel, they may simply run off into the swamp. A band of pirates will follow in pursuit a few minutes later, and the adventure becomes a long chase through the swamp toward the main canal, several days away. The PCs may be able to ambush their pursuers or possibly lose them in the marsh.

Slave Revolt: If the PCs are good leaders and are sufficiently eloquent, they may be able to rouse the captive swamp villagers to fight against the Oenotrians and the pirates. The villagers understand Parhooni, and most speak Koline and Umbran as well. It requires a Formidable: Eloquence or Leadership skill roll to get them to fight. If the adventurers have somehow been able to liberate the hostages from the Oenotrian ship, then the task is only Difficult.

Forces: There are 40 Oenotrians: 32 sailors (Trained NPCs), armed with swords, and eight marines (Experienced) armed with rifle muskets. There are 20 Trained swamp pirates armed with swords and 15 armed with bows, plus five Experienced pirates armed with rifle muskets. If the PCs have drugged the food in the banquet tent, then the pirates have no leader, and the Oenotrians have only a junior officer aboard the *Hullcutter* to command them.

There are 60 swamp villagers, armed with clubs and knives. They are all Green NPCs. Initially, the villagers have surprise, and attack the pirates in a wild melee. If the PCs are leading the villagers and can do something spectacular, the pirates' morale will break, and they will flee. If not, the pirates will regroup by the Oenotrian ship and try to subdue the villagers.

The Oenotrians' chief concern is to protect their ship, and they will make ready to cast off at the first sign of trouble. They can use the ship's guns with devastating effect against the villagers.

COMMAND POST QUARTERLY

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OUTCOMES

If the PCs can reach the main canal through the swamp, they can hail a passing canal barge and get safely to Mylark.

Once there, they can warn the British military attache at the consulate, and a squadron of gunboats will be sent to attack the secret base.

A successful revolt of the villagers against the Oenotrians will result in the base being permanently abandoned. The swamp tribes will be very friendly toward Earthmen in the future, and can provide scientists with a huge store of knowledge about the flora and fauna of the wetlands.

If the PCs fail to escape or to defeat the Oenotrians, then Captain Dasgaar will order them executed at dawn. Just as the marines of the firing squad are taking aim at the helpless adventurers, a British gunboat appears overhead and opens fire on the Oenotrians. (Luckily for the characters, the gunboat was passing by just as a break in the swamp mists allowed a glimpse of the two cloudships moored at the base.)

DR. CLEMENT BLOGSWORTH

Dr. Blogsworth is an eminent botanist and physician who has travelled widely on Mars gathering plant specimens. He is particularly interested in discovering new medicinal plants. The expedition into the Mylomerosean Swamp was his idea, but he is perfectly willing to share command of the party with other experienced travellers.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Agl: 1	Marksmanship 1 (rifle)
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 4 (mapping)
Int: 6	Observation 7, Science 5 (biology), Engineering 1 (explosives)
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2, Linguistics 3 (German, Koline, Parhooni)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Medicine 3

Motives: Knowledge, Steady, Ambitious.

Description: Dr. Blogsworth is of medium height, slightly built, and extremely untidy looking. His hair is unbrushed, his clothes are ill-fitting and carelessly mended, and his pockets are stuffed with notes and biological specimens. He is rather shy and quiet, and is only really happy when digging up a newly discovered plant.

CAPTAIN

RUTILAAN DASGAAR

Dasgaar is the commander of the Oenotrian forces in the swamp. The idea of the hidden base was his, and he is passionately committed to making it work. If his plan succeeds, then the Oenotrians will be that much closer to driving the Terrans off of Mars, and Dasgaar's prestige and power will be greatly increased. He does not like the swamp very much, as he prefers the comforts of his ship and distrusts his swamp pirate allies.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Trimsman 2 (cloudship), Close Combat 2 (polearms)
Agl: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 1 (rifle)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2
Int: 4	Observation 4, Gunnery 1 (MLC), Engineering 1 (earthworks)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Linguistics 3 (Parhooni, English, Umbran), Bargaining 1
Soc: 5	Riding 4 (ruumet breehr), Piloting 2 (cloudship), Leadership 2

Motives: Aggressive, Arrogant, Hatred (of Terrans).

Description: Dasgaar is a very handsome Martian, with an urbane and polished manner of speaking. He dresses in an ornate uniform which is always immaculate, and goes armed with a knife and a concealed single-shot pistol. His native language is Syrtan.

AKHAGAAN KATOOQ


Katooq is the chief of the swamp pirates, a position he won by being tougher and more brutal than anyone else. He has a terrible temper, and has been known to kill men for trivial reasons. Katooq doesn't trust the Oenotrians one bit, but is willing to cooperate with them as long as they pay him well.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agl: 5	Stealth 5, Marksmanship 4 (rifle)
End: 6	Wilderness Travel 7 (foraging), Fieldcraft 2, Swimming 2
Int: 3	Observation 2
Chr: 2	Eloquence 1, Linguistics 1 (Koline)
Soc: 1	

Motives: Greedy, Rage, Ruthless.

Description: Katooq is not especially big, but he moves with the strength and grace of a steppe tiger. He would be quite handsome were it not for a jagged scar across his face. Katooq dresses in a motley outfit of leather armor and soiled finery, topped off by a bloodstained British officer's coat. His native language is Parhooni. Ω

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The characters are adventurers trading in a remote part of Mars. They have travelled almost 3000 miles east from the great port of Syrtis Major, crossing the dangerous Crocea to the Gorklimsk Swamp to Syrtis Minor, thence to Osorma, Surukaan and finally to the frontier twin of Sekoor, the last outpost of civilization before the untamed wilderness of Zephyria. Sekoor is a traditional frontier town with many mixed races—mainly the strong, rough Hill Martians with their large ears and dark hair, but also many fairer, elf-like Canal Martians from the huge Cimmerian Swamp to the south—from Olonia and Cimmeria, and French and British Earthmen trade here. It is not too unusual to see the savage High Martians at the trading posts—they come from the mountains north of Tratsk. It is an exciting, adventurous, colorful and often dangerous place to be. Beyond Sekoor lies only the desert with its abandoned, dried-up, dead canals and ancient, blasted ruins. And it is from the desert that the mysterious ship came one dark night.

The *Dauntless*-class, steam-driven, lightwood flyer glided in, crashing into the side of a brick building, its boilers exhausted. It suffered only superficial damage and can be repaired in a few days, with the exception of the bow-

foreign stations," because of its speed and bow-mounted gun. This ship, however, was being used to transport a small archaeological team to examine an unnamed ancient Martian ruin 100 miles east of Sekoor, its guns necessary because of the threat from pirates and High Martians. A chart shows the location of the ruins, and the log lists its crew and passengers:

Captain Arthur Smith, First Mate Master Hinchcliffe, crewmen Turner and Adams, Hill Martian guide K'Troonda K'Treel, and three archaeologists: Professor Richard Bird, Dr. Archie Archbold and Miss Emma Lee.

The log also tells of the mystery that befell the *John Bull*. Upon their arrival at the ruins, Professor Bird, Dr. Archbold, Miss Lee and K'Treel set up camp within the ruined walls in what appeared to be an ancient, overgrown garden. The ship was moved some distance away within an open area. That night, Captain Smith was standing watch on the ship's central gun tower, when a loud scream was heard throughout the camp. The rest of the crew ran to look, but the captain had totally vanished. Crewmen Turner and Adams set out to contact the research party. In the morning, their footprints were seen heading toward the ruins, but they abruptly ended in the middle of an open space—no trace of the two crew-

Her name is K'tree'-eenya, and she is quite striking. Of only average height at six feet, seven inches, she is obviously well-muscled and has unusual, flame-red hair. She explains that she is an entertainer, a dancer who is also a teller of tales and a singer of songs according to local tribal custom. As such, she can tell the legendary history of the ruins in question.

The ruins are believed to be of the country estate of an ancient king. They consist of his royal palace, gardens and harem, and are surrounded by the remains of his soldiers' barracks and servants' quarters, kitchens, etc. The king was extremely rich, with many vaults full of rare gems and precious metals, even the rare tin. He was both jealous and frightened, believing his concubines would run off, assassins would kill him or his soldiers would mutiny. Accordingly, he guarded his vaults with ancient demons which were released at night to enforce his curfew and protect his palace. These demons were invisible, huge and terrible, carrying people off to the Martian hell with no trace of them being left behind. K'tree'-eenya is very friendly and inquisitive about the ship, its weapons and speed, the weapons of the adventurers, what Earth is like, what food is eaten there, what treasures are found on Earth, etc.

WRECK OF THE SLOOP JOHN B.

By J.B. Hill

mounted, four-inch gun, which is destroyed. Although part of its nameplate broke off in the crash, leaving only the name *John B*, its log shows it to be the *HMS John Bull*. Of its crew and passengers, there is no sign, except for one male body leashed to the steering wheel with ropes cutting deeply into the wrists, the head savagely torn off. Local knowledge and the ship's log tell the story.

HISTORY OF THE JOHN BULL

The *John Bull* is a *Dauntless*-class ship often referred to as a sloop, "a small warship used for general purposes and especially for police work on

members could be seen. Hinchcliffe stayed with the ship, too frightened to cross the red sands to the ruins. As night approached, his nerve broke, and he set course back to Sekoor, expressing his intention to tie himself to the ship's wheel. Obviously, he never made it back.

The local Hill Martian leader (a cross between sheriff and mayor of the town) asks the adventurers to take the ship back to the ruins in an attempt to rescue the archaeologists who may still be alive and to try to solve the mystery.

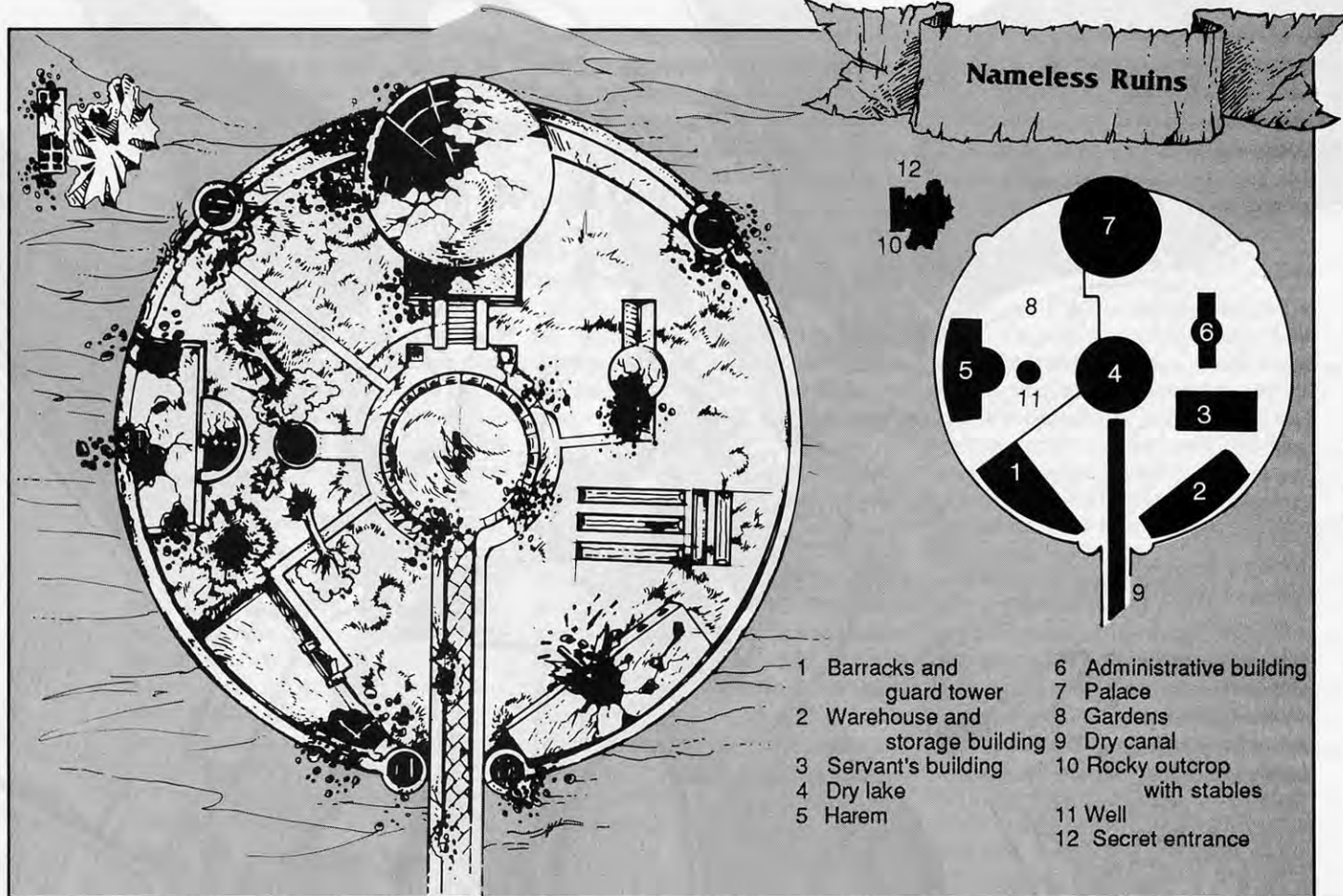
As they are preparing for the trip, the adventurers are fortunate enough to be approached by a female Canal Martian.

UNNAMED RUINS

It will take approximately four hours flying time to reach the ruins. Referees should attempt to make the adventurers arrive in the late afternoon to allow only a short period of preparation before night falls. Delay them with a sudden sandstorm with fake weather die rolls and with bureaucracy—no one can find the permit needed to fly the craft from the official pound in which it is docked.

The ruins are reasonably well preserved. There are four towers which have crumbled and are now only on average 20 feet high. The outer walls





are thick and still stand mostly intact. Many internal walls, however, have fallen. The gardens are very overgrown with ancient fallen trees, but the well still provides fresh water.

Barracks and Guard Tower: Mostly destroyed. The tower has the ruined remains of a large war engine.

Servants' Buildings: Almost totally destroyed.

Gardens: The well still has fresh water. A tribe of 20 Roogies now lives here, hiding in the harem building at night.

Harem: Still in good condition—but rather foul from the Roogies.

Administrative Building: Still contains many ancient record scrolls—all totally useless.

Palace: Some areas are destroyed, while others still retain their old glory—grand ballrooms, state suites, etc.

Rocky Outcrop with Stables: The outcrop hides a secret opening to a tunnel.

UNDERGROUND

Three of the towers are hollow entrance tubes to large tunnels leading to a central vault under the palace. There are also underground chambers under the king's personal quarters and the harem connected by a narrow tunnel

which also connects to an emergency escape tunnel leading to the stables. Below the administration building are storage tunnels and a tunnel from the barracks leads to the well.

King's Chambers: The archaeologist and guide are hiding here. They know there are huge monsters in the adjacent vault, but they are safe due to the small size of the corridor, provided they do not stand too close to it. Their food is almost all gone, but they can obtain water from the well.

Harem: The Roogies cannot open the door to the harem—it is only operable from below.

Armory: Below the barracks lies the armory. Metal swords and coddling-choppers are still usable, but all bows and crossbows are unusable due to deterioration of the strings.

Treasure Vault: This is packed with masses of copper, silver, gold and even tin in small quantities. Also, the "demons" which destroyed the crew of the *John Bull* dwell here. They are three Imperial Knoe Shoshu. The normal Knoe Shoshu discovered by the French expeditions are the modern degenerate descendants which have become land bound due to the loss of their lift sacs and have been reduced to scavenging. The original Imperial Knoe Shoshu are

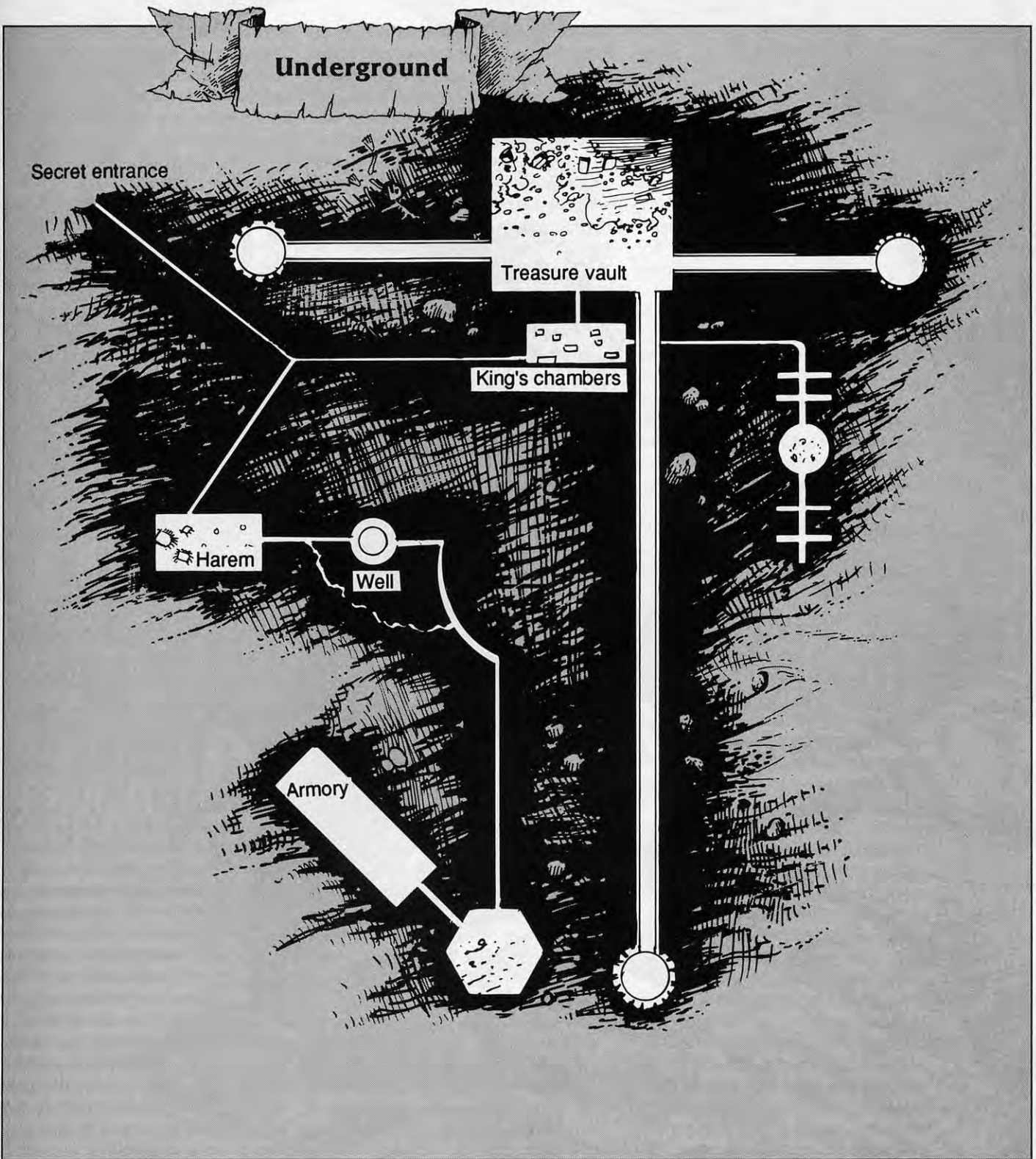
even more rare—perhaps unique. They are much larger and have well developed lift sacs, allowing them to reach high levels. They can pass down the large tunnels, but cannot squeeze through the small corridors, although they can reach through with a tentacle. They protect the treasure and can also patrol the grounds. They are not nocturnal but have discovered that they cannot catch Roogies in the daylight. Fortunately, their poison is still not fatal to humans, whom they will hunt in preference to Roogies.

Imperial Knoe Shoshu: # App: 3 Size: 4x4 Move: F50 (in *Sky Galleons of Mars*, it moves as a kite) Wnds: 20, Tentacles: (6, 4, 9, 6), Sting: (1, 2, 0, 2).

RETURN

The Imperial Knoe Shoshu will pursue and attack the *John Bull* in flight and so must be destroyed before the escape can be successful.

After two hours' flight, a red sail is spotted approaching from the south. Soon, a red *Whisperdeath* kite with a black-and-red striped sail is maneuvering to attack. If K'Treel was rescued, he will immediately recognize the sky galleon as the *Red Tigress*, a pirate ship under the command of the Red Tigress herself—a savage cutthroat pirate queen



with flaming red hair. With the use of a telescope, any adventurer can clearly recognize K'tree'-eenya standing high on the forecastle ordering her pirate crew in their attempt to capture the *John Bull*. She is only interested in treasure.

This can either be played as a **Space: 1889** roleplaying encounter using the 25mm plans from **Cloudships and Gunboats** or as a **Sky Galleons of Mars** wargame. For **SGOM**, use the

Barrovaar plan, but with no land above level 3. The *John Bull* may enter from any hex on the right, and its aim is to exit from any hex on the left edge. The kite may enter from any hex on the southern edge at high level. Its aim is to stop the *John Bull* by causing it to land, crash or be boarded. The *Dauntless* flyer does not have its bow gun. The wind is blowing from the south.

John Bull, Dauntless-Class Gunboat: Armor=2, Hull=4, Speed=6.

Armament 4" long, stern tower.
2x3 pdr HRC, wing mounted.
2xNordenfelts broadside.

Red Tigress Whisperdeath Kite:

Armor=2, Hull=7 (ram), Speed=K.

Armament=1 rod gun forecastle (her teeth)

2x heavy guns-wing mounted (her claws)

2xheavy guns aft

It does not have drogue torpedoes or Martian fire racks. Q

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I had just got back to old Syrtis after a few months poaching liftwood up in the highlands, and was feeling in need of a little rest. So it seemed like a stroke of good luck when I met Miss Clarendon strolling in the bazaar. She's a schoolteacher, and the sweetest thing under a bonnet on three planets. She mentioned a little trip she was planning. "Just an excursion to view the old Martian locks on the Moeris Canal. Would you like to come along, Doctor Blogsworth?"

"I'd be delighted to come, Miss Clarendon." I felt as though I was made of liftwood myself.

"I'm pleased that you will. And the children will be so happy."

"Er—children?"

"Yes. The schoolchildren from Rev. Lutwidge's School. We're taking a dozen of them along."

I'm usually a brave man, but suddenly I felt a pang of dread.

Rev. Louis Lutwidge, head of Rev. Lutwidge's School in Syrtis Major, is taking a group of students on a field trip. They will travel by steamer to the locks and pumping station on the Syrtis Major-Moeris Lacus Canal, where they can get a first-hand look at ancient Martian engineering.

There are two ways to handle this adventure. In an ongoing campaign, the adult PCs can be invited along by Miss Clarendon, a teacher at the school. (She can be assumed to be an old friend or distant relative of one of the PCs.) Or they may simply be passengers aboard the steamer.

If the gamemaster chooses to run this as a one-shot adventure, then the players can choose characters from the list of students.

MARTIAN QUEEN

The canal steamer *Martian Queen* is similar to the riverboats of the Mississippi. Normally, the ship carries mail, passengers and freight from Parhoon to Moeris Lacus via Syrtis Major, but Rev. Lutwidge has chartered it for the trip. There will be nobody aboard besides the school group (unless the adult PCs are passengers).

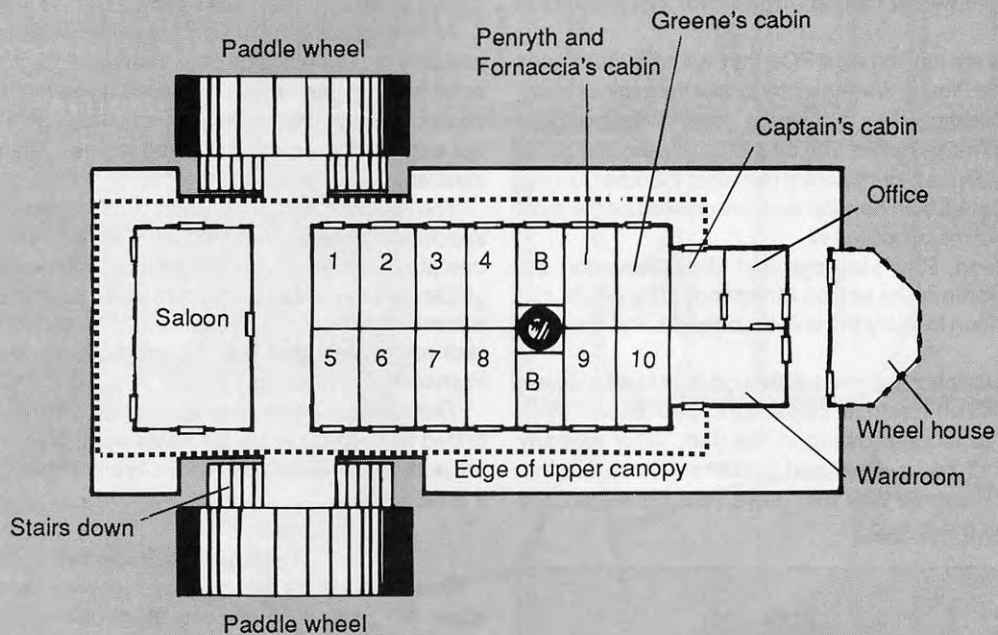
Ship: The deck plans show the layout of the *Martian Queen*. The rooms are labeled on the plan. The students will be housed two to a room in staterooms 2, 3, 6, and 7. Rev. Lutwidge will be in stateroom 1, and Miss Clarendon will be in stateroom 5. Any other adults will be in rooms 4, 8, 9 or 10.

Crew: The *Martian Queen* has a crew of 14. The master is Isaac McTavish; the first officer is Arthur Penryth; the pilot is Donald Greene (a former Mississippi riverboat pilot); and the engineer is Antonio Fornaccia. The ship's cook is a Martian named Vymoos. The deckhands, stokers and stewards are all Martians.

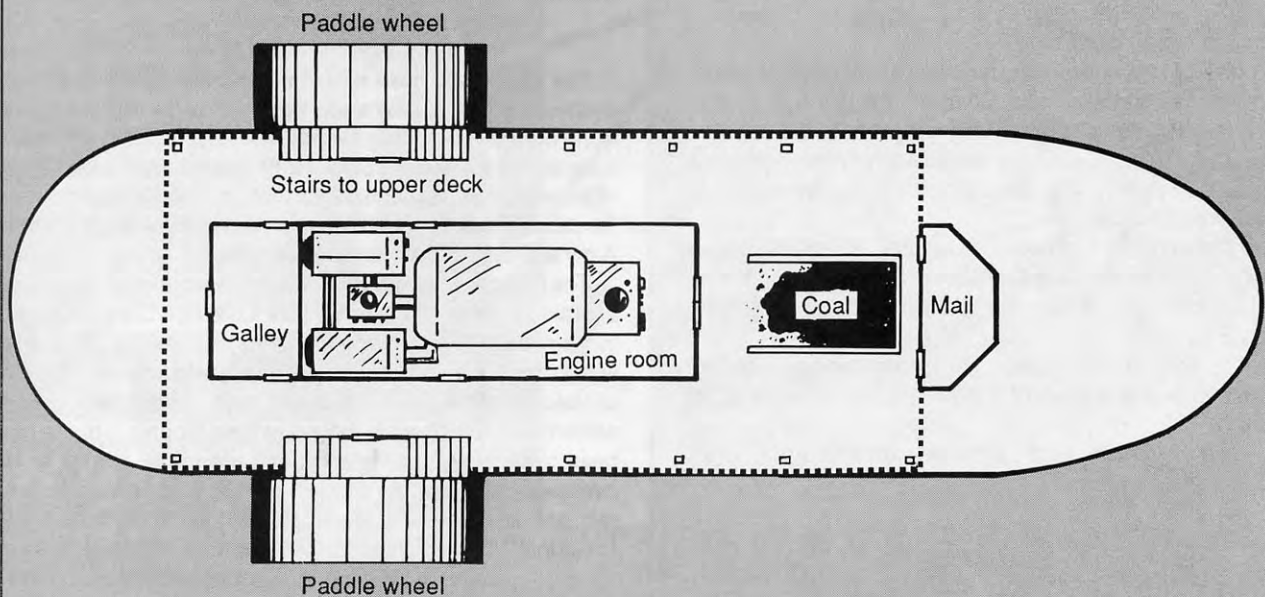
Playing Fields of Mars

**A Space: 1889 adventure for child characters
by James L. Cambias**

Upper Deck



Main Deck



VOYAGE

The *Martian Queen* sets out from Syrtis Major early in the morning. Rev. Lutwidge will excuse the children from their morning lessons so the youngsters can spend a few hours exploring the ship and getting into mischief. The galley and the engine room will be natural magnets for inquisitive children.

If the players are running adult PCs, they will have their hands full keeping order. Young Waffles will try to take the engines apart; little Lord Smallbridge will try to climb the mast; "Lizard" will go to the kitchen and make herself sick on Martian treats; and Smith Minor will try to talk the pilot into letting him steer. Clarissa Douglas and Smith Major will both develop massive crushes on the most attractive PCs of the opposite sex.

After luncheon, Rev. Lutwidge and Miss Clarendon will gather the children in the saloon for lessons. The adults can take the afternoon to study the ship themselves and meet the officers.

The ship will anchor at sunset. Although the *Martian Queen* is equipped with an electrical searchlight, Captain McTavish doesn't want to risk navigating in the dark. After a hearty English meal of boiled beef and pudding ("those Martian foods always disagree with me," says Rev. Lutwidge), the children will be put to bed.

Child Characters

Since the game **Space: 1889** draws much of its inspiration from boys' adventure stories of the past century, it is surprising that all the characters in the game are assumed to be adults. But the rules can easily be adapted to allow child characters.

Age Limits: Obviously, children are less capable than adults. This is reflected by limits on skills and attributes at different stages of development.

At 5 years old or below, characters can have a maximum Strength and Endurance of 1. They get no skills at all, not even the basic skills derived from a character's attributes.

From age 6 to 10, the children can have a maximum Strength of 2 and a maximum Endurance of 3. They get all the basic attribute-derived skills (Fisticuffs, Observation, etc.), and get one of their two free skill points to spend on skills.

At ages 11 through 15, characters can have a maximum Strength of 4; there are no other attribute limits. Characters of this age get both of their two free skill points, but are still too young to take any careers.

Characters aged 16 to 20 can take one career plus their two free skill points. Individuals who are 21 or older can have two careers, and are normal adult characters.

Childhood Career: If the campaign is realistic, then children will be limited in their abilities as described above. But a campaign or an adventure which focuses on child characters must allow them to be more capable.

The solution is the Childhood career. This career can only be taken by characters between the ages of 5 and 16. There are no other requirements.

Persons taking the Childhood career can learn a total of 6 levels in skills from the following list:

- Stealth
- Marksmanship (slingshot)
- Marksmanship (spitball)
- Mechanics (disassembly)
- Theatrics
- Linguistics (Pig-Latin)

The skill levels gained from the Childhood career are immediately lost as soon as the character enters on his or her first adult career.

The adults, including the ship's officers, gather in the saloon, and Rev. Lutwidge opens an old bottle of port which he has been saving. After an hour, everyone is sleepy, and all go to bed.

CAPTIVES!

At midnight, a gang of Fenians will invade the ship from an aerial flyer. There will be little chance of their being discovered, for both the port and the pudding were drugged. (If any character specified that he was not drinking the wine and did not eat the dinner, roll a Difficult task of Observation to be awakened.)

The Fenians will take each adult's cabin one by one, knocking out the characters and tying them up. When everyone at last wakes up, all the adult characters and the ship's officers are in the saloon, securely tied to chairs, guarded by a masked man with a Winchester rifle. (A Routine: Intellect task roll reveals that Rev. Lutwidge, Greene, and Signore Fornaccia are missing.)

The Martian crewmembers have been put ashore and bribed to keep quiet about the incident. They will try to alert the authorities, but will be unable to accomplish anything until it is far too late.

CHILDREN'S HOUR

Once the adults are helpless, the gamemaster should allow the players to choose characters from among the children on board. With the adults held prisoner and the ship in the hands of unknown enemies, can a group of British boys and girls save the day?

The children will wake up when the ship's engines are restarted and the *Martian Queen* begins to move again. If any of the students try to leave their cabins, they will find that there are masked men with guns posted at the stairways, who will roughly order anyone back to their rooms.

The children can communicate between adjacent rooms, as the walls are thin enough to allow limited conversation. They have whatever equipment is listed on the character descriptions. The rooms are all sparsely furnished, with a washbasin, bunk beds, a chair and a small writing desk.

FENIAN PLOT

The villains who have seized the ship are actually a gang of desperate Fenians. They are trying to disrupt the flow of supplies to the British Army fighting the rebels in Shastapsh. The Fenians have loaded the *Martian Queen* with dynamite and intend to set off the explosives as the ship enters the canal locks. This will close the canal to boat traffic. With the canal supply line cut, the British Army at Shastapsh will have to withdraw.

The bad guys are led by a heavily bearded man wearing a captain's uniform. He is really Rev. Lutwidge/Liam O'Connor in disguise. There are six other Fenians aboard, all armed with Winchester rifles, heavy revolvers and knives. They are all Veteran NPCs. One is guarding the adult characters in the saloon; one is in the pilothouse, where Donald Greene has been forced to steer the ship; two are in the engine room overseeing the Martian stokers and Signore Fornaccia; and two are on the upper deck, at the top of the stairways. Lutwidge/O'Connor will initially be on the lower deck, setting up the dynamite, but will move to wherever there is trouble.

The dynamite is in a dozen big crates, lined up along the sides of the ship on the lower deck, with a timer apparatus set atop the coal bunker. Lutwidge's plan is to set the timer while the ship is in the locks, then escape aboard the aerial steam launch secured atop the ship. The ship will reach the locks by noon the next day.

DEFEATING THE VILLAINS

The children must somehow overcome the Fenians and regain control of the *Martian Queen*. They can either try to fight the Fenians themselves, or release the adults and let them recover the ship. The primary advantage the children have is that the Fenians, while fanatics, are not completely inhuman. They will not shoot innocent children (though they have no qualms about blowing them up). If the children are armed, or if they have killed anyone, then the Fenians will no longer be so tolerant.

The gamemaster should let the players come up with their own plan and play it through. Initially, the children will not know about the dynamite or the aerial steam launch—the intentions of the Fenians should be a complete mystery. If at all possible, Lutwidge/O'Connor should survive the adventure, so that he can be unmasked at the end, snarling, "And I would have succeeded, if it hadn't been for you meddling kids!"

REV. LOUIS LUTWIDGE

Rev. Lutwidge is in fact the notorious Fenian Liam O'Connor. With dyed hair, thick spectacles, and a clergyman's clothing, it is very difficult to recognize that the stern, griggish schoolmaster is really a colorful revolutionary. Only after he has been defeated, and is no longer playing the part, will anyone be able to recognize his true identity.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agil: 5	Stealth 4, Crime 4 (pick locks), Marksmanship 3 (pistol)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mapping)
Int: 6	Observation 4, Engineering 2 (explosives), Science 1 (chemistry)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Theatrics 3, Linguistics 2 (Gaelic, Parhooni)
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (horse), Leadership 2, Medicine 1

Motives: Hatred (of Englishmen), Adventurous, Leader.

Description: Liam O'Connor is a tall, handsome man with dark red hair and piercing eyes. He has great personal charm and is a superb natural leader. Disguised as Rev. Lutwidge, he wears a much-mended black suit and thick tinted spectacles. His hair is dyed gray, and his famous side-whiskers are shaved off. His Irish brogue will be covered by a Midlands accent. O'Connor always carries a pistol and knife hidden on his person.

CAPTAIN ISAAC MCTAVISH

Captain Isaac Edward McTavish is a full-blooded Scotsman who came to Mars with one of the earliest expeditions and never left. Despite the reputation for frugality which adheres to most Scots, McTavish is in fact quite generous. He certainly spares no expense where the *Martian Queen* is concerned. Though McTavish has no family of his own, he is fond of children.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 5	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 1 (bashing)
Agil: 6	Stealth 5, Mechanics 2 (steam), Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping), Swimming 1
Int: 4	Observation 4, Science 1 (physics), Engineering 1 (naval)
Chr: 1	Linguistics 3 (Parhooni, Koline, Hespesian)
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (gashant), Leadership 1, Piloting 2 (steamship)

Motives: Generous, Friendly.

Description: McTavish is a stout, cheerful man who dresses in a merchant captain's uniform. He has a red face and enormous white sideburns. Despite his weight, he is amazingly nimble. His voice is deep and loud, with a Scots accent that becomes stronger when he is excited. McTavish is normally unarmed.

SMITH MAJOR

Cyril Smith (age 15) is the older of the two Smith brothers at Rev. Lutwidge's school. He is very athletic and excels on the cricket field or on horseback. But his real love is shooting, and he lives for the day when he can have his very own rifle. Until then, he will hone his skill with a slingshot. Smith Major is aware that his younger brother has all the brains, and is very protective of him. Anyone who harms Smith Minor will have Smith Major to answer to.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat (bashing) 1
Agil: 5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 3 (slingshot)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mountaineering)
Int: 2	Observation 1
Chr: 2	Eloquence 1, Linguistics 1 (Pig-Latin), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse)

Motives: Love (of brother), Adventurous.

Description: Cyril Smith is a tall, good-looking boy. He has unruly light-brown hair and an infectious grin. Smith Major wears the standard schoolboy uniform—flannel trousers and an Eton jacket. He usually carries his slingshot hidden in his boot.

SMITH MINOR

Jeremy Smith is Cyril's younger brother. Though he is only 12, he is already much more intelligent and knowledgeable than his brother. Smith Minor is a quiet boy, but when he does speak up he often startles adults with what he knows. He is particularly interested in the ancient Martians and their ruins. Smith Minor and Syukeem are best friends.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	
Agil: 5	Stealth 6, Crime 2 (pick locks)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mountaineering)
Int: 5	Observation 4, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Theatrics 3, Linguistics 1 (Pig-Latin)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (gashant)

Motives: Knowledge, Loyal (to brother).

Description: Smith Minor is a small, skinny little boy with the same tousled hair as his older brother. He usually looks very serious, and is much more calm and well-behaved than most 12 year olds. He still is in short pants and wears a cap.

SMALLS

Thomas Albert, Lord Smallbridge and Baron Twickenham, is only 9 years old. He gained the titles after the tragic death of his father in a gashant stampede two years ago. His mother, Lady Smallbridge, elected to remain on Mars, where she heads the Explorers' Club Ladies' Auxiliary. Young Lord Smallbridge is unfortunately all too aware of his exalted position, and seldom hesitates to remind others of his wealth and importance. He is very much a spoiled brat. Though Smalls is not a good student, he has won the grudging respect of the others through his astounding ability to sneak around the school at night, and his accuracy with the slingshot. His only real friend is Waffles, as they share an interest in random destruction.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Agil: 6	Stealth 6, Marksmanship 4 (slingshot)
End: 1	
Int: 1	
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 3 (Latin, Parhooni, Pig-Latin)
Soc: 6	Riding 5 (horse)

Motives: Arrogant, Greedy.

Appearance: Smalls is a small boy with a large, beaky nose and very pale blond hair. He has a wide range of speech impediments. Smalls wears the same short pants and cap uniform as the other young boys, but his are custom-made by the best tailors. His shirts and socks are silk. Smalls keeps a slingshot in his cap.

"WAFFLES"

Waffles's real name is George Whitford. Though only 8 years old, he has already learned a great deal about mechanics and chemistry. Waffles is motivated by an intense desire to know how things work. He can seldom resist the urge to dismantle something. And if he can't take something apart, he is equally fond of blowing things up. His parents sent him to Rev. Lutwidge's school after he destroyed one wing of their house in Meepsoor.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Agil: 4	Stealth 3, Mechanics 2 (disassembly), Marksmanship 2 (spitball)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 6	Observation 5, Science 1 (chemistry), Engineering 1 (explosives)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Linguistics 1 (Pig-Latin), Theatrics 1
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (gashant)

Motives: Knowledge, Eccentric.

Description: Waffles is a chubby little boy, unremarkable in appearance. Around adults, he is very shy, sometimes to the point of being unable to speak. He is usually very well-behaved, except when he is left alone with some interesting machinery, or anything that looks as if it might burn. He always carries a screwdriver, and starts the adventure with three firecrackers and a book of matches.

CLARISSA

Clarissa Douglas is 16 years old and is very much aware that she is not a child anymore. She resents any attempt to treat her as a one and always tries to be included in any "grown-up" activities. However, sometimes she forgets that she is an adult, and she has masterminded some awful mischief. Clarissa wants to see the world and have some fun. She is very romantic and falls in love often. Clarissa is beginning a career as an adventuress.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 1 (edged)
Agil: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 2 (pistol), Crime 1 (forgery)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 5	Observation 5, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Linguistics 2 (French, Parhooni), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 1

Motives: Adventurous, Stubborn.

Description: Clarissa is already a very striking-looking girl and is likely to be an utterly beautiful woman. With her long

black hair and big dark eyes, she has a slightly Latin appearance. She still wears dull schoolgirl frocks. She always has a hatpin at her disposal (treat as a stiletto).

"LIZARD"

Elizabeth "Lizard" Pinkwood is 11 years old and a determined tomboy. She routinely beats up Waffles, Smalls and Smith Minor, and once fought Smith Major to a draw. Lizard is most effective when armed with a croquet mallet or cricket bat, but can use an umbrella if necessary. She admires Clarissa enormously and wants to be like her when she gets older.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 1 (bashing)
Agil: 4	Stealth 5
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mountaineering)
Int: 4	Observation 3
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 2 (Pig-Latin), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse)

Motives: Aggressive, Fair.

Description: Lizard is a wiry, skinny little girl with torn stockings and mud on her skirt. She always loses her hat. Lizard has curly red hair and freckles. She is almost constantly in motion. Lizard has no equipment (she would only lose it).

SYUKEEM

Natuuz Syukeem is the only Martian student at Rev. Lutwidge's school. He is 6 Martian years old (about 12 Earth years). His family are merchants, who saw an advantage in having a son educated by the English. Syukeem is already a good merchant himself—he makes quite a bit of money smuggling goodies into the school, selling test answers and betting on Lizard's fights. But he has also become interested in the history of his people and would like to learn more about Mars than Rev. Lutwidge teaches.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	
Agil: 2	Stealth 4
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 4 (foraging)
Int: 4	Observation 3, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 2 (English, Koline), Theatrics 3
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (gashant)

Motives: Mercantile, Knowledge.

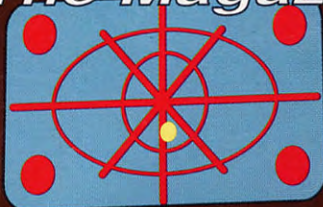
Description: Syukeem is average height for a 6-year-old Martian; he is over five feet tall and growing fast. He is very slender and is not as strong as the other students, but his Martian constitution already gives him better stamina than most human adults. He wears English-style school clothes, modified for his alien frame. It was agreed by all that he should wear long pants instead of shorts. Ω



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Twenty Thousand Leagues Through Martian Skies

A Space: 1889 adventure by Terry Sophian

I could feel my pulse pounding as the sleek sky galley took to the air. For weeks now, cloudships had been disappearing. Our patrols had been chasing supposed pirates. Finally, the culprit had been sighted: not Martian or human cloud captain, but a sandwing, a most notable beast from Martian legends. The sandwing had been said to be much like Earthly dragons in aspect and temperament, but had thought to be extinct, killed off by the savage High Martians who shared its lofty domains. Now one had been sighted, having wandered in from who knew what wasteland, to terrorize the shipping lanes.

The sporting blood was up, and quickly the adventurers' club outfitted a fine sky galley. On the fore deck was the line-throwing paper grapple, to harpoon the beast like a whale, while sighted aft the deadly bulk of a Hotchkiss 6 pdr waited, if the beast proved even more formidable than legends allowed. It was with banners flying and an air of supreme confidence that my friends and I, the young and elite of the Royal Colony on Mars, set forth to find adventure and return with a tale worth telling. Those of us who did return succeeded in these endeavors beyond our wildest dreams.

The Mars of the late 19th century was still a brutal and savage place. Slavery, banished from most parts of the civilized Earth by 1864, was still endemic to Mars. The power of indentured muscle moved the freight, either by canal barge or by screw galley. As on Earth, there were those who opposed this practice, sometimes violently. One of the most notorious men to oppose the practice of slave taking was a genius known only as Nemo. He and his amazing vessel, the *Nautilus*, terrorized slavers by sinking their ships and raiding their camps. He was believed to have perished in the maelstrom, a huge whirlpool, but later was reported in the caves of a strange island. Then it was thought that he and his vessel were destroyed in a volcanic eruption. This is not the case.

Nemo and a number of his men escaped the destruction of the Mysterious Island and made their way to the lawless frontiers of Mars. Here, in seclusion, far from the prying eyes of Earthly governments, Nemo and his followers have constructed a flying ship, built of Martian liftwood and steel. Like

the *Nautilus* before it, Nemo's new ship is powered by the controlled fury of the atom itself. Armed with a huge ram and powerful weapons, the new vessel, called the *Quinixitis*, for a strange Martian flying creature, would clean the Martian skies of slave galleys and then would spearhead the attack against the plantations where Martians labored in servitude. A patrol of Parhooni auxiliaries spotted the vessel from a distance and mistook it for the semi-mythical sandwing. This sighting will lead to the involvement of the player characters.

OUTFITTING AND BACKGROUND

The PCs may be outfitted with a ship they already own, one purchased for the hunt or one provided by the referee through some rich patron. The referee may feel free to remind the players that they are hunting an animal, not going to war. Heavy weapons should be viewed as entirely "unsporting."

The power of the PCs' vessel is of little concern. Nemo's aerial death machine should be more than a match for anything less than a flying fortress. The *Quinixitis* is a 6000-ton, steel-hulled flyer powered by Nemo's nuclear reactor. It can reach High altitude and travel at 50 knots. It is equipped with a ram bow. For use against ground targets, Nemo has installed fire holds and bomb racks. Nemo's bombs have twice the explosive power of normal ones. In addition, Nemo had a weapon of terrible power, nuclear devices. For those interested in numbers, they have a yield of nearly 150 kilotons. Nemo plans, at some future time, to detonate this device over the armies of Great Britain and her Martian enemies while they are locked in combat. In this way, he will destroy the most powerful forces on Mars simultaneously, making himself the unchallenged ruler of the red planet with one fell swoop. This plan lies somewhere in the future, though—a future soon to be interrupted by the arrival of the player characters.

Our gallant flyer now is nothing but splinters. The beast struck at night. We could see its glowing eyes, at first appearing against the far horizon. Then the great bulk of the creature began to occult the true stories behind it. Montgomery was the fastest of us. He ran for the harpoon gun at the bow. With a wild cry, he fired the heavy grapnel and line. With a cry of our own, we watched it fly straight and true, striking the sandwing fair on its shoulder above the right wing. To our dismay, the steel-hard scales of

this leviathan of the skies deflected the 30 pounds of iron as if it were a small skipping stone. After a light brush against our hull that almost turned us over, the sky dragon wheeled about to strike us dead-on with its fearsome beak. By now the young Duke of Cements and I had the deadly rotating cannon in operation. We could see the explosive shells strike the beast, but they had no more effect in turning it from its course than did the second harpoon fired by Montgomery. The mighty creature's head crashed into our starboard side with a shattering impact, and I was lost to this world.

CONFRONTING THE STAR BEAST

The PCs should encounter Nemo's vessel at night, after several days of hunting. To heighten the tension, they may come across a vessel that has been damaged but escaped from Nemo's terror weapon. Later, they will come across a sky galley that was not so fortunate. The hapless vessel's skeleton will be bleaching in the weak Martian sunlight. Any search for survivors will be fruitless but will yield up one surprise. The bodies of the crew have all been given a Christian burial. The PCs will probably believe that this is due to the efforts of any survivors who have since fled, but this is actually the work of Nemo and his men.

When the PCs' ship first sights its quarry, the characters will see only control room windows. These are built to resemble eyes and glow with a moderate greenish light. They will be visible from 20 hexes away at night, giving the characters two turns to ready their puny weapons. The first attack by the *Quinixitis* will only graze the PCs' vessel, producing little damage but showing the tremendous power of Nemo's creation.

The rest of the battle should be played out using *Sky Galleons of Mars* rules. Statistics for the *Quinixitis* are provided for that game as well as for *Ironclads* and *Ether Flyers*.

If the PCs somehow manage to avoid or disable the larger ship and return to port, events are left up to the PCs. They may attempt to attack the "sandwing" again, this time with a more powerful vessel or fleet of vessels, or more wisely they may decide that they have pressing matters to attend to on the Mother Planet and catch the next ether flyer for Earth.

If the PCs elect to fight the *Quinixitis* again, Nemo will be waiting for them. If he faces a fleet of vessels, he will

choose to fight amongst the cliffs and spires of a nearby mountain range to allow him to fight one vessel at a time. He will prefer to strike at night, when his powerful searchlights can be used to blind opponents and the ranges of their weapons will be restricted by the lack of visibility. His vessel should be fully capable of standing up for itself against anything less than the combined Royal Navy Martian Station Aerial Squadron.

If the PCs' vessel should be destroyed by Nemo, either in a second battle or, more likely, in the initial confrontation, the characters will all be knocked unconscious in the fray. They will wake up in some kind of cell aboard what appears to be, from the motion of the deck beneath them, a very large flyer.

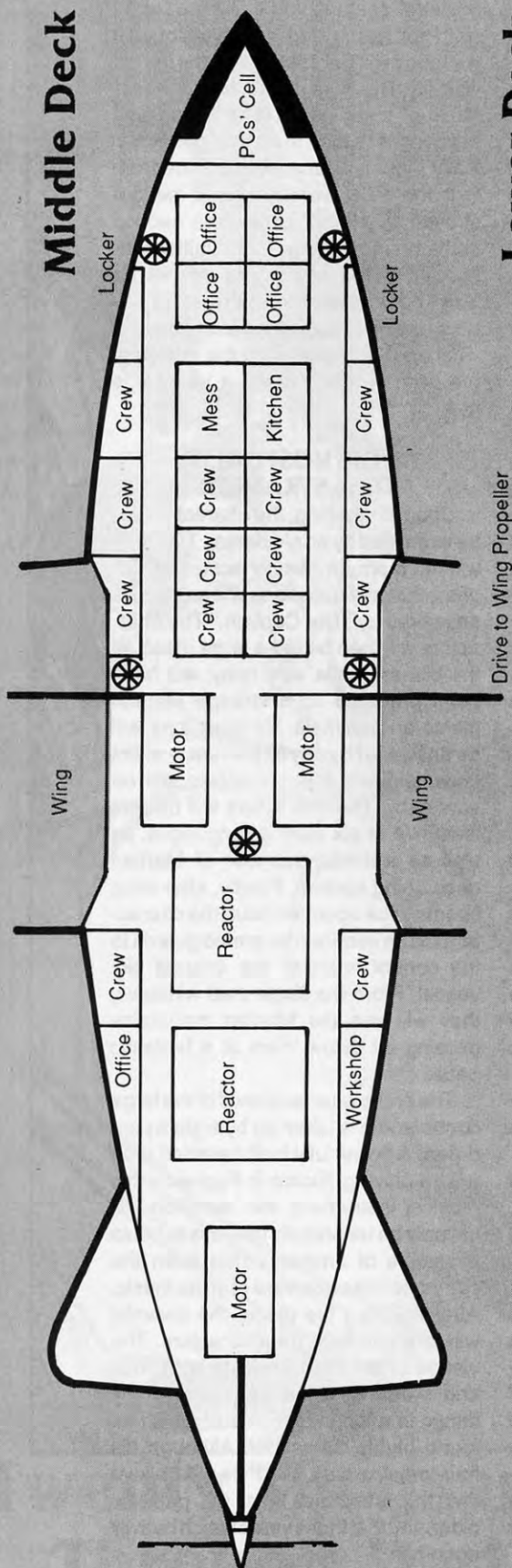
IN THE HOSPITALITY OF A STRANGER

Upon awakening, the characters will be examined by an old doctor. This man will tell them, in heavily accented English, that any questions will have to be answered by "The Captain." The characters will then be fed a large meal. All the dishes, while very tasty, will have been prepared from strange Martian plants and animals. No questions will be answered by any of the nearly silent crewmembers the characters will be served by. The characters will hear at least five or six Earthly languages, as well as a similar number of Martian ones being spoken. Finally, after what seems to be about an hour, the characters will be escorted by armed guards to the control room of the strange sky vessel. From the large oval windows, they will see the Martian mountains passing by below them at a fantastic pace.

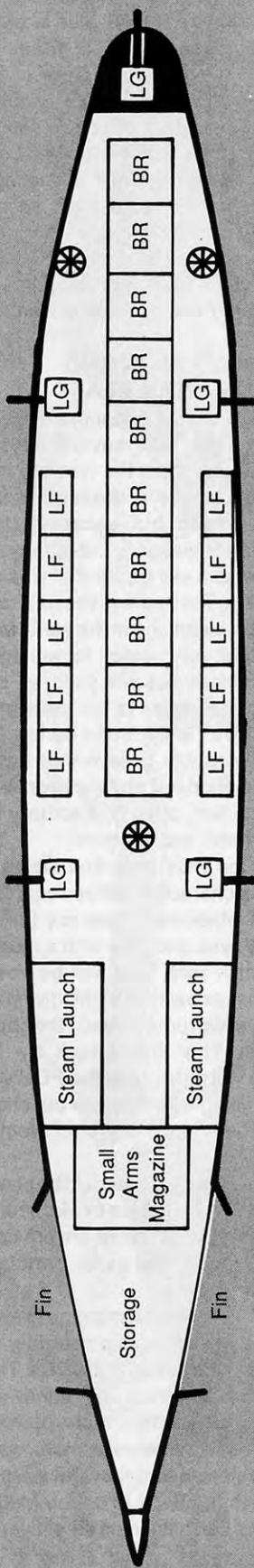
The entire after bulkhead of the large control room is taken up by a giant pipe organ. A powerfully built bearded man will be playing *Tocata in Fugue* on this musical instrument. His rendition will not only be technically flawless but also evocative of emotions that even the composer was unaware of in the music. After finishing the piece, the organist will turn and face the characters. The visage of the man appears both wise and stern, as if he has seen many things in a long life, some of which he found highly distasteful. Although his hair remains dark, the PCs will believe that the man is at least 60, perhaps older, and that those years weigh heavily upon him.

The man will speak in a deep resonant tone, introducing himself as Captain Nemo, yes the same Nemo who

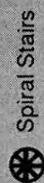
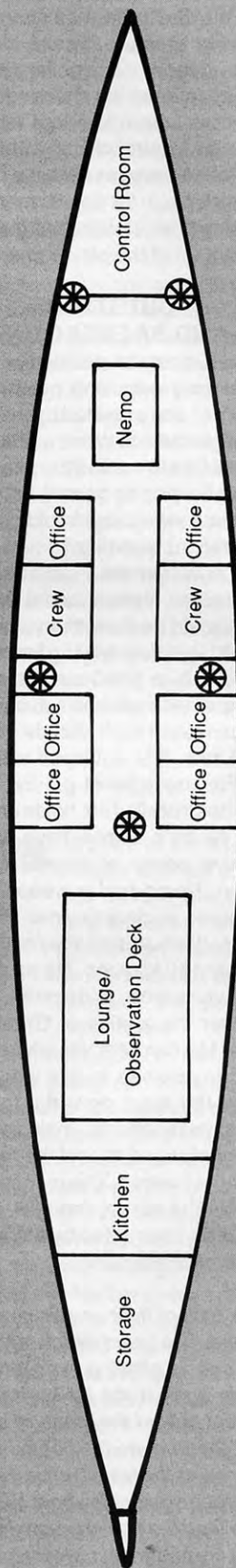
Middle Deck



Lower Deck



Upper Deck



once terrorized the seaways of Earth. If questioned on how he escaped the grasp of death, he will cryptically state that death has found a use of him as a servant, not a victim. To demonstrate his point, Nemo plots a course for a nearby Martian kraag, one of those nearly impregnable fortress cities of the most bestial of all the Martian races. As the great aerial vessel nears the kraag, Nemo begins speaking quietly into a strange device. His voice, amplified a thousand times, will echo around the strange Martian city. In fluent High Martian, Nemo will demand the freeing of all slaves held in the city. This will drive the High Martian king to a frothing rage. He will order his flying parties to attack the *Quinixitis*, as he prepares his small fleet of aerial warships for combat. Any Martian who attempts to board will receive a large, sometimes fatal, jolt of electricity. As the crew galleys rise to meet her, Nemo's vessel will drop liquid fire on them or destroy them with her ram.

After defeating all resistance, Nemo will again call for the surrender of all the slaves. The king will still refuse. With a sad shake of his head, Nemo will calmly order the dropping of a "Solar Bomb." From a distance of many cables, the huge ship will fire some kind of rocket-propelled bomb which will strike the kraag and explode with Sun-like brilliance. The shock wave from the detonation will rock even the great aerial flyer. A huge mushroom-shaped cloud will form from the brightly glowing fireball. In a few minutes, the PCs will see that not only was the fortress atop the kraag destroyed, but that the entire rock buttress has been reduced to half its original height.

Nemo will turn to the PCs, a sad expression on his face masking the madness in his eyes, and explain that they have been privileged to witness the dawning of a new age, an age of peace and enlightenment. He, Nemo, will end the petty bickering on Mars, and with the Red Planet as a base, he will bring his wisdom to Earth as well. Soon he will strike at the war going between Britain and her Martian opponents. He will show both worlds the power of his Solar Bombs. He will end all wars and make all nations as one. Slavery will be no more. Nemo's tone will be exultant. He will end his speech in wild laughter, before falling into an ashamed silence.

IN THE FACE OF MADNESS

It should quickly become apparent to

the PCs that Nemo is both mad and extremely powerful. His weapon can easily destroy the massed armies and navies of the Earth, his vessel the aerial fleets as well. He must be stopped before he destroys both worlds. Nemo will tell the characters that he intends on using his weapons against the British Army when it is locked in battle, thereby destroying both it and its enemies. He will prowl the skies of Mars for sometime before his madness forces him to make the attack. During the several weeks that the PCs will be aboard the *Quinixitis*, they will notice his violent mood swings. Nemo will always manage to convince himself that the time is not yet right for the attack. It is not tactical reasons that make this decision for him but humanitarian ones. Deep inside, Nemo knows that his plan is evil. It will be up to the PCs to stop him before he unleashes a new terror on mankind.

The PCs will have many plans to choose from in attempting to destroy the *Quinixitis*, her mad captain and his mighty weapon. First, they may attempt to stage a mutiny with the help of the crew. The chances of this are very unlikely. Each crewmember was rescued from slavery by Nemo, and many of the humans were crew on the *Nautilus*. Unless the PCs can find some incredibly convincing argument that will sway the crew into accepting Nemo's insanity as real, the vessel's complement will endeavor to assist the captain in any way possible.

A second method is to seize control of the vessel by overpowering the crew. Deck plans of the vessel have been provided for any combat that might occur in the midst of such an attempt. The PCs will begin with a tremendous set of disadvantages, though—they do not know the lay of the ship, they are unarmed and they are under constant guard. Player characters being player characters, they will find a way of defeating odds like that to seize control of the ship. An-

other plan that might be attempted is to try to gain Nemo's trust and confidence by appearing to become his disciples. This will require excellent acting abilities but will at least allow the characters more freedom on the ship.

If the characters gain control of the *Quinixitis*, they will discover that they have little idea of how the vessel or its weapons operate. It will require a combined score of Physics 11 or better to have any idea how the atomic engines function. The Solar Bomb is at least as complicated.

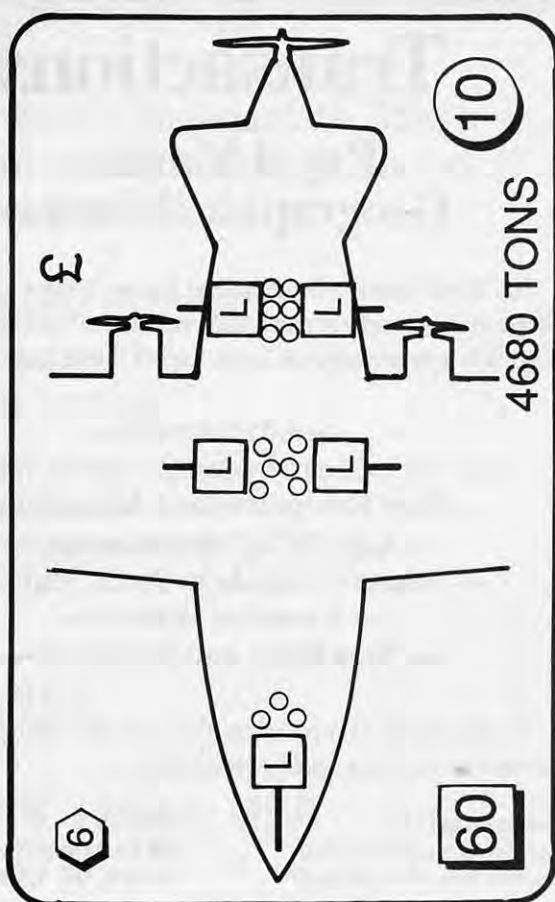
If characters should tamper with either of these devices, any catastrophic failure results will be just that—catastrophic.

A method of gaining control of their own destinies, if not the ship, will be to convince Nemo himself that what he is doing is wrong. Did the weapon not only kill masters but slaves also? Has Nemo made the characters themselves slave, or at least prisoner? Will the world follow a man into an age of enlightenment when he has ushered that age in with

IRONCLADS AND ETHER FLYERS

Class	Type	Year	HS	AV	BS	End	SP	Alt
<i>Quinixitis</i>	Raider	1889	60	6	—	Inf	10	V4

Armament: F(1xLG) BS (2xLG) 10LF 10BR+20.



the deaths of millions? Nemo has always prided himself on his mental abilities, and his bouts of madness terrify him. Astute PCs may notice his moodiness, and the abortive attacks he makes on the British troops. If the characters are careful, they should be able to bring the captain to his senses long enough for him to disembark. Nemo and his crew will then fly into oblivion, their only memorial a glowing mushroom cloud deep in the Martian wastes.

If the PCs manage to seize control of the vessel, Nemo will slide totally into madness. He will activate a secret self-destruct mechanism that will arm the Solar Bombs aboard the vessel and cause its engines to explode. The PCs will have to make their escape from the vessel as it is in midair. Perhaps they can find parachutes or hijack a small ship's boat. As before, the end of Nemo and his creations will come as a flash in the desert, leaving the characters, and the rest of the world, wondering if the genius captain might strike again.

REWARDS

For surviving a voyage with history's most notorious captain, the characters can expect to receive a fair share of Renown points. If they persuaded Nemo to destroy his weapon, and perhaps himself, they can expect knighthoods at the least. Inventors and scientists will receive 2D6 worth of Physics or Electricity points.

The revenue from the story, which will keep the readers of the time humming for several weeks, will also be substantial. All in all, characters may view this little pleasure cruise through Martian skies as one of their most successful and exciting ones yet. Ω

Transactions of the Royal Martian Geographical Society

The Royal Martian Geographical Society wishes to inform the public that its quarterly publication devoted to Victorian Era role-playing is now available on Earth. Each 32-page issue contains:

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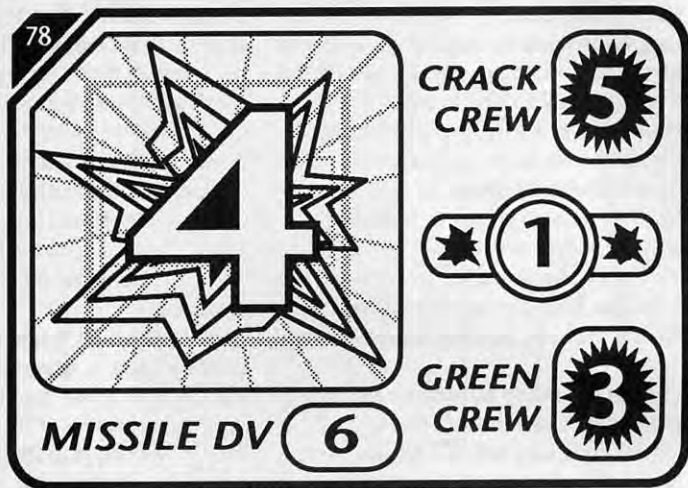
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The Covenant of Sufren

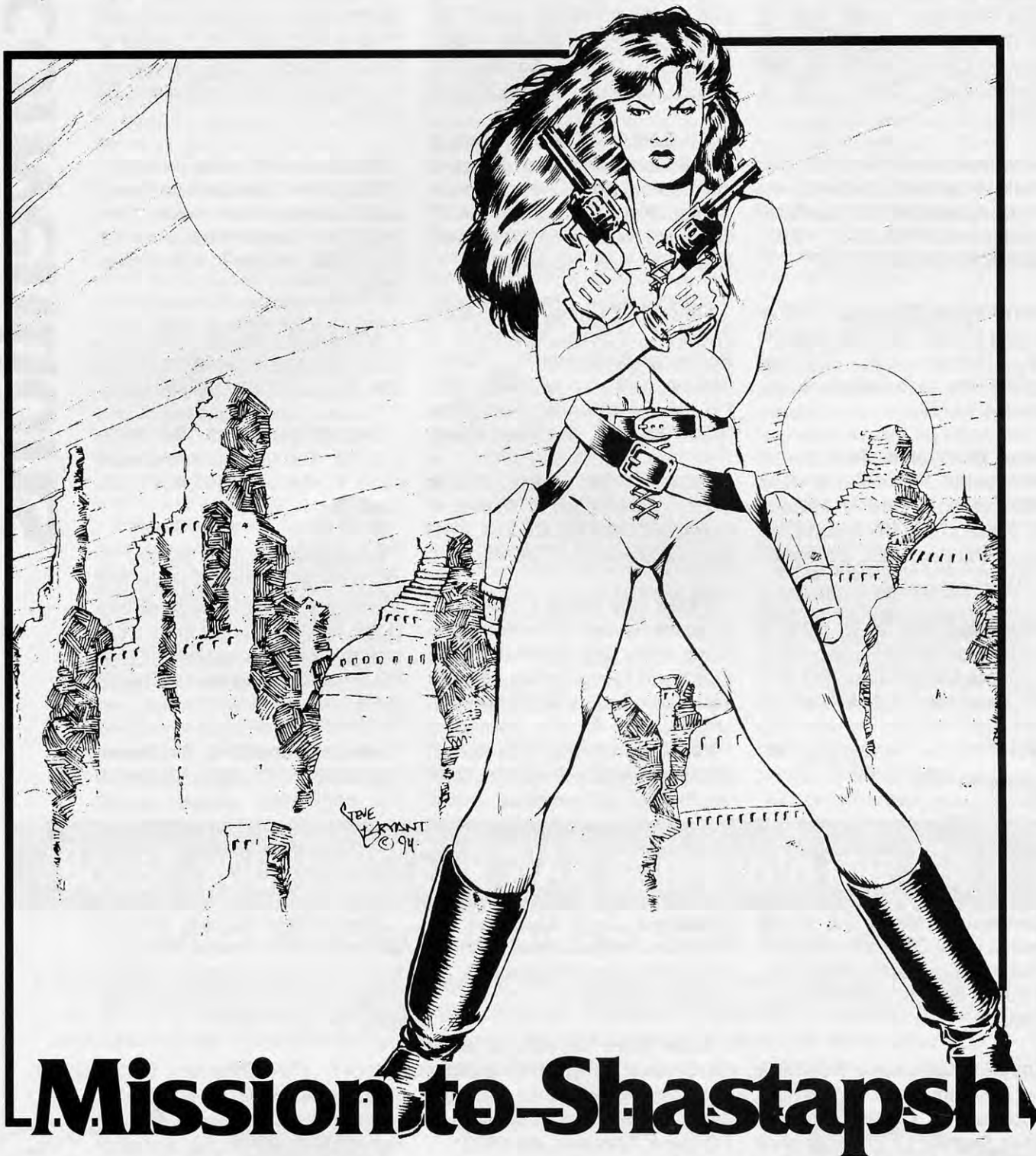
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Mission to Shastapsh

A Space: 1889 adventure by James L. Cambias Art by Steve Bryant

When our operation in Thoth went bust, Mulvihill and I had to skip town in a hurry, one jump ahead of the prince's guards. We took passage on a merchant kite bound for Syrtis and breathed easier when Thoth was out of sight.

On the second day out, we were crossing the Isidis Desert when a ship came hustling after us out of the south. At first, she looked like an ordinary gun kite, but when our captain crowded on

canvas to outrun her, the mystery ship began puffing smoke like a steamer.

"Shastapsh privateers, I reckon," I said to Mulvihill. "What can you make out through the telescope?"

"It can't be!" he whispered, peering hard through the glass. "Tom, either my eyes have gone bad, or else that privateer is flying the flag of the Newport Yacht Club!"

Then the shooting started.

The revolt against British rule in the city of Shastapsh has created some unique headaches for Percival Lowell, the American consul in Syrtis Major. Officially, the United States does not recognize the independence of Shastapsh—as far as Washington is concerned, the revolt is a purely internal affair of the

British colonial government.

But unofficially, there is a great deal of support for the Shastapsh rebels in America. The rebel government is the closest thing to a democracy on Mars, which appeals to many in the United States. The exploits of the Fenian Battalion in the fight against Britain are tremendously popular among Irish-Americans. Similarly, many German-Americans take pride in the activities of the German Tripod squadron fighting for Shastapsh. Consul Lowell must carefully balance American sympathy for Shastapsh against the fact that American interests on Mars are inextricably linked to Britain's interests. Usually, Lowell is up to the job, but now a crisis has developed.

An American privateer named Nathan Derby Pickman has recently started operating out of Shastapsh. His ship is fast and well-armed, and Pickman has rapidly built up an impressive list of British ships captured or destroyed. He frequently flies the American flag while privateering, which has led to stiff complaints from the British government. What complicates matters is that young Pickman is from one of the oldest and wealthiest families in Massachusetts. If he is shot down or executed by the British, it would create a serious breach between America and England. But if he continues privateering, the British may take it as an act of war.

SECRET COMMISSION

If one or more of the player characters are Americans, they will be contacted by Percival Lowell and asked to meet with him privately. At his house, Lowell treats the PCs to a splendid dinner prepared by his Martian chef, then explains the situation.

Lowell would like the characters to undertake a small commission for him. He has a letter from Nathan's father, Obed Marsh Pickman. The letter is a firm request that young Nathan stop his privateering or else be disinherited. Lowell would like the adventurers to deliver the letter to Shastapsh and try to persuade Nathan to stop attacking British vessels. Lowell and the elder Pickman can offer the party £100 per person if Nathan leaves Shastapsh for good.

British Version: British player characters will be summoned by Charles Merrivale, head of the colony's Cartographic Office. The Cartographic Office is actually a front organization for the British Secret Service, and Merrivale is Britain's spymaster in Syrtis Major. He

has a very different commission for the party: Merrivale would like the PCs to slip into Shastapsh and capture young Pickman, then bring him back to Syrtis Major for trial. Merrivale will give the PCs £500 to cover expenses; they can keep what they do not spend.

Mixed Version: If the player characters in your campaign are a mix of British and American adventurers, try to make sure that neither group of players hears what the other characters' mission is. Let the players themselves decide how much to tell one another. In the 1890s, Britain and America are still wary of each other and often work at cross-purposes.

GETTING TO SHASTAPSH

Since the British are currently fighting a war along their border with Shastapsh, it is obvious that the party cannot travel that way. To reach Shastapsh, the characters must go via Thoth or Karkarham. Both routes have their unique dangers.

From Thoth: The adventurers can get to Thoth aboard a cloudship from Mylarkt. The skies over the Isidis Desert and the Nepenthes-Thoth steppe are infested both with British gunboats and Shastapsh privateers. Roll encounters normally, treating large warship encounters as British gunboats, small warships as privateers, and pirates as High Martian brigands.

At Thoth, the party can get passage aboard a canal barge to Shastapsh. On a roll of 1 on 1D6, the barge will be attacked by a marauding British gunboat. All fares and shipping rates are doubled on the run into Shastapsh.

From Karkarham: Reaching Karkarham is itself an adventure, what with High Martian pirates and Oenotrian raiders in the Shistomik Mountains, in addition to the many pirates who operate out of Karkarham itself. Roll encounters normally using the table in the basic rulebook, but replace all the animal encounters (Great Kommota, Eelowaan, etc.) with either Karkarham pirates or Oenotrian warships.

Once at Karkarham, the party will have to get cloudship transport to Shastapsh. The fares are doubled on that run, and the PCs will have to wait 2D6 days to find a ship, unless they can charter a vessel or purchase one.

Other Means: If the player characters have their own ship, they can get to Shastapsh however they choose. The referee should adjust their encounters according to the guidelines above.

Once within Shastapsh territory, ships

will be intercepted by vessels of the Shastapsh Navy. The naval officers will search all incoming ships carefully, and they will check the identity papers and credentials of all Terran visitors. British subjects who identify themselves as such will be arrested and taken off to be interned.

SHASTAPSH DESCRIBED

The population of Shastapsh is 60,000, and the city controls some surrounding towns with a combined population of perhaps 24,000. The city's economy is based on mining and metalworking, supplemented by shipbuilding and the canal trade. Before the war, it was quite prosperous. The language of Shastapsh is Parhooni, but Cebreni and Hespesian are frequently understood.

The city is built on an island in the center of the canal. Referees who own **Sky Galleons of Mars** can consult the city map provided with that game. The suburbs sprawl out onto the banks of the canal. Shastapsh has many ancient towers and buildings of great beauty. Some signs of damage from the revolt are still visible, as are scars from when the cruiser *Triumph* shelled the city in 1887.

The city has no walls, relying instead on the canal for protection. Since the outbreak of war, the army has set up gun emplacements and earthworks around the city's perimeter. These are quite modern in design, as the army is being advised by an Irish-American engineer who fought at Vicksburg and Shiloh. (The British would be very interested in sketches of the fortifications.)

REBEL CITY

When the British subjugated Shastapsh in 1887, the ruling Prince Gemoortav agreed to abdicate in exchange for a handsome subsidy. Many in Shastapsh were outraged that the ruler they had fought to protect had sold them out. Resentment in the city festered, and the incompetent city governor, Jeremy Strutt, only made things worse by alternating weakness and brutality.

At the outbreak of the Oenotrian War, the British withdrew some of their forces from Shastapsh, leaving only a small contingent of Meepsoori and Moeris Lacus troops to occupy the city. When a mocking crowd burned an effigy of Governor Strutt during the drunken celebration of the Swift Moon Festival, he panicked and ordered the city watch to break up the festival. The Martian watch

officers refused, and Strutt called in the soldiers. Someone fired a shot, and the city exploded.

The garrison troops were overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of the mob. A quick-thinking captain was able to organize an orderly retreat, but casualties were high. Governor Strutt was found by the rebels as he tried to escape in disguise; they hacked him to pieces.

Governing Council: Some prominent citizens—mostly merchants and bureaucrats—formed the Shastapsh Governing Council and organized an army to defend the city. Surprisingly, one of the council's first actions was to hold citywide elections. Most council members were easily returned to office, but the vote has made the council the only democratically elected government on Mars.

Currently, there are 15 men on the council. The most powerful are Laareb Mitaav, Agodak Juduuz and Vashtaan Eelogeem. Mitaav commands the army; Juduuz is head of the Justice Tribunal and controls the police; and Eelogeem is a popular leader of the masses. The council members constantly struggle for power, even as they try to preserve their city's freedom.

Army: The army of Shastapsh is described in the **Soldier's Compan-**

ion. It is organized into 10 "flags" of about 200 men each. Each flag elects its officers. Most of the troops are volunteers, but three of the flags have veterans of the old city militia. Each flag has two infantry bands, one of cavalry, and a gun section. Half the men have muskets or bows; the rest carry melee weapons.

Navy: Shastapsh has a small navy, and is struggling desperately to find more ships. There are two *Endtime*-class screw galleys with Trained crews, supplemented by a half-dozen armed merchant kites with Green crews. The city's shipyard and foundries make it possible to repair cloudships, and the navy is building two large armored screw galleys. The council has issued dozens of seizure warrants, so the skies around Shastapsh are full of privateers. While the privateers can raid commerce and keep British gunboats busy on patrol, they would probably vanish if a fleet ever came to attack the city.

CONDITIONS IN SHASTAPSH

The war has placed an incredible strain on Shastapsh's resources, but so far the city has met the challenge. Unemployment has vanished, since all idle citizens are either in the army or working in the shipyards and arsenals.

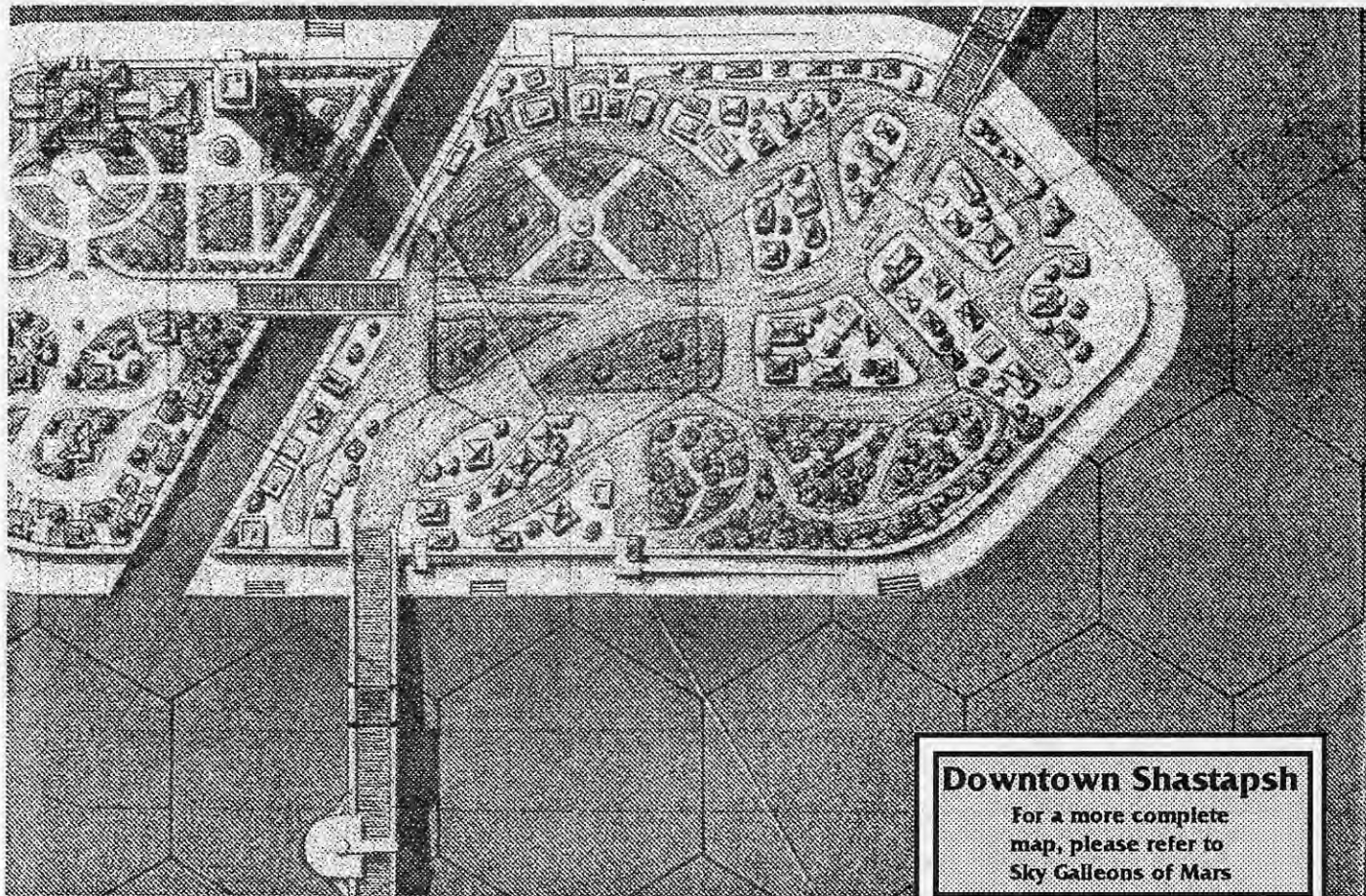
Food supplies are tight, but the council's rationing program seems to be working. The government has almost no money and is printing paper currency to keep things going. So far, the citizens accept the paper money. It is rumored that Shastapsh is receiving gold from other cities.

Prices are very high in Shastapsh, and many items are completely unavailable. Referees should double the cost of most items. Terran goods cost 10 times normal, when they can be had at all. Guns and ammunition are almost impossible to find.

Visitors will notice the unusual public-spiritedness and determination of the people of Shastapsh. Corruption is entirely missing from the Shastapsh government. Even the merchants do not haggle as much as they might. Crime is low, and the Justice Tribunal is unrelenting in its pursuit of wrongdoers. The red, black and green tricolor flag of Shastapsh is everywhere.

ENCOUNTERS IN SHASTAPSH

Terran adventurers wandering around Shastapsh will automatically attract attention. Every hour, roll 1D6 for an encounter. During the day, there will be an encounter on a roll of 1-3; at night, a roll of 1 is required. Check the



tables below for the nature of the encounter.

Roll	Day	Night
1	Police	Police
2	Police	Terrans
3	Terran	Refugees
4	Merchant	Criminals
5	Refugees	Ground Cleanser cultists
6	Crowd	Ground Cleanser cultists

Police: The party will meet with 1D6 agents of the Justice Tribunal, who will inspect the player characters' identification and ask them their business. If the PCs are acting at all suspicious, the police will take them in for questioning by Agodak Juduuz. Police are Green NPCs armed with swords.

Terrans: The PCs encounter one or more of the other Terrans in Shastapsh. Most will be interested in who the player characters are and why they are in the city.

Merchant: The adventurers meet a merchant, who will try to sell them something. The nature of the goods for sale is up to the referee, but everything will be expensive.

Refugees: The characters meet 3D6 refugees, camping out in the street and begging for food. These are poor farmers from a village in the war zone; they have come to Shastapsh because they have no place else to go.

Crowd: The adventurers come across a large crowd of citizens, in a frenzy of patriotic enthusiasm. Again roll 1D6. On 1-3, they will hail the PCs as some of the city's noble allies. On 4-6, they will chase after them, intending to lynch the evil Red Men. Most in a crowd will be unarmed, but some may have knives.

Criminals: The PCs encounter 1D6 criminals in a dark street. Lone crooks may be pickpockets or con men; larger groups will be thugs. Criminals are Veteran NPCs armed with knives and clubs.

Ground Cleansers: The party encounters a group of Ground Cleanser cultists equal in number to the PCs. They have knives and clubs, and will attack the Terrans on sight. They are Trained NPCs.

FOREIGNERS IN SHASTAPSH

Popular attitudes toward Terrans are mixed. Large numbers of Ground Cleanser cultists in Shastapsh live for the day when all Earthmen leave Mars. But the help given by the Fenians, Germans and other human volunteers has made some Terrans very popular in

Shastapsh. The Irish, Germans and French are best regarded. Needless to say, the English are thoroughly hated.

At present, there are perhaps 200 Terrans resident in Shastapsh. The Fenian Volunteers have a single battalion of 70 men, with a dozen followers and noncombatants. The German Tripod squadron has 10 men. Five Terran privateering ships operate out of Shastapsh, with a total complement of 80 men. There are another two dozen civilian Earthmen in Shastapsh—arms dealers, reporters, spies, anarchists and similar shady characters. Most have American, Greek or Latin American passports. The Germans and Fenians are usually at the front, and the privateers are often out on cruises, so at any given time there are only about 100 Earthmen in the city.

Foreigners in Shastapsh tend to cluster in the port district, near the landing field. A bar called the Liberty Tavern is their unofficial headquarters. The place is dark and smoky—a natural haven for intrigue. There are always plots and mysterious deals being hatched around the tables in the back. The owner is a one-eyed old Martian woman called "Granny Akvaan," who wears a British officer's tunic (a bullet hole is visible just over the heart).

FINDING PICKMAN

Nathan is actually fairly easy to locate, but he is hard to see. He spends much of his time aboard his privateering ship, the *Margarita*, out on patrol. When in port, he lives in one of the city's ancient towers, guarded by his marines. The marines do not admit visitors without Nathan's approval.

If any of the player characters are Americans of Social Level 6, there is a very good chance that they are personally acquainted with Nathan. He will almost certainly have heard of the PC's family. Such social connections might get the characters in to see him.

Nathan is always interested in better weapons for his ship. Characters who are (or claim to be) arms merchants will be allowed in. He is also something of

The Margarita

0

Price: £16,540

Rogue ROF= 1

2

Bridge CHTISO

Deck [][][]

Engineers [][]

Hull Hits

VH	
H	
M	
L	
VL	

Masts

-1
-2
-3
-4
-5
-6

Screws

6
5
4
3
2
1

Marines

6/K

a scientific dilettante, and would love to talk with any scholars visiting Shastapsh—especially archaeologists.

MISS CONSIDINE

Nathan is always accompanied by a lovely dark-haired woman named Margarita Considine. She is an extremely intelligent woman with a strong personality and remarkable beauty. Among her many talents is a gift for new inventions.

Anyone meeting Nathan and Margarita will quickly realize that she is the real brains of the pair. Margarita harbors a deep hatred for the British and is waging war on them, with Nathan as her weapon. She is fully aware of the diplomatic complications he is generating, and she hopes to cause war between England and America.

There are two ways to play Margarita. Either she and Nathan are in love, and he has taken up the fight against Britain on her behalf, or else she is merely using him. In the latter case, she may be employing her Mind Control drug to keep him in line.

MARGARITA

Nathan's ship is a much-modified old *Small Bird*-class screw galley. The turncranks have been replaced with a forced-draught steam engine designed by Margarita. The ship also has a com-

NATHAN DERBY PICKMAN (Trained NPC)

Born to one of the oldest and richest families in New England, young Nathan has always dreamed of living a life of adventure. When he turned 21, Nathan left Harvard and bought a ticket to Mars. He drifted around the planet for a few months, before meeting Margarita Considine in Karkarham. She convinced him to become a privateer and fight for the cause of liberty in Shastapsh.

Nathan is a pleasant young man, utterly devoted to Margarita. He is having great fun living the life of a dashing privateer and sees no reason to give it up. He is something of an idealist and supports the underdog in any conflict.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (edged), Trimsman 1 (steam flyer)
Agil: 2	Stealth 1, Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 5 (mapping), Swimming 1
Int: 1	Observation 1, Gunnery 2 (MLC), Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2, Linguistics 3 (French, Koline, Parhooni)
Soc: 6	Riding 5 (horse), Leadership 2, Piloting 4 (steam flyer)

Motives: Love (of Margarita), Fair, Adventuresome.

Appearance: Nathan is of medium height and a sturdy build. He has dark hair and is already starting to go bald. His good looks are marred slightly by protruding eyes and a receding chin. His clothing is of the best quality, made in London. Nathan has taken to wearing a sword when travelling in Shastapsh.

MARGARITA CONSIDINE (Veteran NPC)

Margarita Considine was born of an Irish father and Mexican mother. When she was only a girl, her father was executed by the British for revolutionary activities. Since then, she has harbored a deep hatred of the British specifically and all oppressors in general.

As a strong-willed and talented woman in Victorian society, Margarita has learned to manipulate men to accomplish things she cannot do alone. Her beauty and charm make this simple for her.

Even as a girl, Margarita was interested in science, and has given herself as good an education as any college graduate. She is particularly interested in flight, and has written a paper on the biology of liftwood. She has a natural talent with machinery, and she has a number of inventions to her credit. Sadly, most of them have been turned to the cause of destruction.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 3 (edged)
Agil: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 3 (pistol), Crime 1 (pick locks), Mechanics 2 (machinist)
End: 1	
Int: 6	Observation 5, Science 4 (physics), Engineering 2 (naval architecture)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Linguistics 4 (English, Koline, Parhooni, Hespesian), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 1

Research Areas: Biochemistry 28, Flight 14, Precision Machinery 10, Metallurgy 5, Combustion 4, Power Production 4, and Electricity 1.

Inventions: Mind Control drug, reliability 3; Personal Conveyor, reliability 6; Quick-Firing Gun, reliability 5; Forced-Draught Boiler, reliability 6.

Motives: Hatred (of the British specifically and oppressors in general), Knowledge, Ambitious.

Appearance: Margarita is devastatingly beautiful. She is tall and slender, with fair skin and large dark eyes. Her hair is dark brown with reddish tints, worn in long braids, Mexican-style. She usually dresses simply and on shipboard sometimes wears trousers. In Shastapsh, she wears a pistol in a holster at her waist and keeps a knife hidden in her stocking.

plete kite rig, for fuel economy on long cruises.

It is armed with a Rogue cannon, modified by Margarita to have a rate of fire of 1. The two Sweeper mounts have been replaced with 1" Gatlings. The *Margarita* carries eight marines (five are Irish or Mexican, and the rest are Martians). It has two passenger cabins and a small laboratory. The cargo hold can fit 20 tons.

The ship can reach Very High altitude. Its speed is 6 under power, or else normal kite speed. The coal bunker is 20 tons, giving the *Margarita* 10 days' endurance under steam. Under sail, she can cruise almost indefinitely. The crew are Trained quality, and the marines are armed with modern Winchester rifles.

OUTCOMES

The player characters will have their work cut out for them getting Nathan to stop privateering. Nathan will not leave Margarita, not even if he gets his father's letter threatening to disinherit him. The characters must find a way to break her hold on him.

If Margarita is using the Mind Control drug on Nathan, the player characters may be able to discover it by observing his behavior. They can then try to release him from its effects. He will not be pleased to learn he has been drugged.

But if Nathan actually is in love with Margarita, things will be much more difficult. The adventurers must find a way to discredit her in Nathan's eyes. It might be simpler to kidnap Nathan and spirit him out of Shastapsh after all.

If the PCs do decide on direct action against Nathan, they must evade not only his marine guards but the city's police as well. Nathan is quite popular with the citizens, so anyone harming him will have to face the entire city.

FURTHER ADVENTURES IN SHASTAPSH

There are many other potential adventures for player characters in Shastapsh. The British government may ask them to learn which Martian states are sending money and weapons to the city. The Germans or the French might be covertly supporting the rebellion as well. Perhaps the PCs might be asked to infiltrate the Fenian Volunteers or sabotage the Tripod Squadron. Idealistic characters may decide to join the rebellion. More mercenary sorts could find any number of ways to turn a profit on the situation. Ω

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The adventure begins with the player characters travelling on Earth by ship. Their destination is unimportant; all that matters is that the voyage takes them across an ocean.

For now, it will be assumed that they are taking a ship across the Atlantic.

At about the midpoint of the voyage, a terrible storm strikes. The fierce winds and waves pound the ship mercilessly. The fury of the tempest is too much for the vessel to take. She begins taking on water and starts to go down. The captain gives the order to man the lifeboats.

The passengers rush for the lifeboats. Though the PCs will undoubtedly follow the rule of ladies and children first, others among the passengers are less chivalrous. A group of ruffians from second class will try to seize one boat for themselves and must be prevented by force. All around are scenes of terrible confusion and panic. Children are crying, men fighting, and above it all is the roar of the wind.

Tragically, there are not enough boats for everyone. Women and obviously elderly or infirm male PCs will be able to get seats in the lifeboats, but healthy men must take their chances in the water. As the ship starts to go down, there is plenty of loose wreckage and flotsam in the water for characters to grab hold of.

All night, the PCs are tossed in the foaming waves. But as dawn approaches, the weather begins to calm. In the dim morning light, the characters can see an island in the distance, and the currents appear to be pushing the castaways toward the island. Characters skilled at Navigation will be puzzled, for the charts show no island anywhere near the ship's course.

Wet, exhausted and chilled to the bone, the PCs reach the shore of the

island and collapse on the beach. They see no sign of life. None of the other boats can be seen. (Fortunately, the other boats were all rescued during the night by a passing steamer, and only a few lives were lost.)

MYSTERIOUS ISLAND

After the characters have had a chance to rest and recover their strength, they will want to look around. The beach on which they are lying rises to meet a dense thicket of trees and shrubbery, which appears to cover the entire island. As they are considering what to do, a strange sound is heard from behind the trees. It grows louder as a mysterious machine comes into view.

The apparatus appears to be a small carriage mounted on four jointed legs, the whole thing powered by a steam engine noisily puffing away. When its occupant spies the castaways, he gives a shout of surprise, dismounts and rushes over.

The man is Yoshi Tanaka. Though he is Japanese, he speaks perfect English. Tanaka will help any injured characters or NPCs into his steam walker, then lead the castaways to a concealed road through the jungle. If anyone asks where they are going, he will answer simply, "Technopolis."

CITY OF SCIENCE

After a mile, the jungle ends, revealing a large central valley laid out in neat fields. In the center is a city of pristine white buildings. The adventurers may notice as they pass the fields that each plant is covered by a glass bell, with several tubes and pipes leading to main lines running between the rows. In one field of tomatoes, a group of people are carefully replacing the glass covers on the plants with larger ones. Tanaka explains that the glass covers protect the

various citizens to take charge of the castaways. Each refugee will be housed in the home of a citizen of Technopolis.

Dr. Forester welcomes the refugees. "Welcome to the city of the future! Technopolis! Where we have used science to create a land of peace and prosperity for all!"

WONDERS OF TECHNOPSIS

Dr. Forester is unmarried, so he can host two or three player characters in his own home. Other characters can stay with the Barranza family next door. Unmarried ladies will be housed with the Jackson sisters, a pair of spinsters. Everyone will be given a chance to rest, a change of clothes and a hot meal. Then Dr. Forester will lead the visitors on a tour of Technopolis.

The city is filled with super-scientific wonders, as summarized below. All are very Victorian and slightly loopy. New inventions have their Knowledge Area, required knowledge level and Reliability modifier listed in parentheses. References are encouraged to add devices of their own creation. All should be slightly impractical.

Transportation: Many of the pedestrians on the sidewalks of Technopolis wear clockwork-powered roller skates, so that they can travel at a walking pace without any effort (Transportation 5, -1). All the streets have narrow-gauge railroad tracks running down the middle, and the Technopolitans travel about within the city aboard small locomotives. The air is filled with the sound of bells and whistles. Each house has its own railroad siding.

For rapid travel to distant sites on the island, such as the submarine harbor or the defensive emplacements, there are pneumatic tubes which blast the passenger along using compressed air (there are three sizes of tube—for small,

City of Tomorrow

**A Space: 1889
adventure by
James L. Cambias
Art by Tom Roberts**

crops from the elements, and allow each plant to be individually heated and watered.

At the edge of the city, the player characters and Tanaka will be met by a crowd of people of all nationalities. Everyone is dressed alike, in jumpsuits of some heavy gray fabric. The leader of the community is Dr. Clayton Forester, the chief manager. He quickly directs

medium and large passengers). Tube passengers travel unprotected and often arrive mugged by the air.

Travel on rough terrain is accomplished with steam walkers, like the one Tanaka was riding when he first encountered the castaways (25, 2).

Home Life: Each house is surmounted by a device like a giant umbrella. This collapsible canopy protects



the dwelling from rain and sun. The beds in each house are fitted with sheets woven from asbestos, so they can be cleaned and sterilized in a flaming furnace. Bathtubs come equipped with a steam-driven scrubbing-machine, which briskly cleans the occupant using stiff brushes and strong soap (Precision Machinery 4, -1). The houses are heated by steam heat, provided from the central steam plant. All the homes must be heated to the same temperature, so there are daily votes on the heat level. Many citizens supplement the steam heat by wearing clothes containing battery-operated electric heating fibers (Electricity 6, 2). Light is provided to all

the homes by powerful searchlights mounted atop the power plant. According to Dr. Forester, this simulates the light of the Sun, and is more healthy than lamplight. The blinding searchlights are controlled from their target homes by a telegraph device.

Food and Drink: For ease in storage, all foodstuffs on the island are kept in a dehydrated state, reduced to a fine powder (Biochemistry 6, -2). Huge bins of dehydrated foods are kept in the central kitchen. At any time, the Technopolitans can request meals from the kitchen via telegraph. The dehydrated food is reconstituted, heated and fired to the customer through a powerful

pneumatic tube. The result is that all meals in Technopolis consist of variously flavored pale brown mush.

Communication: The Technopolitans have almost completely abandoned writing with pens and pencils. Instead, each home is equipped with a compact typesetting machine and printing-press. Dr. Forester explains that this allows copies to be kept of everything one writes. Books are printed on huge rolls of paper so that they can be set up on a mechanical page-reel, which rolls the sheets past the reader at a constant rate (Precision Machinery 1, -2). Daily news for the island is displayed on a huge screen atop the power plant, using a magic lantern device. Each house is fitted with a telegraph device for communication with the other homes. Everyone in Technopolis is highly skilled at sending Morse code.

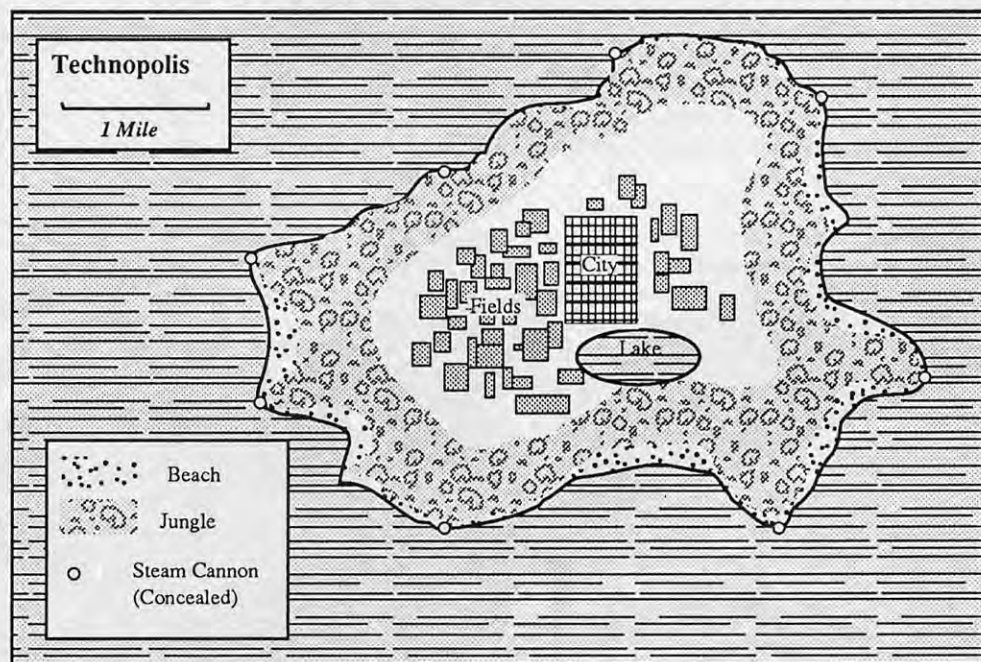
Society and Politics: Dr. Forester explains that there is no crime on the island because everyone has access to wonderful scientific luxuries. There are not even any weapons. The entire city of Technopolis is protected by batteries of powerful steam-cannons, equivalent to 10-inch naval guns, but with a much higher rate of fire (Power Production 20, 4; rate of fire equals Reliability).

The basic unit of currency in Technopolis is the Pound—not the British pound, but the Pound of steam-pressure. A Technopolitan pound-note represents one hour of steam at 1 PSI, and is worth about a penny. Consequently, all prices in Technopolis will initially seem outrageous, as they are based on the amount of power used to manufacture the items.

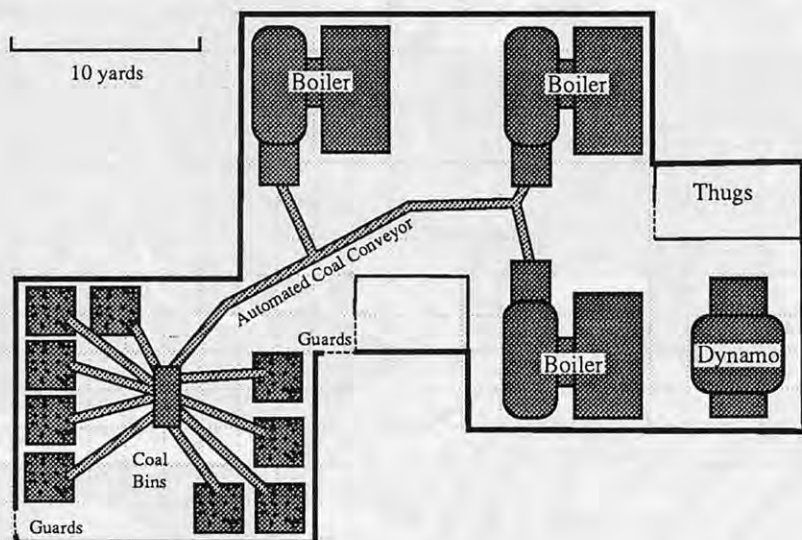
The chief industry of Technopolis is invention. Most of the residents are inventors, and they share half the royalties from their inventions with the community. This means that the citizens are forever testing out bizarre devices, often in the middle of the night.

Technopolis is governed by a committee of managers, each of whom is responsible for one part of running the community. There is a power manager, a farms manager, a housing manager, and so on. Clayton Forester is the chief manager. All the managers are elected, but there are no campaigns or parties. Each candidate in an election merely sends his résumé and a policy statement to all the voters, and the people make their decision based on that information.

At present, society in Technopolis is very much like that of America or Europe. A few of the more radical citizens have proposed experiments with "so-



The Power Plant



cial inventions" such as Anarchism, Socialism, Free Love or allowing women to vote. So far, none of these have been implemented.

ENTER THE SERPENT

The player characters are not the only survivors of the shipwreck on the island. One boat was commandeered by "Roaring" Frank Nelson and his gang of ruffians. They washed up elsewhere on the shore of the island and were not discovered by the inhabitants. While the PCs are being shown the sights, Roaring Frank and his men will be spying on the city and making sinister plans.

The night after the characters have had their tour of the city, Roaring Frank and his men will strike. Stealthily slipping through the streets of Technopolis, they will reach the central power plant and barricade themselves inside. Control of the steam plant gives them total control of the city; nothing works without power. Even the mighty steam-cannons are silent.

Using the magic-lantern device, Roaring Frank issues his demands: He is to be made king of the city, and everyone will do as he says from now on. If the people agree, he will restore power. Otherwise, not a wisp of steam will come from the plant. Without steam, there is no light, no heat, no water and no food for the city. The citizens will not be able to resist more than a few days.

Roaring Frank's real plan is to make Technopolis a haven for criminals. It is not on any maps, and with the advanced weapons designed by the citizens, Technopolis can be made impregnable against attack. Wanted men from all over the world will flock to this refuge, safe from the law and equipped with all modern conveniences to boot. Nelson plans to keep most of the current citizens in Technopolis, to serve himself and his criminal friends. The City of Tomorrow will become the City of Criminals.

BATTLE FOR TECHNOLIS

The citizens of Technopolis are completely at a loss. With no weapons, they are helpless to resist Roaring Frank. They have not even so much as a carving-knife. In addition, very few of the Technopolitans are skilled at fighting. Most are inventors and scientists—men of peace.

It seems that the player characters may be the last hope of Technopolis. If they have any personal weapons, they can fight Roaring Frank and his men. Perhaps half a dozen Technopolitans will also volunteer to fight, arming them-

selves with croquet mallets, letter-openers and tree branches. Nobody has any knowledge of tactics, so the PCs must devise a plan of attack.

Roaring Frank and his men have barricaded themselves inside the power plant. (See the diagram.) It is a huge, windowless brick building at the center of Technopolis. The plant has numerous skylights and two large steel doors. The doors are shut, but have no locks.

Inside the plant, there are a dozen thugs, all of them are armed with knives. One man at each entrance is armed with a heavy revolver. At any time, half of the villains will be on guard duty, while the remainder rest. The thugs are all

Veteran NPCs, with high physical attributes. They are all terrified of Roaring Frank and will not give up until he does.

CONCLUSION

Once Technopolis has been saved from the threat of Roaring Frank's gang, the player characters will be heroes. The citizens will tend any injuries and send the PCs back to civilization aboard the city's submarine. And they will be entrusted with the greatest secret of Technopolis—the coordinates of the island. Should they ever return, they will be welcomed. But they must promise never to reveal the secret of Technopolis to the outside world.

DR. CLAYTON FORESTER (Green NPC)

Dr. Forester was one of the founders of Technopolis and is its most enthusiastic proponent. As chief manager, he is responsible for making long-range plans for the community and coordinating the work of the other managers. He is merely the chief administrator and by no means is the "ruler" of the city.

Forester is very optimistic about science and progress. He dreams that someday the whole world will be as happy and advanced as Technopolis. Dr. Forester is himself a talented inventor, with many devices to his credit. His Steam-Cannon keep Technopolis safe from outside attack. Dr. Forester still has one Intellect die to use creating new inventions.

Motives: Knowledge, Ambitious, Friendly.

Appearance: Dr. Forester is a short, slim, long-faced man with a shock of gray hair and a heavy mustache. He wears thick spectacles and is never armed.

Attribute Skills

Str:	1	
Agil:	4	Stealth 3, Mechanics 2 (machinist)
End:	2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int:	6	Observation 6, Science 6 (physics), Engineering 4 (naval architecture)
Chr:	3	Eloquence 2, Linguistics 2 (German, Japanese)
Soc:	5	Riding 4 (horse), Leadership 2

Research Areas: Power Production 22, Biochemistry 15, Metallurgy 14, Combustion 13, Precision Machinery 11, Transportation 7, Ether 5

Inventions: Steam cannon, Reliability 3; dehydrated food, Reliability 5; steam turbine, Reliability 4.

"ROARING" FRANK NELSON (Veteran NPC)

From the slums of Whitechapel in London to the South Pacific, Roaring Frank Nelson is known and despised wherever he goes. He has never earned an honest cent in his life, preferring to gamble, swindle, smuggle, steal, cheat or forge his way through the world. Roaring Frank openly bullies anyone weaker than himself and treacherously plots against those he cannot terrorize. The fact that he is cunning as well as strong makes him very dangerous.

Motives: Liar, Greedy, Boastful.

Appearance: Roaring Frank Nelson is a huge man, with a massive chest and thick, tattooed arms. His voice is deep and thunderous, and he seldom speaks in anything but a shout. His little eyes are sharp and treacherous. Roaring Frank always carries a heavy revolver and keeps a Derringer hidden in his sleeve.

Attribute Skills

Str:	6	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 4 (edged)
Agil:	4	Stealth 3, Mechanics 1 (steam), Marksmanship 2 (pistol), Crime 3 (forgery)
End:	4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mountaineering), Swimming 2
Int:	5	Observation 5, Gunnery 1 (BLC)
Chr:	2	Eloquence 1, Linguistics 2 (Malay, Samoan), Bargaining 1
Soc:	1	Piloting 1 (sailing craft) Ω