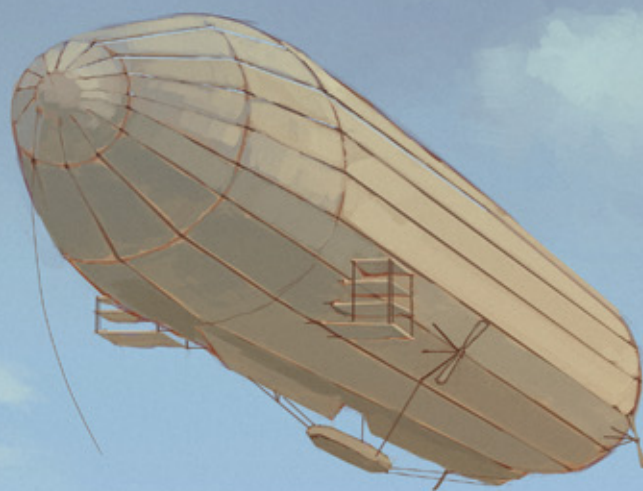


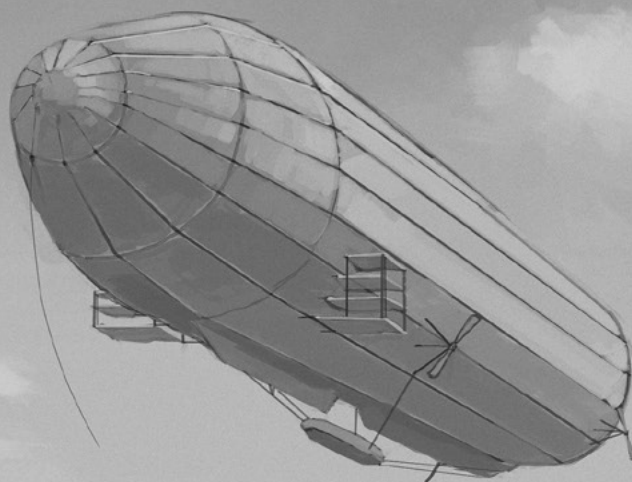
# ON THE TRAIL OF THE GODS



**SPACE**  
1889



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SPACE  
1889



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An adventure by J.C. Clements, Esq., Frank Frey, and Shane Ivey, Esq.

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# On the Trail of the Gods

A Space: 1889 expedition organized by J. C. Clements, Esq., Frank Frey, and Shane Ivey, Esq.

## Introduction

In May of 1888 the London social season has begun—and so has deadly intrigue! An obscure naturalist's discovery in the deserts of the Sudan may rewrite history and lead to an ancient treasure from a long-lost civilization. The characters follow clues from the halls of the Royal Exhibition to the wastes of Mars, contending with rivals obsessed with the power the discovery may unlock. How long can mere mortals survive along the trail of the gods?

### Character Recommendations

**Nations:** Any.

**Characters:** Any; especially Academics, Discoverers, Reporters, Scientists, Soldiers.

Africa—discoveries that may have implications for many other sciences and for history itself. They first hear of Whitman in London while investigating a sinister Prussian soldier-scientist named Hans Vogel.

Hans Vogel dreams of a sterner German Empire, with only the military at its head. In order to pursue his objective, he has rallied kindred spirits, the *Blutsbrüder*, the Blood Brothers. Just like himself they are fanatics that mean to establish a realm under military rule, and to that end would take the risk of—briefly—destabilizing the German Empire.

At the behest of a new patron, the characters journey to Glasgow for the **International Exhibition of Science, Art and Industry**, a months-long showcase of science and industry (it opens on May 8th, 1888, and will run until November of that year). Whitman's research is presented at an archaeological conference by his daughter, Alice, and the presentation proves explosive. But not as explosive as the bombs that suddenly go off across the Exhibition. In the confusion, Vogel and his men attempt to abduct Alice Whitman. They mean to find Alastair Whitman and force him to bend his discoveries to their ruthless cause.

As the smoke clears, the chase is on. The characters must pursue Vogel (or his compatriots, if they dealt with Vogel in Glasgow) through the war-torn Sudan to Whitman's research sites. Wondrous discoveries lead to Mars, where ancient secrets lie forgotten beneath the red soil, and where a cataclysmic confrontation awaits.

## Blood Brothers

*On the Trail of the Gods*, the characters learn of an archaeologist named Alastair Whitman making astonishing discoveries in

1889



# Chapter 1: The Season

*In which the Social Season of England commences and the heroes are given a mysterious invitation.*

May marks “the Season,” the social season of 1888, when the elite leave their country estates and move to London houses. There are coming-out parties and debutante balls for young ladies, charity events, and Derby Day. The Queen opens Parliament and the Royal Academy meets. The Season has been the heartbeat of the upper class of British society for over a century. It draws not only the British elite but great families from across Europe. It is governed by strict protocols, and it is widely known that British etiquette is considered the gold standard of civility, manners and behavior.

The characters are in London, or have been drawn there if they reside elsewhere. They have variously learned that inquiries

have been made about them at their favorite pubs, at regimental headquarters, with the local pastor, and so forth, as appropriate to each character. One Viscount Bury has sought to learn about their aptitudes, temperaments, and reputations. Characters who reside away from town may have come to London to ascertain the purpose of these inquiries.

The characters may want information about Viscount Bury. Seeking him out leads nowhere at first—his schedule is quite full—but a summary of what they can learn follows in the form of a magazine feature.

## THE ATHANAEUM

Page 27

### AN EXPOSITION ON VISCOUNT BURY AND THE ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE

*By Frederic George Stephens*

William Coutts Keppel, 7th Earl of Albemarle, KCMG, PC, styled Viscount Bury, served in the British Army before entering parliament in 1857.

Initially a Liberal, Lord Bury was elected Member of Parliament (MP) for Norwich in 1857, and later represented Wick Burghs from 1860 to 1865 and Berwick-upon-Tweed from 1868 to 1874. In 1859 he was sworn into the Privy Council and appointed Treasurer of the Household under Lord Palmerston, a post he held until 1866, the last year under the premiership of Lord Russell. In 1870 he was appointed a Knight Commander of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George. On 6 September 1876 he was summoned to the House of Lords through a writ of acceleration in his father's barony of Ashford.

Two years later Lord Bury was appointed Under-Secretary of State for War in Lord Beaconsfield's Conservative administration, where he remained until the government fell in 1880. In 1881, he became a Volunteer Aide-de-Camp to the Queen. He was once again Under-Secretary of State for War from 1885 to 1886 under Lord Salisbury. He wrote a history of American colonization entitled *Exodus of the Western Nations* in 1865, *A Report on the Condition of the Indians of British North America* in 1880, and was the principal author of *Savage Truths: A Comparison of the Native Peoples of the Americas and the Martians of the Kraag* in 1887.

Lord Albemarle married Sophia Mary MacNab, daughter of Sir Allan Napier MacNab, a Joint Premier of the Province of Canada (as it was called then), at Dundurn

Castle, Hamilton, Ontario, on 15 November 1855. They have ten children.

#### HIS BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION

Keppel was born in 1832 in London, England, the only son of General George Keppel, 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Albemarle, by his wife Susan Coutts Trotter, daughter of Sir Coutts Trotter, 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet. He was educated at Eton.

#### HIS SERVICE TO THE QUEEN

Keppel became an ensign and lieutenant in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Foot in 1843, a lieutenant in the Scots Guards in 1848 and an aide-de-camp to Lord Frederick FitzClarence in India in 1853. From 1854 until 1856, he was Superintendent of Native Affairs in Canada.

#### THE ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE

The Royal Colonial Institute was born of the British Empire on Friday June 26, 1868. At a meeting in the Willis Rooms, King Street, St. James's, it was agreed that a society with a London headquarters should be formed which would take an interest in colonial and Indian affairs. The elected chairman of the Society, Viscount Bury, declared that the intention was ‘to provide a meeting place for gentlemen interested in colonial and Indian affairs (and later) as well as those of our burgeoning Martian colony; to establish a reading room and a library, in which recent and authentic intelligence upon colonial subjects may be constantly available, and a museum for the collection and exhibition of colonial produc-

tions; to afford opportunities for reading papers, and for holding discussions upon colonial subjects generally.’

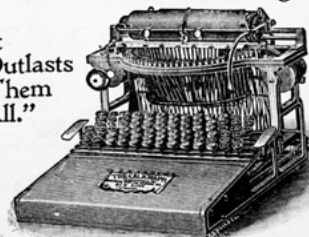
First called the Colonial Society, the Society received its first Royal Charter in 1869, which led to it being renamed the Royal Colonial Society and in 1870 the Royal Colonial Institute. Its first home was above a shirt shop at No. 15 The Strand, where it remained from 1870 until 1885. In this modest space the organization's library collection first began to be assembled.

As the Institute grew, it was felt that the initial premises would not satisfy its objective of being a ‘meeting place.’ In 1883, therefore, a lease was obtained for land in Northumberland Avenue, and a clubhouse formally opened in 1885.

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## The Invitation

Early one morning, when all the characters are in London, each of them is approached by a courier. This smartly-dressed man recognizes the character by name and gives them a sealed letter. The seal belongs to an organization granted a Royal Charter. The courier, alas, can offer no further information, being merely a messenger. Each courier has only a small card bearing the recipient's name and address and an artist's likeness. Upon delivering the letter, the courier continues on his way.

Each letter bears the letterhead of the Royal Colonial Institute, The Imperial Club, 25 Northumberland Avenue. It invites the recipient to visit the Viscount Bury at the institute on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 1888. Each letter is written and signed by the Viscount's own hand and instructs the recipient to bring the letter to the meeting.

Upon arrival at Northumberland Avenue, each character is greeted by a butler who requests to see the invitation. Each character in turn is brought to a lounge. The butler assures them periodically that the Viscount will arrive soon, and in the meantime servants provide refreshments. If the characters are strangers, this is a fine time for introductions.

After all have arrived, the butler announces the Viscount Bury. William Coutts Keppel, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Albemarle and founder of the Institute, is a stately man in his fifties. His graying hair and mutton chops are keenly coiffed and he is groomed impeccably. He has the air of a member of the peerage, a paragon of his station.

Lord Bury welcomes the characters and engages them in discussion of their backgrounds, accomplishments, and interests. He has tea brought, then a meal and drinks as they talk.

Lord Bury is an unabashed monarchist and drips of British nationalism. His political dealings have made him cunning, which he presents as deliberately stereotypical English reserve, but he is forthright and voluble by instinct and inclination.

He often comments on his military service in India, with hints of regret that it was cut short due to illness. He laments that duties to the Crown and the Institute preclude him from venturing into the field once more. He has published several works on the native cultures of the Empire. Indeed, his scientific and social views can be downright progressive at times; but they must be weighed against his adherence to the British class system and belief in what will come to be known as the "White Man's burden."

Eventually, Lord Bury makes a proposal on behalf of the Institute. Since the Berlin Conference of 1884 that partitioned Africa, the Germans have made minor efforts to expand their holdings there. They have made overtures north from German East Africa into the territory assigned to the newly-created Imperial British East Africa Company. Lord Bury intends to sponsor an expedition to Nubia to look into it, and there are more immediate issues to investigate here at home.

## That Russian Fellow

The first item is to get a look at a particular servant of the Kaiser who recently came to town. A Prussian officer named Hans Vogel has attracted attention as an outspoken proponent of German expansionism at the expense of other European powers.

Bury says German diplomats of his acquaintance don't much like Vogel. Vogel favors an ever-greater role for the upper-class officer corps of the German military in governing imperial affairs. He holds diplomats, mercantile interests, and the lower classes in contempt. The Germans assure Bury that Vogel has retired from

military service and does not speak for the Kaiser. Nevertheless, Bury suspects Vogel is up to something, and it won't be anything good for Britain.

Vogel is expected to attend a play at the Criterion Theatre tonight. Lord Bury offers tickets to the characters and asks if they'll determine what the Prussian up to.

Lord Bury does not, of course, negotiate the details of compensation—he has men of business to handle such details—but he promises that good service shall be rewarded with all due consideration by the Crown and membership into the Institute, which of course has considerable resources. He provides notes that the characters may present to his business agents to reimburse any expenses incurred (within reason). Tailor the incentives to the positions and interests of the characters.

## At the Criterion

With the Season at hand and several important events commencing around the kingdom, London is a jumping off point for a host of personalities. Many have descended on the Criterion Theatre for an evening of entertainment.

The Criterion is situated in Piccadilly Circus in London's fashionable West End. The West End is home to shops, art galleries, entertainments, and affluent residences.

The Criterion boasts modern electric lighting. The main floor has a large restaurant, dining rooms, a smoking lounge, a saloon, and a telegraph station. Upstairs are a grand hall, a picture gallery, and a private dining area. The theatre proper sits some thirty feet below the street, with a seating capacity of 588 spread over three levels.

The night's production, currently the talk of the town, is Thomas William Robertson's *David Garrick*, a comic play about a famous 18th century actor who accidentally makes enemies of the French troupe that hired him.

A number of events occur before the play and during the intermission.

## Mr. Edison

In the ballroom, both before and after the play, the characters may encounter famous American inventor Thomas Edison, age 41. He is never without his bodyguard, a former U.S. deputy marshal apparently of some repute.

Edison is eager to make conversation with anyone who will listen. He promotes the electric bulbs of Edison & Swan United Electric Light Company. The company, nicknamed Ediswan, is a partnership with famous English physicist and chemist Joseph Swan. Its bulbs are in this very theatre, brighter and cleaner and cooler than any gas lamp!

Edison also hopes to raise capital for Port Progress, his "City of the Future" on Long Island and speaks of it fulsomely.

Edison is currently embroiled in a lawsuit with the estate of English inventor William Sawyer, who died in 1883, over Edison's improvements to incandescent light bulbs which were based on Sawyer's work. He defends his claim at length if given the chance.

And of course he leaves in the morning for the International Exhibition of Science, Art and Industry in Glasgow.

Edison should be seen nosing around at various points in the evening. He is known for "gleaning" ideas from other inventors. Scientific characters may find him an eager questioner.



## Mr. Tesla

In some corner of the theatre, a man in his thirties with an Eastern European accent regales a fascinated crowd with tales of the future. He describes a world where "...liftwood and other airships are conveyed by electric motor, and the power for such devices is transmitted through the air from stations on the ground. These invisible waves might eventually span continents, making travel by air as common as by carriage." This is Nikola Tesla.

Tesla happily discusses engineering and electrical principles for hours at a time. He is in London looking for investors, and he has no qualms as to inquiring into a character's financial situation.

Tesla is under pressure from American industrialist George Westinghouse. Westinghouse is trying to negotiate a licensing deal for Tesla's polyphase induction motor and generator designs, as well as to retain him as a consultant for a year. Westinghouse has offered to fund Tesla's "pet projects" in exchange for access to further patents. (This may move the date of the Wardencliff Tower experiments ahead in history.) Tesla thinks Westinghouse is a pushy entrepreneur looking to exploit him as a source of remuneration.

Tesla comes off as a bit eccentric. He uses an abundance of technical terms and drifts into theoretical subjects as if he's having the conversation with himself, briefly ignoring his interlocutors altogether. A technically minded or skilled character might develop a rapport with Tesla; if in doubt, this may call for a *Science* roll.

Tesla says he plans to attend the International Exhibition in Glasgow. In particular he'll attend the opening of the Scottish Archaeological Collection in two days, where several papers of interest will be presented. If the characters befriend him, Tesla offers to secure them invitations to the event.

## Hauptmann Hans Vogel

In the picture gallery, the smoking room, or perhaps seated nearby in the restaurant, the characters encounter *Hauptmann* Hans Vogel and an entourage of soldiers, about as many as there are player characters. Vogel is quite fit, a little over six feet tall and with the physiognomy of a classic Prussian soldier of high birth. His long moustache is perfectly waxed and his uniform heavily starched.

Vogel and his constituents are adorned in full military regalia. That's not uncommon during the Season for soldiers of foreign governments, but close inspection of these men finds that their uniforms are not quite right. They look like the German military but are not part of it. Vogel was a lieutenant colonel in the army. His men call him *hauptmann*, meaning "captain" in the more general sense of a respected leader.

Any character with a military background recognizes it is uncommon for a soldier even of Vogel's rank to be accompanied by what appear to be bodyguards when on leave or conducting "personal business", let alone one who is retired. Characters who pay close attention (or who make *Perception* or *Empathy* rolls) discover Vogel and his men stray from military protocols. Vogel often uses the first names of his men, and their demeanor toward him seems strangely familiar and personally dedicated.

Vogel describes himself as a soldier and a scientist. He says he came to London to enjoy the Season for a few days. Tomorrow he will attend the International Exhibition in Glasgow to see the wonders of modern technology.

If the characters press him further, Vogel becomes aloof and quick to change the subject. He cites his poor English as an impediment, although his language skills seem excellent when the subject suits him.

If the characters push too hard, Vogel moves to another part of the theatre and his companions form a passively aggressive barrier to block further access.

Characters attempting to engage Vogel's guards in conversation find them particularly cold and unwilling to socialize. But Vogel has more men waiting outside who may be more forthcoming. See *Servants Outside* on page 8.

**Archetype:** Adventurer **Motivation:** Power  
**Style:** 2 **Health:** 7

### Primary Attributes

**Body:** 3 **Charisma:** 4  
**Dexterity:** 2 **Intelligence:** 3  
**Strength:** 3 **Willpower:** 4

### Secondary Attributes

**Size:** 0 **Initiative:** 5  
**Move:** 5 **Defense:** 5  
**Perception:** 7 **Stun:** 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Athletics	3	3	6	(3)
Brawl	3	2	5	(2+)
Con	4	4	7	(3+)
Demolitions	2	2	4	(2)
Firearms	2	2	4	(2)
Gunnery	3	2	5	(2+)
Intimidation	4	3	7	(3+)
Larceny	3	2	5	(2+)
Linguistics	3	2	5	(2+)
Melee	3	3	6	(3)
Science (Engineering)	3	3	6	(3)
Science (Physics)	3	3	6	(3)
Survival	3	1	4	(2)

### Talents

**Danger Sense**

### Resources

**Rank 4**

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0 N	0	5 N	(2+) N
Dagger	1 L	0	7 L	(3+) L
Sabre	3 L	0	9 L	(4+) L
Revolver	2 L	0	6 L	(3) L

## Vogel's Soldiers, the Blutsbrüder

**Archetype:** Soldier **Motivation:** Faith  
**Style:** 0 **Health:** 4

### Primary Attributes

**Body:** 2 **Charisma:** 2  
**Dexterity:** 2 **Intelligence:** 1  
**Strength:** 3 **Willpower:** 2

### Secondary Attributes

**Size:** 0 **Initiative:** 3  
**Move:** 5 **Defense:** 4  
**Perception:** 3 **Stun:** 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Athletics	2	2	4	(2)
Brawl	3	1	4	(2)
Demolitions	1	3	4	(2)
Firearms	2	2	4	(2)
Gunnery	1	3	4	(2)
Intimidation	2	2	4	(2)
Melee	3	1	4	(2)
Survival	1	1	2	(1)



## Resources

**Fame -1, Mentor (Vogel), Wealth -1**

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0 N	0	4 N	(2) L
Dagger	1 L	0	5 L	(2+) L
Rifle butt or big club	2 N	0	6 N	(3) N
Rifle	3 L	0	7 L	(3+) L
Revolver	2 L	0	6 L	(3) L
Sawed-off shotgun	4 L	0	8 L	(4) L

## Mrs. Johanna Bach

Characters looking and listening particularly for Germans may meet Johanna Bach in the ballroom or a lounge. Bach is the hearty, middle-aged wife of a prosperous industrialist and investor—and, she'll happily tell anyone (and her husband would agree), the genius behind his success. She has capitalized on a lifelong knack for engineering with constant education and indefatigable work, and can talk shop with any inventor or entrepreneur in the Empire. But tonight she's socializing among wealthy and upper-class mothers and daughters. She regards most of them as silly creatures, but she'll soon need a profitable match for her son.

Bach knows about Hans Vogel, a retired officer dabbling in science and politics. She says he is a noisy proponent of putting the upper-class officers of the military in charge of everything. He advances the logic that they, by dint of gifts of God and their own strong nature, know best how to protect the nation and advance all its interests. Vogel often makes veiled allusions to showing the power of the army when common folk forget their place. She detests him. In Vogel's world there's little room for ambitious, middle-class women to improve themselves and their country, and certainly no need for ordinary workers to thrive. She has much more sympathy for the social democrats and trade unions. At least they are honest in justifying their grasping for influence by the need to support their families. Bach keenly prefers a system that rewards work over class.

She has no idea what Vogel wants in Britain. He fancies himself a scientist, so perhaps he is going to the International Exhibition. That's where she's headed tomorrow morning.

## Intermission

Edison and Vogel have words during the intermission. They are engaged in some type of negotiation regarding a potential collaboration on the findings of an English scientist. His name is Dr. Alastair Whitman, and he has been conducting research through a grant from the British Archaeological Association.

Vogel seems to think that Whitman's work could somehow change the balance of power in Europe. Edison proposes a collaboration to obtain the details of Whitman's findings and those of whatever other British scientists may be working with him. Vogel assures Edison that he will obtain Whitman's work this very week.

Neither Edison nor Vogel will reveal anything about their arrangement or what they want from Whitman.

If the characters aren't keeping careful tabs on Vogel or Edison, there are still ways they may be privy to the contents of this discussion.

The two critical points are:

- The name Dr. Alastair Whitman.
- Vogel's desire to get something from him.

**Socialites:** Characters may encounter a group of ladies gossiping about the rich American and the handsome German. Some wit and charm (or a skill such as *Con* or *Diplomacy*, if necessary) can encourage the ladies to recall the salient points of the conversation. They are fixated on the intrigue of the encounter more than what was actually said; technical and scientific terms are glossed over and mispronounced.

**Bach:** Mrs. Bach, interested in Edison's plans, may have overheard snippets of the conversation.

**Tesla:** Nikola Tesla has been eavesdropping around the theatre all night. Characters who befriended him may hear details of Edison's chat with Vogel. Tesla seems particularly interested in Whitman, but pressing him on it makes him suspicious. He may demand to know more about the characters and what they are really after.

If they treat him well, he apologizes for his rudeness. His dealings with leaders of industry has made him wary. He says Whitman is interested in theories that the Great Pyramid was some form of power transmitter. If he's learned something important, that may offer insights into Tesla's research.

Tesla is largely altruistic and could aid the characters later if it means finding Whitman and his discovery for the prosperity of science. This might be of particular value if characters lack scientific skills.

## Whitman's Reputation

Scholarly characters (and Tesla, if the characters ask him) know Alastair Whitman vaguely by reputation. He is an archaeologist, not a physical scientist. He is a gifted academic, but his interests tend toward the outlandish—even the supernatural and the occult—and he has never been kept in any position for very long.

## Servants Outside

Three of Vogel's men accompanied him into the Criterion, but more linger on the street and in the alley among the drivers and valets awaiting wealthier ladies and gentlemen. Outside of Vogel's presence, the Prussian soldiers are more approachable. These are low-born men with rowdy manners and thick German accents. There are about as many of them as there are player characters approaching them.

Directly asking about Vogel and his plans makes the soldiers suspicious and hostile. A burly corporal named Klaus—bald but hairy, with intimidating mustaches—looms forward and warns the biggest and toughest of the characters to go away or take a beating.

If there's a fight and it stays in the alley, there's no trouble with the law. Constables interfere only if the brawl becomes excessively noisy or spills out into the street where decent folk might see.

A character who beats Klaus in a fair fist-fight, or who loses but puts up a spirited battle, finds Klaus willing to be friends. The characters can also befriend the German soldiers by bringing them drinks and seeming genuinely friendly. This may need *Con* or *Streetwise*; a character without those skills can use the lower of his or her *Charisma* and *Body* to be charming without getting



too drunk. After a few drinks, the soldiers reveal information with each successful roll of a skill or attribute:

- The soldiers may say they work for *Hauptmann* Vogel. If the characters skillfully inveigle them, the soldiers may inadvertently confirm that they're former soldiers who now work for Vogel personally. They speak of Vogel with the reverence of cultists for a charismatic master.
- The soldiers may reveal they are going to the International Exhibition. They may even encourage their newfound friends to go, too.

The soldiers know nothing about Vogel's plans.

Following the Germans after the play leads to Vogel's private airship, moored on the banks of the Thames south of Whitechapel and east of the Tower of London. They have no contraband on board and Vogel is rigorously careful to keep his schemes to himself. The day after the play, the Germans fly to Glasgow.

## Sergeant Klaus Stiermann, a Blutsbrüder

<b>Archetype:</b> Soldier	<b>Motivation:</b> Faith
<b>Style:</b> 0	<b>Health:</b> 5
<b>Primary Attributes</b>	
<b>Body:</b> 3	<b>Charisma:</b> 2
<b>Dexterity:</b> 3	<b>Intelligence:</b> 1
<b>Strength:</b> 4	<b>Willpower:</b> 2
<b>Secondary Attributes</b>	
<b>Size:</b> 0	<b>Initiative:</b> 4
<b>Move:</b> 7	<b>Defense:</b> 6
<b>Perception:</b> 3	<b>Stun:</b> 4
<b>Skills</b>	<b>Base Levels Rating Average</b>
<b>Athletics</b>	3 5 8 (4)
<b>Brawl</b>	4 4 8 (4)
<b>Demolitions</b>	1 3 4 (2)
<b>Firearms</b>	2 2 4 (2)
<b>Gunnery</b>	1 3 4 (2)
<b>Intimidation</b>	2 3 5 (2+)
<b>Melee</b>	4 1 5 (2+)
<b>Survival</b>	1 1 2 (1)
<b>Talents</b>	
<b>Iron Jaw</b>	
<b>Resources</b>	
<b>Fame -1, Mentor (Vogel), Wealth -1</b>	
<b>Weapons</b>	<b>Rating Size Attack Average</b>
<b>Punch</b>	0 N 0 8 N (4) N
<b>Dagger</b>	1 L 0 6 L (3) L
<b>Rifle butt or big club</b>	2 N 0 7 N (3+) N
<b>Rifle</b>	3 L 0 7 L (3+) L
<b>Revolver</b>	2 L 0 6 L (3) L

## Typical London Constable

<b>Archetype:</b> Soldier	<b>Motivation:</b> Duty
<b>Style:</b> 0	<b>Health:</b> 5
<b>Primary Attributes</b>	
<b>Body:</b> 2	<b>Charisma:</b> 2
<b>Dexterity:</b> 2	<b>Intelligence:</b> 2
<b>Strength:</b> 3	<b>Willpower:</b> 3
<b>Secondary Attributes</b>	
<b>Size:</b> 0	<b>Initiative:</b> 4
<b>Move:</b> 5	<b>Defense:</b> 4
<b>Perception:</b> 5	<b>Stun:</b> 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Brawl	3	2	5	(2+)
Empathy	2	2	4	(2)
Firearms	2	1	3	(1+)
Intimidation	2	2	4	(2)
Investigation	2	2	4	(2)
Melee	3	2	5	(2+)
Streetwise	2	2	4	(2)
Talents				
Iron Will				
Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0 N	0	5 N	(2+) N
Night stick	1 N	0	6 N	(3) N

## Abducting Vogel

Especially aggressive characters may simply seize Hauptmann Vogel and demand answers. That maneuver comes with a great many complications beyond the risk of getting killed by his guards. Vogel has committed no crime as yet; mistreating him will cause a dire diplomatic incident that is sure to bring censure and embarrassment on the heads of the characters and their patron, Lord Bury.

If worse comes to worst and the characters insist on putting Vogel to questioning, then it's time for slippery measures. Their abductee, it turns out, is not really Hans Vogel. He is a soldier in Vogel's service, posing as his master on Vogel's orders for reasons the impostor does not know. In fact, if this occurs, it's a ruse to allow Hans Vogel to claim he was in London before the Exhibition. It's a safeguard in case he is arrested and accused of an evil scheme.

## Lord Bury's Request

Lord Bury expects a report from the characters the next day, the 23rd of May. He is a friendly but keen questioner, teasing details from the evening out and helping the characters make sense of it all. Details about Vogel and particularly his connection to Edison surprise Lord Bury.

Lord Bury can reveal a little more about Dr. Alastair Whitman. Whitman has yet to distinguish himself as an academic, and indeed may be on his way to becoming a mere crank, but he is affable and well-liked, and he is undeniably a gifted researcher and a hard worker. He is never at a loss for a low-prestige post, often helping less accomplished scholars with papers for which he gets little credit. Most recently he has been conducting research in unexplored regions of Nubia. Whitman is supposed to present a paper entitled *The Paths of the Gods: The Ancient Sites of Earth Decoded*; it sounds rather too high-spirited for real science.

Lord Bury raises a number of questions about the evening at the Criterion:

- Why is Vogel in England?
- Is he connected with Edison? How?
- Is there a threat to the Crown?



- What is the connection between the arrival of the Prussians and the International Exhibition in Glasgow?
- How are Whitman and his research involved?

As a side note, Lord Bury is keenly interested in Tesla. Bury himself has a great interest in electrical power and is Chairman of the General Electric Power and Traction Company. In small talk he may say he is formulating a verb to suggest progression by electric motor: "To Motor." Nevertheless, Tesla, who is currently backed by Westinghouse, should be considered as much an agent of the American government as his rival Edison. Neither should be trusted if this strange affair involves important secrets.

If the characters agree to remain in his service, Lord Bury asks that they make haste to the International Exhibition in Glasgow

to investigate further. The Royal Academy is in attendance there and may know more of Whitman's research.

If the characters failed to secure invitations to the Exhibition from Tesla or Edison, Lord Bury comments ruefully on their lack of resourcefulness. He says it was a shame to let that much wattage in one place go to waste. He says he will send a footman with invitations for the characters later today.

The Scottish Archaeological Exhibit opens in only two days, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, and the journey by rail typically takes 14 hours. The characters must make preparations immediately and depart early tomorrow morning.

## Chapter 2: The Exhibition

*In which the heroes behold the wonders of science and a villain is revealed.*

Either through Lord Bury or by befriending Nikola Tesla or Thomas Edison, the characters have secured an invitation to attend the opening of the Scottish Archaeological and Historical Collection at the Glasgow International Exhibition on Friday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of May. This is where the British Association for the Advancement of Science will present Dr. Whitman's findings.

### The Journey

The characters must make their way to Glasgow. Travel time from loading to unloading is about 14 hours by train. Depending on how early the characters meet with Lord Bury, they have the

23<sup>rd</sup> to gather supplies and the 24<sup>th</sup> to make the journey and secure lodgings (the latter should be moderately difficult as the Exhibition has been drawing in a lot of visitors). This will give them the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> to look around Glasgow and the rest of the Exhibition before the Scottish Archaeological and Historical Collection opens at 2 p.m. at the Bishop's Castle.

The train is on the North-Eastern line, which is not known for its punctuality but has been upgraded with elegant Pullman carriages. First-class passengers enjoy leather cushions, rugs, brass furnishings, sleeper cars, and a buffet car.

Second-class passengers experience simple wood-paneled cars with bench seating and little privacy. Refreshment and privy matters must be addressed during station stops and the ride is somewhat more jarring than in first class.

## Glasgow International Exhibition, 1888.

### Scottish Archaeological and Historical Section.

**THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL** request the honour of your company at the Ceremony of  
Opening the **Scottish Archaeological and Historical Collection**, in  
**The Bishop's Castle**

by **His Grace The Duke of Montrose, K.T.**, on **Friday, the 25<sup>th</sup> May**



The Castle will be open to Guests from 2.0 o'clock till 3.30. The Guests will then accompany His Grace to the Grand Hall of the Exhibition, where the proceedings will commence at 3.45 p.m.

*William M. Cunningham,*  
Secretary

27, St. Vincent Place,  
Glasgow, May, 1888.



Third-class passengers, in addition to the starkness of their accommodations, are advised to hold close their wallets during tunnel crossings and ladies are advised to hold pins in their mouths to prevent male passengers from attempting to steal kisses. They spend at least part of the journey standing as third-class carriages lack sufficient seating. A character who chooses third-class must make a *Body* roll with a Difficulty of 1 during the journey; if failed, the fatigued character suffers 1 nonlethal damage.

## Background

The International Exhibition of Science, Art and Industry is the first international exhibition to be held in Glasgow, Scotland. It will run at Kelvingrove Park from May to November 1888. The aim of the exhibition is to draw international attention to Glasgow's achievements in applied sciences, industry and the arts. Glasgow is one of the largest ship builders in the empire with an expanding focus on airships and ether technology. The Exhibition also hopes to raise funds for the arts in the city, and many of its patrons are in attendance. It is a grand exhibition, the largest ever in Scotland.

As of the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, the exhibition has been open more than two weeks. The opening ceremony was conducted by the Prince of Wales, the honorary president of the exhibition, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May.

Friday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of May is a dreary day. Heavy fog dissipates by the early afternoon but there are intermittent showers throughout the day.

If you want to give your players a chance to explore the exhibition on their own, check out the historical map at <http://www.theglasgowstory.com/images/TGSA00341.jpg>

## Security

About two dozen uniformed policemen circulate around the grounds at any given time. They provide crowd control as well as a visible deterrent to petty theft, public drunkenness, and brawling. They are armed with nightsticks. Especially valuable exhibits have their own security in the form of a few large, stern-faced blokes. The most impressive exhibits have professional security, plainclothes agents with revolvers in their pockets.

## The Main Building

The exhibition's main building has a high dome built on an iron framework covered in galvanized sheet iron. Most exhibits are housed in wooden buildings in an oriental style. Exhibitors from all over the empire take up the lion's share of the main avenue. The largest showings of foreign powers are represented by Italy, Germany, and the United States. Here are examples, listed by section.

## Women's Industries

At the east entrance of the main building, opposite the Picture Galleries, traditional "feminine" crafts such as lace-making, needlework, and perfumery are on display.

**Robin & Houston's:** Soaps and candles.

**Madame Birds:** Outdoor and sporting outfitter for the discerning lady.

**Pettigrew and Stephens:** Fine ladies' undergarments.

**Maggie E. Frier Arts in Clay:** Ceramics.

**The Sculptress Guild:** Wood carvings (mostly Canadian native totems) for the home.

## Picture Galleries

At the east entrance, opposite Women's Industries, the Picture Galleries showcase many famous art collections.

**Eastman Kodak—The Kodak at Large:** Photographs of daily life around the Earth, Mars and Venus. Also on display is the Kodak camera, a cheap method for amateur photographers and average consumers to create what Eastman calls "snapshot" photography. Their slogan is, "You push the button, we do the rest." Their portable camera was launched this year and there is great interest in their demonstrations.

**Horatio Tinker—Primocogglers:** Interpretive sculptures built from industrial materials.

**St. John's Wood Arts Club Presents Selected Works of John William Waterhouse:** A collection of the painter's work, including his latest accomplishments: "The Lady of Shalott" and "Dionysus Bestows Wine on the Oenotrians."

## Main Avenue

Over a quarter-mile long and covered in a high, arching ceiling, the Main Avenue houses every manner of exhibition on both sides and right down the middle. A managing office and a bank stand at the intersection of Main Avenue and Transverse Avenue.

**Huntley and Palmers:** Biscuit makers serving their wares with a fine Ceylon tea.

**Cadbury:** Fine confectionary sweets, featuring particularly aggressive advertising proclaiming its superiority over Dutch and English (Rowntree's, Fry) imitations.

**Bodega Bar:** Featuring beer and fine spirits from across the empire.

**Van Houten's Cocoa:** Only the purest. They have a stand on the walkway north of the main building.

**C'est Wahlise:** Viennese bric-a-brac.

**Anson's Delicacies Ltd.:** Importer of Martian foodstuffs including its namesake, the Anson Cabbage, and Pushti fruitcakes (advertised as having an extended shelf life).

**The Indian Bazaar:** Spices, textiles, and fineries from the Jewel of the Empire.

**Philip's Dunblane Hydropathic:** Superior Turkish, Russian, and *bain-douche* baths.

## Machinery Section

The vast Machinery Section is for many the heart of the International Exhibition. Huge examples of heavy machinery work ceaselessly, providing noise and smells that overpower some attendees but stir the blood of industrialists.



**James Stewart's Clyde Tube Works:** Piping materials for steam-powered machinery

**Lang's Patented Steel Wire.**

**Mirlees Watson & Co.:** Steam machinery.

**Fairfield Co. Ltd.:** Displaying models of the triple-expansion engine for use in sea vessels.

**Nobel's Explosives:** The inventor of dynamite.

**Walter Macfarlane's Saracen Foundry:** Fine wrought-iron fencing.

**Schlesische Analysemaschinen-Produktion:** Analytical engines (Artifact 1, *Space: 1889 Core Rules*, page 235).



## Attractions and Encounters

The grounds hold several attractions for attendees. There is a shooting gallery, a rifle range, regular musical performances, and sporting events in the recreational area, including the Highland games. At every event peddlers offer the latest tonics and other health supplements to onlookers.

A precursor to the roller coaster, the switchback railway, provides excitement for thrill seekers. It overlooks the river north of the main hall.

The portion of the Kelvin River that runs through the exhibition has been dredged and its banks beautified. Visitors can ride in electric and steam-powered boats or take leisurely excursions on Venetian gondolas.

In the center of the exhibition, a huge terra cotta fountain depicts scenes of empire. At 46 feet high and with a diameter of over 70 feet, it is the largest of its kind in the world.

## Making Connections

Make clear to the players that the Exhibition is a font of potential Resources just waiting to be snatched up! Characters have time to mingle around the exhibits and converse with exhibitors. The GM should add new exhibits if necessary to cater to the experience or the characters' interests. Players who show good role-playing or creativity—such as studying inventions to gain inspiration for their own, climbing the social ladder by engaging the interest of influential ladies and gentlemen, or participating in sporting events—could be rewarded with Experience Points.

## Tesla and Edison

Tesla and Edison are most likely to be seen in the Machinery Section, though the arts may catch Tesla's attention in the Picture Galleries, too.

Edison is usually beset by inventors hoping for investment or patent-holders looking to sell; most of them are small fry and soon sent packing by Edison's bodyguard. He knows nothing about any trouble with Whitman's presentation nor about Vogel's activities. He hasn't spoken with Vogel since the Criterion, when Vogel had nothing to offer but notions.

Tesla seeks potential sponsors—but not Edison!—and hopes the characters understand that he has little time to spend with them.

## Rumors of Whitman

There is already quite a buzz regarding what discoveries the obscure Dr. Whitman shall reveal. As characters circulate around the exhibits they overhear that there has been a robust three-way battle in the past few weeks on who in fact would present Whitman's paper: the *British Archaeological Association*, the *Royal Geographical Society*, or the *British Association for the Advancement of Science*. Whitman was already a member of the British Archaeological Association and was granted membership in the other two quite suddenly.

If the characters ask around as to the background of Dr. Whitman, they can track down members of those academic societies. Each contact may provide some or all of the following background.

- **An academic outcast:** Dr. Whitman has always been considered a bit of an outcast in academic circles. Until now he never presented anything noteworthy. He has bounced from position to position, or volunteered himself as the academic workhorse for those younger and less accomplished than he, only to take second billing in minor scholarly publications.

- **Unseemly interests:** He is a gifted academic but his research interests have always bordered on the improbable. In fact, they have on occasion dipped into the supernatural or occult, which only tarnished his reputation further.

- **Well liked, for all that:** He is a dreamer with boundless optimism. His affability has kept him from becoming a pariah among his peers. He is always greeted with good will at social functions by his colleagues, who generally must feign interest in his latest research.



• **A dodgy opportunity:** A few years ago, Whitman took an assignment to map and explore the region of Nubia for a British trading company. It was widely understood that the offer was merely a front for someone to infiltrate the region and watch the movements of the Madhist forces who had driven the British out, rather than an expedition aimed at real scientific discovery. Only a truly desperate or foolhardy researcher would accept such an assignment, but Whitman yearned for the opportunity to escape public life for a while; and his latest far-flung theories involved ancient Kushite sites in the region. Since there was no other interest from the academic community, Whitman's credentials landed him the assignment. No one had heard from him since, until now.

• **Newfound glory:** Nobody knows exactly what is in Whitman's new paper, but rumors say it may turn the scientific world on its head and vindicate Whitman's entire career. That alarms and excites everyone with an opinion on the subject.

• **His daughter:** Whitman himself is not in Glasgow, but apparently he sent his daughter Alice, a budding scientist in her own right, to read the paper for him. Having a young woman present a scientific paper has irritated conservative scholars, but these are unconventional times.

## Alice Whitman

The characters are unlikely to meet Dr. Whitman's daughter Alice before the presentations. She is inside the Bishop's Castle, which will not open to the public until 2:00 p.m. But characters who talk their way into the Bishop's Castle—perhaps by leaning a little too heavily on their patronage by Viscount Bury and backing it up with a *Con* or *Diplomacy* roll—can find her in one of the offices, speaking angrily to officials of the Scottish Archaeological and Historical Collection.

Miss Whitman learned this morning that her father's notes and papers, which she left in a Bishop's Castle office for safekeeping, have gone missing. She has only her copy of the paper she is to read in the afternoon. Officials have searched and have begun interviewing workers and volunteers, to no avail so far. It's an academic environment and theft has never been an issue before, so there was little attention to security. Miss Whitman is distraught.

She has no time to discuss her father's research with the characters. She impatiently advises them to attend the presentation.

Officials likewise have no time to entertain the characters, even those who offer their services as detectives. The officials are sure the Whitman papers were simply misplaced and will turn up very soon.

## Vogel's Doubles

Hans Vogel has enlisted three unwitting members of the local theatre guild to act as doubles for him in the Exhibition beginning at 8:00 p.m. He persuaded the actors that he has entered into an unscrupulous love triangle and fears detectives from Germany mean to ruin his reputation. He has paid the actors a handsome wage to play along as diversions.

Characters outside Bishop's Castle after 8:00 p.m. likely spot one of these doubles. Each looks, dresses, and walks much like Vogel from a distance.

If one of Vogel's doubles is interrogated, he freely tells all he knows of Vogel and his supposed affair, and says two others are on the same funny job. The doubles know nothing of Vogel's actual actions or motivations.

## Vogel and His Followers

Hans Vogel and his men maintain a low profile before the Scottish Archaeological and Historical Collection opens. They spend time in the main building, quietly enjoying the exhibits; they dine quietly in the Bishop's Castle café; they enter the Bishop's Castle at 2:00 p.m. to view the collection and await the presentations. But they are not Vogel's only men here.

## That Damnable Russian

Vogel and his men have been formulating a plot to attack the Exhibition and steal Whitman's research for months, ever since vague rumors began to swirl about the extraordinary nature of his findings. This morning they stole Whitman's research and snuck it off the grounds. Now they mean to abduct Whitman's daughter as a guarantee of his cooperation.

Worse than that, they prepared a catastrophe. The resulting confusion will cover the abduction; if they had not managed to steal the papers earlier, the catastrophe would also have provided a distraction to finish that task. When the explosions begin, they won't be the only ones fleeing the Exhibition.

Vogel has four men working at the Exhibition. They came to Glasgow weeks ago and found jobs building and maintaining the facilities. They were generous with drinks at pubs, so the other workmen's initial suspicion and resentment soon faded.

Even now these undercover saboteurs are handling repairs, cheerfully helping exhibitors who have machinery trouble, and planting bombs all over the main building.

## The Kludge Bombs

Vogel's infiltrators have kludged together various gubbins from around town and from within the Exhibition itself, together with dynamite they bought from a disgruntled coal miner. Each bomb contains a rudimentary timer. Disarming one is a Tough challenge for *Demolitions*, requiring three successes. Each is equivalent to one stick of dynamite (*Space: 1889 Core Rules*, page 225).

Six bombs are lashed to the wood beams of the ceiling of the Main Avenue, high above the crowd and easily concealed.

On the day of the presentations, the saboteurs have planted three other bombs in the main building. This is the most likely opportunity for the players to discover the devices and attempt to intervene.

The bombs are timed to begin detonating at 8:45 p.m. By Vogel's calculations, the Whitman presentation will then be deep into discussion and debate. They detonate one at a time, from one to three minutes apart. They are not especially destructive (not enough to bring the roof down) but the concussive force and smoke send the crowds fleeing in terror and confusion.

## Finding the Bombs

It's conceivable that a character will deliberately watch the movements of laborers and single out Germans. That requires the whole day leading up to the Whitman presentation and an *Investigation* roll. Rolling three successes catches two of the German laborers speaking furtively together. Four or five successes notices one of



them talking with one of Vogel's guards instead. Six successes spots one of them placing a kludged-together bomb in some unobserved corner of the Machinery Section or Main Avenue while one of Vogel's guards stands lookout. Vogel, of course, is nowhere around.

It is highly unlikely that the party will discover the explosives in the rafters before they begin to detonate. The hall is simply too large. Even specifically looking for them there requires an *Investigation* roll with six or more successes.

The party may discover bombs planted the day of the presentation, perhaps even before the first bomb goes off. The characters can either disarm the bombs they find or try to herd the panicking crowd away. Here are a few possible incidents.

- **In the Picture Galleries:** A character spots a worker by himself in a display that's closed and off-limits. He's sweeping in and around one of the Kodak booths. A crowd close by is watching a cage where a Pushti monkey scurries around an artificial Martian tree in befuddlement. The monkey screeches, the crowd laughs, and the worker quietly opens one of Eastman's portable cameras and places a bomb inside.

- **In the Machinery Section:** A large pile of pipes is suspended from a chain at the Clyde Tube Works display. Several school children along with their comely teacher stand underneath. The teacher seems to be explaining something about the pipes. Or if the explosions have already begun, then the teacher and children have taken refuge under a table without realizing the pipes are overhead. A character who successfully rolls the lower of either *Perception* or *Craft* notices an unexpected device attached high on the chain connecting it to the support beam. It turns out to be a bomb.

- **In the Main Avenue:** A terrier barks at a grate in the floor as a boy tries to drag the dog away. Or if the explosions have already begun, then the child has lost his parents and the dog has worked his way under the grate and is barking at something there. Closer investigation reveals a faint ticking sound. The grate is welded shut, but the weld was hurried and it could be pulled open with a tough *Strength* test (three successes). The child will not leave without the dog and the steady stream of exhibit goers are in danger of being hurt by the blast.

## Catching the Bombers

The bombers are similar to Vogel's guards described on page 7, but each has *Craft* 2, *Linguistics* 1 (speaking English), *Stealth* 2, and an *Intelligence* of 3.

The bombers have devised another layer of deception should one of them be captured. The disguised workers have made extensive notes on the comings and goings of the tellers and exhibition management at the bank and offices on Transverse Avenue, with detailed time tables as to security shifts and the times when cash is moved to be deposited in town. Each disguised conspirator carries these notes at all times. If they are uncovered, they claim it's part of a plot to rob the Exhibition. They claim, unconvincingly, not to know Vogel.

## The Collection Opens

The Scottish Archaeological and Historical Collection is housed at the Bishop's Castle, a small medieval ruin recently renovated. The gates open at 2 o'clock. Refreshments are served at 3:30.

Artifacts are displayed on three levels. In the great hall are relics of medieval Scottish notables, Mary Queen of Scots, and the Jacobites. On the ground floor and in the basement are artifacts from across Scottish history and prehistory, from arms and armor to furniture, tools, medals, jewelry, banners and more. The Bishop's Castle is crowded with members of the press, academia, and industry. Tesla, Edison, and Bach are there. Vogel arrives with six bored-looking men led by burly Klaus Stiermann (page 9).

At 3:45, the guests are summoned to the Grand Exhibition Hall. His Grace the Duke of Montrose, K. T. (36-year-old Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald Graham, a former soldier), and his wife the Lady Violet, who has orchestrated all this pomp, are to commence the proceedings.

Presenters deliver papers on a myriad of subjects, such as:

- *The Physiology of High Martian Flight* by Joseph Lister, Bt, OM, PC, FRS.
- *Christianity and Creationism: A Resolution on Life in the Solar System* by William Thompson, OM, GCVO, PC, PRS, PRSE.
- *The Health of Our Cities: Engineering a Lasting Solution—A Proposal for the Chemical Treatment of Human Wastes* by Sir Joseph William Bazalgette, CB.

## Academic Arguments

For all the opening pomp and circumstance, the presentations are boisterous. Each is followed by lively debate. Academic characters may wish to join the fray.

Make up two or three bullet points summarizing a presenter's arguments, then two or three summarizing his detractors' challenges. The discussion can be very general. It shouldn't warrant heavy research. Encourage the players to help.

There are generally three types of questions:

- **The genuine request for knowledge:** This is the easiest to address as the presenter has only to expound upon what he or she already presented.
- **The self-serving question:** The questioner merely wishes to garner attention for his or her wit and cogency. The presenter is best served by a politely complimentary reply.
- **The malicious question:** This threatens a long and acrimonious exchange, often with shouting and the odd thrown item.

A player's formulation of a good argument is worth a (temporary) level 1 Resource in either Fame (academia) or Contacts (academia), or a Style Point for good roleplaying.

In addition, a character who is active in Joseph Lister's presentation on the physiology of High Martians may have an advantage in encountering the High Martians later. Allow the character a *Medicine* or *Science* roll to garner one Style Point for every two successes (round up), which may be spent when dealing with High Martians.



## Miss Whitman

After the other papers are presented and discussed, an orderly for the British Association for the Advancement of Science announces a paper to be presented by Miss Alice Whitman on behalf of Dr. Alastair Whitman: *The Paths of the Gods: Ancient Sites of Earth Decoded*.

Usually a paper submitted in absentia would simply have its abstract placed in the official program. The Association has made a rare exception. The reader is Dr. Whitman's 22-year-old daughter.

There's already grumbling before she begins to speak; some scholars dislike a woman presenting to them, particularly a girl who is not even a university student. But Alice Whitman is no helpless waif. She has worked and studied at her father's side for ten years, ever since her mother died of scarlet fever, and she is knowledgeable and confident.

Alastair Whitman's paper begins with several acknowledgments, such as one to W. M. Flinders Petrie, who published "The Pyramids and Temples of Gizeh" in 1883 and was the first to provide exact measurements of the Great Pyramid.

Whitman gives an overview of the history of archaeological discoveries across the globe and on Mars as pertaining to the building of great structures by ancient peoples. He mentions the Temple of Seti I and its Abydos carvings of what appear to be futuristic aircraft.

The crowd grows listless. Someone in back cries out, "*We already know this, by Jove. Get on with it!*"

Miss Whitman's voice cracks for a moment, but she visibly steels herself and continues to the true controversies.

## The Discovery

Dr. Whitman's paper proposes that ancient structures found on Earth bear architectural and mathematical similarities to Martian structures. He links these structures with certain star patterns using a complex formula he has named "The Whitman Theorem" in conjunction with an old map he found in Africa. The Whitman Theorem involves geography, astronomy, and measurements of magnetic energy taken by the mechanism itself. Whitman assumes there is a so far unknown "Martian" energy—without knowing or being able to prove that he is indeed right.

Whitman says that he has discerned several proposed dig sites based on constellations with which they are mathematically paired. He does not say where the sites are; that is for a later paper. Miss Whitman herself does not know. But he says, and Miss Whitman confirms, that he used his theorem to dig up a previously undiscovered temple at the famous Jebel Barkal ruins in the Sudan. He somewhat whimsically calls it the "Seven Sisters" site because it corresponds to the Pleiades.

That was enough for Whitman to want to present these findings and get more support.

Miss Whitman takes a deep breath before she reads the afterword. Whitman concludes that while man still scabbled in caves, ancient ethernauts must have visited the Earth, seeding it with temples that contained wonders. Perhaps these Ancients even manipulated the development of man himself.

At this, the hall explodes in discussion. If Whitman is correct, his revelation will overturn whole careers. His rivals proceed to fight like dogs to prove him wrong. Disappointed naysayers denounce Whitman as a charlatan and a hopeless crank. Others find his calculations compelling.

"Crikey! Can this be true? This Whitman chap just might be a genius after all."

—Sir Fredrick Bramwell, president, British Association for the Advancement of Science

## Questions

There is an eruption of questions. With Whitman's daughter only able to give cursory answers, the crowd soon breaks into wild speculation.

These main points should come across:

- Tesla has theorized that the Great Pyramid is a kind of wireless transmitter of energies, which generated much skepticism among his colleagues. Whitman's discovery may vindicate him.
- Edison inquires as to the patents that apply to Whitman's mechanism and its use, as well as to discoveries at Whitman's proposed dig sites.
- Vogel asks about military applications of Whitman's findings, and emphasizes that other nations won't allow the British to keep these things to themselves.
- Everyone demands immediate investigation of Whitman's claims. Scientists who think there's a chance that Whitman has uncovered something important want the fame of first discovery.
- Officials of the Association refuse to speculate on Whitman's findings. They must wait until they meet the doctor to validate his claims—or to deal with him accordingly should this all turn out to be a ruse.

## Sabotage

At 8:45 p.m., when the arguments over Whitman's paper are at their most rancorous, the crowd is hushed by the sound of a distant blast. It seemed to come from the main building of the Exhibition. There's a faint sound of screaming.

Scholars crowd the windows to see. After another minute they see smoke rise from the main building. Then another blast echoes across the grounds.

Amid a sudden confusion of shouting and movement, two of Vogel's men in workers' clothes unobtrusively grasp Alice Whitman. Even as she begins to object, they hurry her through a door and out of sight.

## A Deadly Pursuit

While two saboteurs grab Miss Whitman, two others are in the Exhibit's main building, pretending to look for sabotage but really ensuring the bombs go off. After an hour they slip out. Three more of Vogel's guards wait with a carriage near the gates on Dunbarton Road.

## The Abduction

A character explicitly keeping an eye on Whitman during the chaos sees the workmen grab her. Others must roll *Perception* with at least four successes or else be distracted by the blasts.

The abductors rush around a corner, knock Whitman unconscious with a sap, tie and gag her, stuff her in an unmarked sea chest, lock it, and pocket the key. They haul the chest out toward the gate to Dunbarton Road. There they mean to load the chest



onto the waiting carriage and flee into the streets. If the characters rescue Whitman, they have friends for life in her and her father.

## Vogel's Escape

Vogel himself and six guards are in the crowd in the Bishop's Castle. They join the exodus as attendees begin to rush outside to get a better look at the disaster.

If the characters have been watching Vogel during the presentations, they may try to follow him. If each pursuer succeeds at *Stealth*, they avoid catching their quarry's attention; otherwise he flees more actively and each subsequent test requires two or more successes.

The pursuers must roll *Perception* (four successes) to keep from losing him in the crowd, and *Investigation* (three successes) to keep track of him along the way.

A character who succeeds at *Perception* but fails *Investigation* loses Vogel for a moment—and then spots him again, loitering alone in the confusion. But it's one of his hired doubles. (See **Vogel's Doubles**, page 13.) If accosted, the impostor accuses the characters of being German detectives and seems proud of his ability to deceive them. Once the truth emerges, the chagrined actor is happy to tell the little he knows.

If the characters succeed at the *Perception* and *Investigation* rolls and the plotters realize they're being pursued, Vogel's guards turn to attack their pursuers. They mean to rely on their fists but will produce Webley Mk. I revolvers if the characters fire upon them. Any characters who stop to fight lose track of Vogel.

Characters still on Vogel's trail can catch up to him with a hard *Athletics* roll (four successes). If that fails, they see him get in a carriage at the intersection of streets west of the rifle range. Two men in plain clothes sit up top. If his guards are still with him, two get in the carriage and the rest scatter in pairs.

## Through the Streets

There are other carriages about. If the characters seize one with an *Intimidation* roll or a brandished weapon, they can chase Vogel east down Dunbarton Road to Argyle Street, northeast to Jamaica Street, south across the Glasgow Bridge, and west on Clyde Street to the Windmillcroft Docks.

The pursuers must overcome three obstacles. Customize the details and required skills to the characters' actions.

- **Drive:** They must succeed at a *Drive* roll (four successes) or have a tangled run-in with another carriage. A follow-up *Drive* success extricates the pursuers despite the other party's indignant shouts to stop. Otherwise they are stuck and Vogel escapes.
- **Perception:** They must roll *Perception* (three successes) to spot a knot of pedestrians in time. If the roll fails they must either stop or roll *Drive* to avoid running down an elderly woman while onlookers shout in fury. If they stop, Vogel escapes.
- **Drive:** They must make another *Drive* roll (four successes) to keep steady on the rain-slicked streets. If that fails, they have the chance to slow down safely. If they refuse, they must make another *Drive* (three successes) roll to avoid overturning their carriage. Each character takes 2 nonlethal wounds from the crash. If they slow down or overturn, Vogel escapes.

If the pursuers overcome all obstacles, they get close enough to Vogel's carriage to begin combat. The spies are armed with Webley Mk. I revolvers. The one sitting next to the driver has a sawed-off

shotgun. After the first round of combat, Vogel shouts at them to target the pursuers' horses. If they hit a horse, the pursuing carriage crashes, each character in the crash takes 2 nonlethal wounds, and Vogel escapes.

## Windmillcroft Docks

An unusually fast zeppelin waits at the Windmillcroft docks, manned by eight more of Vogel's soldiers. They intend to wait two hours for Vogel's scattered men to catch up. But if Vogel is pursued, the airship lifts off at once. It soon vanishes into thick rain and low-hanging clouds.

Vogel's airship crew are similar to his guards, but each has *Craft (Mechanics)* 3. The pilot and co-pilot have *Intelligence* 2 and *Pilot (Airship)* 2. They have a rack of loaded rifles aboard to dissuade pursuers.

## Capturing the Spies

Captured, Vogel's guards claim to have no knowledge of his plans. They were briefed only on this portion of the operation. They profess undying devotion to his vision of a German Empire of true nobility, where everyone has a place in its glory and, more importantly, everyone knows what place he should have.

## Catching Vogel

The rest of the adventure assumes that the characters pursue Vogel far from British shores. What if they capture or kill him here? In that case (and only in that case), the characters learn from him or from one of his guards that Vogel was only a field commander and the *real* mastermind is called Professor Leuthar Falk. The stolen notes are already en route to him by a courier who fled separately from the rest. Soon, they swear, Professor Falk will find Alastair Whitman and turn his research to the glory of a renewed German empire.

## The Aftermath

Chaos reigns at the Exhibition. Policemen and detectives have arrived by the carriage-full and are taking statements from countless witnesses. Firemen douse the fires started by the bombs. The injured are being carried to the nearby hospital.

The break-in at the Society offices and attempted (or completed!) abduction of Alice Whitman are the scandal of the Society. The personal bodyguards of the Duke of Montrose are investigating the castle along with Glasgow detectives. The characters soon find themselves beset by Society members, Glasgow detectives, and the Duke's men, all asking what they saw and did.

If the characters seem to have a sense of what's happened and why, they soon find themselves in a meeting with Society leaders and the Duke himself. These luminaries mean to enlist them to find Dr. Whitman. Whitman is a subject of the Crown and his discoveries must not be lost to some foreign outlaw. And Vogel must be brought to heel for the attack. Justice demands that he face prosecution for these crimes; and if possible, it must be established whether he was acting in his own interests or under orders from the Kaiser.



## Whitman's Clues

If Alice Whitman was abducted, all that remains of Whitman's research is the paper that she presented. It includes few details. The most useful clue is a map of Jebel Barkal. On the back of the map are drawings of stars. A character well-versed in *Science (Physics)*—or an expert if the characters seek one—recognizes the Pleiades in the constellation Taurus.

Characters who compare the placement of the stars with the placement of the pyramids may notice correspondences. They may also notice that one site indicated by the star map is missing from the pyramid map: an apparently undiscovered ruin northeast of the pyramids.

If the characters rescued Alice Whitman, she dramatically reveals the location of the "Seven Sisters" site, an undiscovered temple at Jebel Barkal, by lining up the Pleiades with known Jebel Barkal landmarks. That indicates the site that Whitman discovered, the last place Alice saw her father. She begs the characters to help her pursue Vogel and save her father. If they agree, she joins their party as an NPC (or as a player character if you wish); if they refuse, she means to set out without them. It's up to you whether she finds them in Egypt and the Sudan. She may be able to step in and offer help or hints if the players need them.

### Alice Whitman

**Archetype:** Academic **Motivation:** Truth  
**Style:** 2 **Health:** 7

#### Primary Attributes

**Body:** 2 **Charisma:** 3  
**Dexterity:** 2 **Intelligence:** 4  
**Strength:** 1 **Willpower:** 3

#### Secondary Attributes

**Size:** 0 **Initiative:** 6  
**Move:** 3 **Defense:** 4  
**Perception:** 7 **Stun:** 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Ratings	Average
Academics (History)	4	3	7	(3+)
Animal Handling	3	1	4	(2)
Bureaucracy	4	1	5	(2+)
Diplomacy	3	1	4	(2)
Empathy	4	1	5	(2+)
Firearms	2	1	3	(1+)
Investigation	4	2	6	(3)
Linguistics	4	3	7	(3+)
Science (Physics)	4	1	5	(2+)
Survival	4	1	5	(2+)

#### Talents

##### Direction Sense, Lucky

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0 N	0	0 N	(0) N
Revolver	2 L	0	5 L	(2+) L

## Tesla and Edison

If the characters befriended Nikolai Tesla, he remains with them and encourages them to pursue Whitman and his discoveries. Tesla is mainly concerned with the advancement of science and assists the characters any way he can while they are here in Glasgow. But he cannot go with them to Africa and has nothing in the way of money; he himself is cash-strapped and unwillingly at the mercy of his patron George Westinghouse.

Edison seeks out the characters. He proclaims them Men of Action (and women, he adds as an afterthought for female characters) for their violent pursuit of the Prussian renegades. He attempts to recruit the characters to bring Whitman's discoveries to him instead of turning them over to the Crown or the Society. He offers a handsome retainer of £1,000 and a promise of much more according to the value of their findings. Further, he can place at their disposal an aerial steamship, as well as any equipment they might need.

Any aid from Edison will not go unnoticed by Lord Bury, who has expressly warned of these foreign interlopers. If the characters make an agreement with Edison, any goodwill and aid that they may have won from Bury, the Duke, or the Society vanishes.

## A Wire from Lord Bury

If the characters telegram Lord Bury with their findings, he soon sends a reply. "*Pursuit critical! Pray return at once. Institute tomorrow night, however late. I shall prepare all.*"

The Duke, if present, offers to arrange a private airship to convey the characters to London first thing in the morning. "You'll soon be racing along the Nile and facing the savage Dervishes," he says. "I rather envy you!"



## Chapter 3: To Africa

*Wherein the heroes decipher the cryptic manuscripts of Dr. Whitman and seek his trail in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.*

Late the very next night—Saturday, the 26th of May—the characters probably find themselves back in London and back in the Royal Colonial Institute meeting-room with Lord Bury. If they took an early-morning train from Glasgow, they came directly from the station to the Institute and are certainly harried and disheveled. If

they took the Duke's private airship, they reached London early in the afternoon and have had a few hours to collect themselves.

Lord Bury has not squandered his time. He has corresponded by telegram with Sir Evelyn Baring, Her Majesty's supremely influential consul in Cairo. Lord Bury informed Baring of the



controversy over Whitman's researches in the Sudan. Baring replied that one of his protégés, a young Cairo officer named *Wingate* who is an expert on the Sudan, is in London now on leave preparing for his wedding and would make an indispensable source of advice.

Bury has Institute staff arranging and packing supplies for the expedition. He leaves it to the characters to arrange their transportation. Steamship passage from London to Port Said via Marseilles will take 12 or 13 days and cost £20; a zeppelin crossing Europe and then the Mediterranean for Port Said will take 11 or 12 days and cost £24, including fine meals and entertainment. It's a few days until the next steamship departs and a few days until the next zeppelin departs.

From Port Said the characters will take a train to Cairo, where they can meet with Sir Evelyn Baring and gain the latest intelligence. Then they face a long journey south to Jebel Barkal in the lands of the Dervishes. From there, who knows where Whitman's trail shall lead?

## If They Took Edison's Flyer

If the characters took Thomas Edison as a patron, they may take his zeppelin from Glasgow direct to Cairo. The flight takes only seven days. See page 22 for details of their arrival.

## Egypt and Beyond

The characters likely know much of Egypt as common knowledge. They can fill in many gaps talking to Lord Bury and his friends at the Institute and reading Baedeker's excellent travel books.

## Baring in Egypt

Sir Evelyn Baring is famous as the *de facto* governor of Egypt. Technically he is an advisor to the *khedive*, Egypt's ruler on behalf of the Ottoman Empire, but Baring oversees a shadow bureaucracy of British administrators that make all decisions for the official Egyptian government. This unusual state of affairs came about due to Egypt's staggering debts owed to Britain, and to Baring personally, incurred with investments in the Suez Canal and a costly war with Ethiopia. When Egyptian nationalists pressured the previous *khedive* Ismail not to pay, Britain orchestrated a coup, put his more tractable son *Tewfik* in power, and assumed control of the government and army.

## The Situation in the Sudan

The general situation in the Sudan is common knowledge among British subjects interested in politics. Some characters may know all this already; others can learn it by asking around. The Sudan was for decades a protectorate of Egypt, but benefited little from Egypt's rulership either before or after the British took Egypt's reins. The Egyptian Army extracted taxes and bribes from the Arab tribes, many of which turned to illegal slavery to earn enough money to keep the Egyptians at bay. An influential British gov-

ernor of the Sudan, Major-General Charles Gordon (celebrated as "Chinese Gordon" for his leadership in colonial China), struggled for ten years to suppress corruption and slavery until he resigned in exhaustion in 1880.

On June 29, 1881, a Sudanese Islamic cleric, *Muhammad Ahmad*, proclaimed himself the *Mahdi* or "the guided one," and claimed he was tasked with restoring the glory of Islam to the Earth. The Mahdi immediately transformed Sudanese resentment of Egyptian-Ottoman-British rule into a jihad, a holy war to conquer first the Sudan and then the world.

Over the next four years the Mahdi's followers, the Ansar—the British call them Dervishes, though not all shared the Mahdi's mysticism—conquered much of the Sudan. Anglo-Egyptian forces briefly attempted reconquest in 1883, but withdrew rather than become prematurely locked into a difficult war. In 1884 the British government sent Charles Gordon back to the Sudan to oversee the withdrawal; but Gordon fixed himself in Khartoum and published lengthy letters to the *Pall Mall Gazette* pressing the Gladstone government to return to the Sudan in force. The Ansar soon besieged Khartoum. An Anglo-Egyptian expedition fought its way south to rescue Gordon, but with their forces two days out the Ansar overran Khartoum. Governor Gordon was rescued at the last minute by *Frederick Gustavus Burnaby's* air ship *Penelope*, and the British withdrew from the Sudan.

In June 1885 the self-proclaimed Mahdi died of typhus. For the next few years his movement dissolved into infighting amongst the three Khalifas, his chief followers. By 1888 one of them has emerged as "the Khalifa," *Abdalla Ibn el Sayid Hamadalla el Taaishi*. Abdalla was the Mahdi's highest lieutenant and has spent three years fighting to bring his rivals into line. Now he rules from Omdurman, a new capital across the Nile from Khartoum.

The Egyptians still claim the Sudan and the British still honor their claim, although they do not have the resources or political will to bring the region back under control.

Most Britons felt humiliated at the Anglo-Egyptian abandonment of the Sudan. Many admired Gordon's brave stand in Khartoum and his passionate appeals to Gladstone's government for aid, and felt the shame even deeper when Gordon and the British forces fled again. That feeling is still fresh in 1888.

## Peoples of the Sudan

Travel books and historians describe three broad ethnic groups in the northern Sudan, all Islamic.

- **Nubians:** Nubians have inhabited the region since dynastic Egypt. They formed the Kingdom of Kush, famous for its archery and horsemanship. Today they are mostly pastoral nomads. They travel far and wide and trade in exotic goods from other parts of Africa, such as ivory and animal skins. They speak the ancient Bedawi language. Both men and women wear white robes and adorn themselves with facial piercings and large, dramatic pieces of jewelry. **Jebel Barkal** (p. 27) is one of many sites of ancient Nubian pyramids.

- **Jalayin:** The Jalayin are a distinctive group of Arabs, some living as farmers in the thin farmlands along the Nile and some as nomadic herders.

- **Juhaynah:** The Juhaynah are nomadic Arabs, a branch of the Bedouins of the Middle East. They travel in small tribes and are classified by caste according to the animals they herd. Highest are the camel herders, then the shepherds, and finally the goat herders.





MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Rosetta  
Alexandria

Damietta

LOWER

EGYPT

Suez  
Cairo

Gara Oasis

Bahriyeh Oasis

UPPER

EGYPT

Farafra Oasis

Kassiat

RIVER NILE

Dakhel Oasis

Khargel Oasis

Luxor

1st Cataract

Aswan

SAHARA DESERT

ARABIA

Medina

RED SEA

NUBIAN DESERT

2nd Cataract

Korosko

Wadi Halfa

Selima Oasis

Sarras

3rd Cataract

Dongola

4th Cataract

Jebel Barkal

Merawi

Abu Dom

Abu Hamed

5th Cataract

Soakin

BARODA DESERT

SUDAN

Gakdal

Abu Klea

Shehacat

Metamneh

Atbara

Meroe

Shendi

Khartoum

RIVER AT BARA

0 100 200 Miles

Rivers

Wadis

Egypt and Sudan



## Climate of the Sudan

Travel books and past visitors say the northern Sudan is dry, enervatingly hot by day and chilly by night. Worse, summer is the season of the *haboob*, the huge, blasting dust storms for which the Sudan is infamous. When the *haboob* approaches, one must tie down animals and retreat into whatever shelter can be made or found. Worse still, the *haboob* is followed by a deluge of rain, and the sudden shift often means cold and fever.

## Clothing and Equipment

"Clothes such as are worn in autumn at home are the best for the Nile. Boots must be stout and watertight. Slippers, bathing-shoes for the clayey Nile baths, both thick and thin stockings, flannel shirts, a broad-brimmed hat, a warm overcoat, and a substantial rug should not be forgotten. A sun-umbrella and kufiyeh, a silk handkerchief or muffler, blue or grey spectacles, and a leathern cushion stuffed with horse-hair will also be found useful. Saddles, which may be hired in Cairo, should be taken, especially if ladies are of the party, for the donkeys hired at the various points do not always have saddles. — Explorers should provide themselves with a long and strong ladder; as well as a magnesium lamp or magnesium-wire (to be obtained in Cairo). — Photographic apparatus should be brought from home, for chemicals are either not obtainable or very dear in Egypt, and good dry plates are scarcely to be obtained. The plate should not be more than 8 to 10 inches at the largest. The traveler should superintend the custom-house examination in person."

—Baedeker's *Egypt*, 1892

## Illments

Travel books warn against the many illnesses that can beset a visitor to Egypt and the Sudan, from heat stroke to smallpox. Frequent rest, sturdy shelter, and clean water are crucial.

- In Egypt, one must take stern precautions against ophthalmia (inflammation of the eye): avoid sharing field-glasses, avoid rubbing the eyes, and wash hands and face frequently with a 3 percent lotion of boric acid. Ophthalmia is not as frequent in the Sudan.
- Smallpox is endemic in the Sudan, and travel books urge travelers to obtain vaccinations before they set out.
- Water and milk must be boiled to avoid typhus.
- A cold that sets in after the deluge of the *haboob*, or from too much exposure to damp night air on the Nile, is often followed by fever or by diarrhea, which in turn often leads to dysentery.
- Grey-tinted spectacles can protect the eyes from the bright desert.
- Loose clothing coupled with a broad-brimmed hat or pith helmet, a sunshade, or a cloth covering the head and neck can protect against heat stroke.
- Mosquito-nets and quinine can guard against malaria.

## The Journey Ahead

According to travel books and veteran explorers, the characters face a hard journey to Merawi.

From Port Said they can reach Cairo by train in a day. Another train can take them from Cairo to Aswan, just south of the First Cataract, in four or five days.

Airships are very few in Egypt, and the Royal Navy allows none near the Mahdia for fear of their being captured.

Beyond **Aswan** (p. 22) the country is subject to frequent raids, so no tourist vessels go farther south. A mail steamboat departs from Aswan to the garrison-town of Wadi Halfa three times a week, taking two days. Wadi Halfa marks the border between the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and the Mahdia.

Beyond **Wadi Halfa** (p. 22), the characters are in Dervish country. Trains ran south before the uprising, but the Mahdi's forces destroyed the rails. The characters must hire boatmen to carry them through the cataracts or buy donkeys and hire guides to travel by land. Either way, raiders will be a deadly threat.

Sailing along the river from Wadi Halfa to **Merawi** (p. 27) is about 400 miles. That would take about two weeks under optimum conditions, but the cataracts may slow them.

If instead they buy donkeys and hire guides at Wadi Halfa, they can follow the caravan trail along the Nile. The ride from Wadi Halfa to Dongola is about 230 miles; if all goes well, that will take about 12 days. At Dongola they must trade their donkeys for harder camels. A caravan trail cuts across the desert to Merawi and Jebel Barkal, 100 miles with no wells to be found, taking about six hard days.

## The Intelligence Officer

Lord Bury has sent an invitation to beg an evening's assistance from Lt. *Reginald Wingate*, who is on leave and embroiled in preparations for his June 18 wedding. It takes a few days for him to find time to meet the characters as Lord Bury's guests at the Institute.

Wingate is 27 years old, tanned from years in the tropics and wearing a mustache waxed to proud points. He apologizes profusely for the delay and greets the characters and especially Lord Bury with cordial enthusiasm. He is naturally friendly, hungry to make contacts that might yield advantages later, and eager to convince people of the importance of re-asserting British influence in the Sudan.

A Royal Artillery officer, Wingate served in India before Egypt. He is assistant adjutant-general to Sir Francis Grenfell, the *sirdar* (overall commander) of the British-led Egyptian Army. Wingate oversees the Egyptian Army's civilian personnel. Over the last few years he has become fluent in Arabic. He interviews not only job-seekers but also refugees from the Mahdia and merchants going into and coming out of Khartoum. And he keeps detailed records. That has made him *de facto* head of an unofficial office of military intelligence. It's fair to say Wingate knows more than any other Englishman about the ways of the Sudan.

## Ranks and Titles

Wingate can clarify the profusion of ranks and titles which British officers hold while serving with the Egyptian Army. First, each has his British Army rank. Some are granted temporary brevet ranks for meritorious service, which grant prestige and unofficial precedence among the officers and allow for greater responsibilities but carry no official authority or increase in pay. Lieutenant Wingate is presently a brevet captain.

A British officer also has an Egyptian Army rank in the Ottoman style: *mulazim tani* for second lieutenant, *mulazim awal* for lieutenant, *yuzbashi* for captain, *saghkolaghasi* for



adjutant-major, *bimbashi* for major, *kaimakam* for lieutenant colonel, *miralai* for colonel, *lewa* for major-general, *farik* for lieutenant general, and *sirdar* for commander-in-chief. British Army officers are placed two ranks higher in the Egyptian Army than in their own. Lieutenant Wingate is thus considered a *bimbashi*, equivalent to major, in the Egyptian Army. British soldiers in Egyptian service wear Turkish-style fez hats and uniforms rather than British uniforms.

Finally each officer in the Egyptian Army is given an honorific title: *effendi* (lord or master) for mulazim tani (second lieutenant) to *bimbashi* (major); *bey* (chieftain) for *kaimakam* (lieutenant colonel), *miralai* (colonel), and *lewa* (major-general); and *pasha* (great lord) for *farik* (lieutenant-general) and *sirdar* (commander-in-chief). The title is given in the Turkish style following the officer's name, and is generally used in place of rank. In Egypt and the Sudan, Lieutenant Wingate, holding the Egyptian rank of *bimbashi*, is called Wingate Effendi.

## Travel Advice

Wingate can offer expert advice on the journey to come.

The railways between Cairo and Aswan were built in stages over the past 15 years, some parts with different rail gauges, requiring transfer from one train to another. Some of the locomotives are in better repair than others. The trip should take only four days, but the characters should not be shocked if delays add two or three days.

The mail steamer will likely take a day or two to arrive at Aswan, and then take two days to bring them to Wadi Halfa.

From Wadi Halfa, Wingate recommends against going by river into the Mahdia. The characters could find boatmen who could carry them, but finding one who is both skillful and honest, and who has a large enough vessel in good enough repair, is too much to hope for. If the characters do stick to the Nile, for over 120 miles between Wadi Halfa and Kerma it is exceedingly difficult to navigate in the summer. It would require frequent disembarkation; that would likely take 11 or 12 days, perhaps longer if a vessel suffers damage or a boatman proves false. Better to allow 15 days given the risk of trouble. Beyond Kerma, the river is smooth for 300 or so miles as it rolls past Dongola to Merawi; likely another 10 days. Better to ride alongside the river than struggle upon it.

So: A day or two for the next vessel to depart London. Twelve or thirteen days to Port Said by steamship. A day from Port Said to Cairo by rail. Nine days from Cairo to Wadi Halfa by rail. Eighteen days from Halfa to Merawi by land or 25 by river. Depending on their choices, the characters can expect to be in Merawi between 37 and 50 days from now.

As for Vogel, Wingate says his ways to Jebel Barkal are also fraught. The Royal Navy will doggedly pursue his airship if they spot it in Egypt or over the Suez Canal. He must approach the Sudan from the desert and wastes of the west, or from the mountains and forests of Abyssinia in the southeast. Wingate thinks Abyssinia more likely, even though the Mahdia and Abyssinia are often fighting. That means a meandering flight of about 5,000 miles from Glasgow to Merawi. That should take a zeppelin about 20 days, allowing for poor weather and the need for supply and repairs. If he is forced to ground at the border and then goes overland, that may add two or three weeks to his journey. But Wingate warns against trusting that much to luck.

## Trouble in the Sudan

Wingate warns the characters that they face grave risks entering the Mahdia. The Dervishes admit merchants who journey south to Omdurman to trade—several Greeks have longstanding connections there—but they regard most Europeans and especially Britons with deep suspicion. The frontier is the scene of active fighting. Raiders frequently attack border villages. More than once they have imprisoned merchants and missionaries in the Khalifa's fortress at Omdurman with no hope of reprieve. Wingate thinks Whitman's expedition to Jebel Barkal was pure folly, whatever he hoped to discover. He expects it will end with Whitman slain or imprisoned, and so will the characters if they proceed.

Wingate says the characters may have some success with the plain truth: they come not as soldiers but as civilians seeking a countryman in trouble. Or they may prefer to buy trade goods in Cairo and make themselves merchants heading south, only to veer east at the road to Jebel Barkal. The Dervishes pay well for dhurra (grain sorghum), sugar, coffee, tea, cutlery, crockery, soap, hardware, and agricultural implements. But the Khalifa requires all foreign merchants to come to his fortress at Omdurman and sell to him, rather than trading with villages and tribes along the way, so merchants away from the ordinary roads risk coming under suspicion. And of course there's the chance of bandits along the way.

Whatever their explanation, the characters must bring plenty of coin for *baksheesh*, the old tradition that's sometimes charitable gift, sometimes a reward for good work, and sometimes naked bribery.

*Baksheesh* will be especially important to hire soldiers at the border or at Dongola. The Khalifa forbids firearms and ammunition to all in the Mahdia except his favored troops. Soldiers at the frontier carry rifles, but even they are allowed ammunition only when there's trouble. Except for the Khalifa's own Taaishi tribe, ordinary tribesmen throughout the Mahdia are allowed only bows, spears, and swords. The soldiers will confiscate the characters' guns and ammunition. Taaishi tribesmen, allowed to bear arms, might be recruited to come along as guards to keep bandits at bay. The characters could claim that they brought their rifles and ammunition as gifts for Taaishi tribesmen for that very purpose. Away from the soldiers, further gifts might even induce the guards to give the weapons back.

But Wingate warns the characters to never press their luck. The Mahdia is a jihad state, with courts enforcing Sharia law along with the precepts of the Mahdi and the Khalifa. The characters risk death or imprisonment merely going there.

## About the Sudanese

Wingate can offer important details about the peoples of the Sudan. He says Nubians are generally neutral towards the British and may be easiest to approach. The Jalayin are likely to be desperate and dangerous; years of bad harvests have impoverished many of them. The Juhayna tribes are likely to be aggressive and hostile. The Khalifa is Juhayna, from the Baggara tribal group, specifically the Taaishi. The Taaishi are the only tribe allowed rifles who are not soldiers of the Khalifa's army. They are the raiders encountered on the frontier.

Wingate also describes the *Jihadiya*. They are not a single ethnic group but a cadre of former Egyptian soldiers, mostly Nubians or from the often-enslaved southern tribes, who now serve the



Mahdia. Well-trained by British officers in the 1880s and before that by Americans in the 1870s, they are disciplined riflemen and form the core of the Mahdia's garrisons and armies.

## Yet Another Rilement

Wingate warns of a grotesque trouble that the travel books don't mention: the Guinea worm. He says it infects the foot of an unlucky bather in the Nile. The foot swells painfully as the worm grows up to a full yard in length. It must be coaxed out by soaking in warm water, then wrapped around a stick and drawn out very slowly, over many days; pulling too hard breaks the worm, and the broken worm heals. There's no other cure, so prevention is key: stay out of the Nile and always wear sturdy boots. (Biologists of 1888 have not yet learned that the Guinea worm is in fact spread by ingestion and emerges a year after infection.)

## The Red Plague

This is not a disease in human but in plants. British merchants beginning in 1880 sold to farmers along the Nile the seeds of a Martian food crop that was supposed to be more robust than wheat. Unfortunately, the alien monoculture secreted an acid into the soil, destroying swaths of fertile farmland, and has proven extraordinarily difficult to eradicate. The Red Plague has led to famines in the Sudan and contributed to the unrest that allowed the Mahdi to arise.

## Cairo

The two-week journey from London to Cairo goes without incident. It may be fun to trace the characters' progress on their calendar and an old map, highlighting airship stops in Paris, Geneva, Rome, and Athens, or the steamship's stop in Marseilles, and then the short train hop from Port Said to Cairo.

Fresh foodstuffs and other supplies that they did not bring from London can be gotten in Cairo. The characters can room at the prestigious Shepherd's Hotel, popular with rich European tourists—and with British debutantes looking for military husbands. (Cairo officers call them the "Imperial Fishing Fleet.")

Lord Bury telegraphed Sir Evelyn Baring's office, but that gets the characters only a brief and fruitless meeting with Baring's assistant. He sends them to a brief meeting with the *sirdar*, Gen. Grenfell, who presses them on to his adjutant, Col. Parr, Wingate's immediate superior. Those brief meetings take three days.

Parr's first response is to regret the absence of Wingate. If the characters interviewed Wingate in London, Parr is relieved. He can't improve on his intelligence officer's advice, but he sends a wire to Col. Wodehouse, commanding the Egyptian forces at Wadi Halfa, to tell him to expect the player characters. Parr says Wodehouse will no doubt recommend a suitable guide who might ease their way among the Mahdi's raiders.

If the characters did not speak to Wingate in London, Parr describes the dangers and urges the characters to abandon any plan to enter the Mahdia. Failing to dissuade them, he offers the advice given under **Travel Advice** (page 21) and **Trouble in the Sudan** (page 21).

Even with the recommendation of Baring's assistant, the characters have no luck meeting a person in authority that commands British airships. The Navy will certainly not convey the characters

southward, nor allow a private vessel to venture farther south than Aswan. Any who make the attempt will be seized by the Navy's two Nile flying gunboats. No one knows anything of Vogel or any zeppelin attempting to enter the Mahdia, and they all deem it highly unlikely.

## Aswan

The characters can take the train from Cairo to Aswan, changing trains at Assiut and Luxor due to changes in rail gauges. The journey takes six days. Other than the inconvenience of occasional mechanical trouble, that trek is uneventful. The great monuments of ancient Egypt fly by unvisited, much to the heartbreak of antiquarians in the party.

At Aswan the characters must wait two days for the next mail-steamer bound for Wadi Halfa. The characters can lodge in a hotel which seems shabby by comparison to Shepherd's in Cairo.

Aswan has a thriving market in exotic goods brought from the Sudan and farther south: ostrich feathers and ostrich-feather fans, silver rings and armlets, ivory, rubber, senna, tamarinds, wax, skins, horns, dried dates, weapons from Central Africa, small monkeys, amulets, baskets, leather-fringed aprons, and Nubian clothing and costumes. Children follow the characters and press ceaselessly for *baksheesh*.

Historically-minded characters can explore the ruined temple built by Ptolemy III, sprawling Arab cemeteries, and the ancient granite quarry, and take an excursion of a few miles to the island of Philae with its famous temple of Isis. Baedeker's 1892 guide to Upper Egypt, available online, has detailed descriptions beginning on page 273.

The mail-steamer to Wadi Halfa—either the *Kaibar*, the *Dal*, or the *Akasha*—takes the characters aboard willingly for a fee of £2 each. The accommodations are threadbare in shared rooms, and they are responsible for their own meals and entertainment. Its captain earnestly repeats the warnings they may have heard many times before: the frontier is troubled by Arab raiders. They would be safer to turn back.

## Wadi Halfa

On the river between Aswan and Wadi Halfa the mail-steamer occasionally meets the Egyptian Army gunboats *Tamai*, *El Teh*, *Metemma*, and *Abu Klea*, and narrow native boats called *gyassas* with broad, tall sails. The *gyassas* sell the sorts of goods found in the Aswan market. The gunboats report Mahdist raids on villages north of Wadi Halfa.

Protected by a ditch and a mud wall, Wadi Halfa runs along the east bank of the Nile for nearly three miles, never more than 400 yards across. It surrounds a bay where steamers dock. A railroad outside the walls runs south to Sarra, but the Dervishes destroyed the rails at Sarra a few months ago so no train goes there. Heavy artillery pieces sit where the wall meets the river. Five small detached forts strengthen the walls. Along the riverbank, a series of *shadoofs*—ancient contrivances of rope, pulleys and buckets—draw water from the river below.

The northern quarter, "Halfa town" proper, boasts a railway station, a cluster of clean, well-built, two-story white houses surrounded by palm trees, a pretty mosque with a tall, slender minaret, a native bazaar, and a hospital. The hospital is locally famous for its glass windows; the houses rely on wooden shutters



and deep verandas for shade. The population is mostly Nubian Sudanese and Egyptians with a handful of British officers and administrators and a large sprinkling of Greek merchants.

The rest of Wadi Halfa, called "the Camp," includes a post and telegraph office, an officers' mess called "the Club", barracks for thousands of Egyptian soldiers, stables, depots, a prison, extensive railway workshops, and a rest-house.

Native villages and bazaars lie north and south of the walls.

Camels may be hired at the rest-house for £1 per day, including provisions for beast and driver, or purchased outright for £60 each. If those prices shock the characters (and they should!), the natives reassure them that God looks kindly on generosity.

## The Officers

Soon after they arrive at Wadi Halfa, the characters are invited to meet *Wodehouse Pasha*, its commander. High-born Col. *Josceline Heneage Wodehouse*, GCB, CMG, age 36, is called Wodehouse Pasha for his Egyptian Army rank. Like many British officers in the Egyptian Army he is a decorated veteran of the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 and of the Second Anglo-Afghan war of 1880. As of this year he is governor of the newly-formed Soudan Frontier Province extending from Halfa to Aswan. He is preoccupied with Dervish raiders and with allied Arabs who may be giving the Dervishes free rein. Even if Parr wired him to aid the characters, he has little time or resources to offer.

If asked about Vogel's zeppelin, Wodehouse recalls a telegram some days ago of an unknown zeppelin heading west from Abyssinia. He counts back the days; it was just after the characters departed Cairo. A border-fort near Suakin spotted it and signaled a Royal Navy zeppelin by semaphore, but the Navy lost the intruder in a dust storm over Berber. Meanwhile Wodehouse gives the characters tea and advises them of the suicidal futility of venturing into the Mahdia. If they persist he passes them on to Maj. Rundle, instructing Rundle to find them a reliable guide.

Maj. *Leslie Rundle*, age 32, a serious-minded combat veteran, is happy if he hears the characters met Lt. Reginald Wingate in London. As of June 18, Rundle's sister Kitty is Wingate's new wife. Rundle is an artillery officer like Wodehouse and Wingate, but where Wingate now collects information in Cairo, Rundle commands cavalry in Wadi Halfa. He served with Wingate, Wodehouse, Grenfell and many others in the 1884-1885 Nile Expedition to rescue doomed Gordon and leads Egyptian soldiers against Dervish raiders now.

Rundle introduces the characters to *Hilmi Effendi*, a major in the Egyptian cavalry, and to Capt. *William Henry Rycroft*, a 28-year-old baronet's son and earl's son-in-law, who leads a band of 60 Nubian irregulars of the sprawling Shaigiya tribe. Rycroft's Shaigiya served Gordon and hate the Mahdia, and have proven tremendously useful to Wadi Halfa as cavalry raiders. The Dervishes have sworn to slay them on sight. The trail-stained and hardened Arabs make a startling contrast with the young English aristocrat who leads them.

Hilmi recommends *Pamphilos Anania*, a Greek merchant who plans to set out for Dongola and Khartoum any day now. Rundle agrees. Anania has long ties to the Taaishi, the Khalifa's tribe; but he also has close ties to the British and will treat the characters well.

If the characters ask to get the opinion of local natives, Rycroft, somewhat surprised, summons a leader of his irregulars. Siddig Effendi el Mek is a leathery old man, mostly bald, with glinting, dangerous-looking eyes. His cheeks are marked with three horizontal scars, given in childhood with a heated knife in an old Shaigiya tradition. Rycroft explains the situation in Arabic and

Siddig laughs. But he thinks it over and then says, "Abri Bey al Kheir." Rycroft clouds over, looking scandalized. He says that Abri is no better than a pirate. He rode with Osman Digna, one of the Khalifa's most notorious lieutenants, many years ago. He lost an arm in battle and became a merchant, then one of the Sudan's most notorious slave traders. He gave up slaving just in time to avoid being strung up by order of Gordon Pasha. He loves neither the Khalifa, the Egyptians, nor the British; he loves only gold. Siddig says, "Yes, and who has more gold than the English?"

Rundle introduces whichever guide the characters choose, even if he can't imagine trusting Abri Bey with his life.

## Anania the Greek

Pamphilos Anania is a burly Greek merchant preparing to take a camel caravan south into the Mahdia to sell grain, sugar, coffee, and tea to the Khalifa. He appraises the characters cannily. He knows the forts and tribes on the road to Omdurman; he does not know the characters, and more importantly the Khalifa's soldiers do not know them. And doubtless they wish to bring guns, forbidden by the Khalifa! It's not a question of whether the characters will draw trouble upon his head, but of how much. And even if he talks his way out of trouble, can his conscience live with letting these guileless strangers risk the Khalifa's dungeons?

Anania volubly talks himself out of taking the characters along, drawing it out, giving them plenty of time to think to offer to pay and then to increase the offer. Anania agrees to take them, with a heartrending show of reluctance, for £6 per character per day. He says perhaps he can convince the soldiers that the characters are tea experts. They can talk him down to £4 with a *Diplomacy* roll (three or more successes). Offering to leave their guns behind reduces his daily fee to £4, or £3 with *Diplomacy*.

If the characters strike a deal with Anania, he departs in three days.

Anania is a lively and friendly traveling companion. He knows the tribes and customs of the Mahdia well and is a fine guide as long as he remains on the caravan track. But if the characters venture off the road, or if they risk serious trouble, he turns out to be no good. He is swift to surrender to any threat from the Dervishes, knowing that they will eventually free him to continue bringing goods in from abroad. He will take no risks on behalf of the characters.

## Abri Bey

*Abri Bey al Kheir* camps just south of Wadi Halfa, within easy reach of water, with a dozen men of his clan in a cluster of tents. Abri Bey is a tall and rangy old man, tough, with eyes that find a hard sort of humor in everything. His right arm is missing above the elbow, but he has learned to get along well enough left-handed. He was deadly in his prime, but now he relies on the nephews and cousins who surround him. Abri's estranged sons live comfortably in Khartoum as merchants favored by the Khalifa. Abri's followers are second and third sons, orphans of the wars, and outcasts, who all love their ruthless uncle and would as happily turn vicious bandit for him as guard his trade goods. Abri Bey plans to live comfortably at Wadi Halfa through the hottest summer months, then buy goods with what money he has left and take them to Khartoum to trade in the fall.

Approached by Rundle or the characters themselves, Abri Bey is offensively skeptical. If there are women in the group, he tells the men they could win rich rewards in Khartoum by turning the



women over to the Khalifa as concubines. He chides European whites for their paleness and warns them the desert will be unforgiving and the Khalifa's soldiers will be worse. He warns non-whites that the Khalifa's soldiers will seize them as slaves after killing their white "masters" as spies. An easy *Empathy* roll can tell that Abri Bey is needing the characters in order to gauge their guile and courage.

If the characters stand up for themselves well without instantly picking a fight, Abri decides they may be worth the trouble. His demeanor becomes friendlier and more businesslike. He offers to set out on his next trading foray early to travel with the characters for £300, acting as guide for up to 30 days, keeping them away from the most obvious dangers, and killing any bandits that try to rob them or any wayward soldiers that accost them away from the forts. Abri is happily mercenary. He disdains calling his demands baksheesh or pretending it's charity. He has a valuable commodity to sell: the characters' survival in the Mahdia. And he boasts that once he strikes a deal, the deal remains struck. (If the characters ask around, the British and Egyptian officers vouch for

that. Their Egyptian quartermasters dislike working with Abri for his arrogance and because he drives hard bargains, but he never cheats them. The Shaigiya irregulars say Abri rarely offers to give his word, because he never breaks it.)

A very hard *Diplomacy* roll and a convincing argument by a player can talk Abri down to £200. He doesn't change his fee if the characters wish to bring guns; he only warns them that he may have to turn them over to the Khalifa's soldiers if they find them. He waves off any worries that it may bring trouble.

If the characters strike a deal with Abri Bey, he departs three days after shopping around Wadi Halfa for tools and hardware to load up on his camels for trade.

Abri Bey is mercurial and temperamental, but once his loyalty has been bought it stays bought. He is happy to kill Dervishes who harass the characters, and he has a keen sense of when to avoid conflict and how to defuse it if the characters offend Dervish leaders. If the characters pay him well, or make themselves interesting, Abri Bey and his men ride with them into the desert to Jebel Barkal and beyond.

## Chapter 4: The Chamber of Night

*Wherein our heroes risk life and freedom in the war-torn Mahdia*

By land or on the water, the journey to Merawi follows the Nile for hundreds of kilometers and many days. The river is wide, deep, and smooth for many miles, but it is broken by long, hazardous cataracts.

Ancient caravan roads follow the river, only deviating when the stony landscape forces them to go through ravines or around rises. The shores of the Nile are green even as the barren desert closes in all around. Reeds and tall grasses grow from the shallows. Tangling, white-spined thornbushes sprawl everywhere, often cut and used to fence off camps. Poisonous and prickly plants threaten the unwary. Occasional palm trees with thick date clusters are prized by all. By water or by land, the characters pass villages every few miles where families struggle to stay fed despite an increasing famine and the depredations of raiders.

### The Journey by Water

Between the long cataracts, the characters can attempt to hire native boatmen in flat-bottom sailing barges. The smaller, more common craft called a *nuggur* has a single sail. But a party of several characters plus servants or guides will need a longer *gyassa*, built with sturdy ribs and two sails in a raking lateen rigging. A *gyassa* has a capacity of three tonnes.

The cataracts complicate travel. At each cataract the characters must disembark, carry their belongings or hire porters to carry them upstream for miles until the cataract ends, and then hire another boat for the next stretch.

The nine-mile-long *Second Cataract* begins at *Akasha*, an abandoned mud fort a few miles south of Wadi Halfa. In the summer flood, the Second Cataract runs shallow, rough and quick through narrow gorges of black granite. Rocks just under the surface require careful steering in June and are too dangerous to negotiate when the waters recede in autumn. Beyond the Second Cataract, the river is smooth for 240 miles through the

broken, stony country of *Batn-El-Hajar*. The characters can travel by foot for a day from Wadi Halfa and hire boats at the villages just beyond the Second Cataract, or hire them at Wadi Halfa and brave the cataract's waters.

The *Third Cataract*, three miles of rapids and little islands, begins just north of *Dongola*. Beyond the Third Cataract lie 200 miles of smooth water to Merawi and the ruins of Jebel Barkal. Or the characters might disembark before the Third Cataract and take the 120-mile desert trail overland from Dongola to Merawi and Jebel Barkal.

The characters sail 10 to 20 miles per day upriver, depending on the wind. If they take the characters through a cataract, each pilot must make an average *Pilot (Sailing Ships)* roll or damage his boat's hull, requiring three to five days for repairs. A roll with no successes at all means the boat is too badly damaged to continue. The characters must scramble to get their belongings ashore and find a new way forward.

### Encounters on the Water

Pick one of these encounters for the journey between the Second and Third cataracts, and another for the journey between the Third Cataract and Merawi.

- **Hostile Village:** The *gyassa* stops to buy fresh food from a Nubian clan farming a small plot on the west side of the river. The villagers live in broad, round huts with straw roofs. But they have been robbed repeatedly by Dervishes and suspect the characters are the hated British. They refuse to let the strangers near what's left of their crops or cattle, refuse to trade, curse them as enemies of the one true faith, and warn that soldiers of the Mahdi will soon put them right. Without careful diplomacy and a tough *Diplomacy* roll, the *gyassa* must quickly set sail again without taking on fresh food. Each character must make an average *Body* roll once every three days or take a point of nonlethal damage from deprivation, until they can trade for food or a character succeeds at a tough



*Survival* roll, catching enough fish or bringing down a gazelle. The characters get one try at *Survival* as a group each day.

- **Tsetse Flies:** The gyassa is overwhelmed by a thick swarm of large biting flies. An average *Science (Biology)* roll recognizes them as *Glossina palpalis palpalis*, carriers of the deadly African trypanosomiasis, the sleeping sickness. That character may warn the others to cover up quickly with neutral-colored clothing. Each character must make a tough *Dexterity* roll (with a +2 bonus if they covered up) to ward off the flies. Each who fails is infected by the **sleeping sickness**. *Symptoms:* A painful chancre appears within three days, followed by a high fever, a severe headache, and muscle aches. Confusion and poor coordination incur penalties of -2 to *Perception* and -1 to *Dexterity*. *Infection:* 2. The character suffers 1 nonlethal damage per day; unless the victim recovers, the damage will convert to lethal and the victim will succumb. *Recovery:* 2. (Seven successes are required to recover from the disease). Each *Body* roll represents one day of illness, beginning when the symptoms first appear. There is no treatment.

- **Dervish Raiders:** A dozen or so rifle-bearing Arabs on horses appear on the eastern shore. They shout at the gyassa to come to them and point their rifles menacingly. A *Diplomacy* roll by an Arabic-speaking character might talk them down while the gyassa sails out of range. Otherwise a few of them open fire while the others laugh and encourage them. Random targets on the gyassa suffer four rifle attacks at long range. If the characters return fire, however, the alarmed raiders follow along the river. Four of them fire on the characters each round until at least one raider falls. Then they retreat.

## Dervish Raiders

**Archetype:** Soldier      **Motivation:** Faith  
**Style:** 0      **Health:** 4

### Primary Attributes

**Body:** 2      **Charisma:** 2  
**Dexterity:** 2      **Intelligence:** 2  
**Strength:** 2      **Willpower:** 2

### Secondary Attributes

**Size:** 0      **Initiative:** 4  
**Move:** 4      **Defense:** 4  
**Perception:** 4      **Stun:** 2

Skills	Bas	Levels	Rating	Average
Animal Handling	2	2	4	(2)
Archery	2	2	4	(2)
Athletics	2	2	4	(2)
Brawl	2	2	4	(2)
Firearms	2	1	3	(1+)
Intimidation	2	2	4	(2)
Melee	2	2	4	(2)
Ride	2	2	4	(2)
Stealth	2	2	4	(2)
Survival	2	2	4	(2)

### Resources

**Status** -1, **Wealth** -2

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	Average
Punch	0 N	0	4 N	(2) L
Dagger	1 L	0	5 L	(2) L
Spear	3 L	0	7 L	(3+) L
Scimitar	3 L	0	7 L	(3+) L
Wooden Shield	+1 Defense	0		
Martini-Henry Rifle (uncommon)	3 L	0	6 L	(3) L
Flintlock rifle	3 L	0	6 L	(3) L
Rifle butt	2 N	0	6 N	(2) N

<b>Flintlock Pistol</b>	3 L	0	6 L	(3) L
<b>Bow</b>	2 L	0	6 L	(3) L

## The Journey by Land

An ancient caravan road winds through a wild and rocky landscape for about 240 miles from Wadi Halfa to the shore opposite Dongola (p. 26). The roads veer away from the river from time to time to take shortcuts across bends in the river or to avoid treacherous terrain. The ground near the water is often cracked and fissured, uneven as a result of eons of erosion. Dangerous holes are hard to spot in the long grass. A camel caravan or a party on foot moves about 10 miles per day; a small party of riders moves about 20 miles per day.

## Fort Sarras

Thirty miles south of Wadi Halfa, Sarras is a Dervish-held fort on a crag of black rock overlooking a bend in the river. Stone walls and barbed wire run down to the water. Within the walls stand a few stout buildings and a yard crowded with the tents and animals (200 horses and 100 camels) of more than two thousand of the Khalifa's soldiers.

The southern terminus of the Egyptian military railway lies a short distance inland, but the trains no longer run this far. Last year a small Dervish force seized Sarras and was later wiped out by a surprise attack from Wadi Halfa that arrived in the dark of night by rail. The Dervishes returned to Sarras with a much greater force a few months later and demolished the tracks.

If the characters attempt to pass Sarras without stopping, thirty rifle-armed Arab horsemen, led by a suspicious and imperious emir named *Makin en Nur* (one of a dozen emirs commanding the fort's soldiers), ride out to intercept and question them. If they ride up to the gates, the emir comes out with a dozen guards.

Makin en Nur orders his men to search the characters' belongings thoroughly. A character who concealed a firearm can attempt a *Stealth* test to keep it from discovery. All others are found and confiscated. If it's clear the guns were for self-defense rather than selling, the emir does not seem upset. He understands the travelers' reluctance to go unarmed. But in the Mahdia, none may bear firearms without the Khalifa's express permission.

If the characters offer a gift worth £10 or more to the emir in a way that's not offensive, he offers to send five soldiers with them as guides and guards. This may require diplomacy—offering baksheesh to thank him for helping them understand the Khalifa's wise laws would work brilliantly—but only requires a *Diplomacy* roll if the characters embarrass him in front of his men.

The emir does not allow the characters into Sarras or attempt to imprison them unless there's violence or the characters make him think they are spies sent by the Anglo-Egyptian army. Characters near the gates can plainly see why he wants no new complications: the fort is riddled with smallpox. Any characters who are behind on their vaccinations would be wise to stay away.

## Encounters by Land

Pick one encounter for the journey between Sarras and Dongola and another between Dongola and Merawi.

- **Scavengers:** A pack of a dozen hyenas or wild dogs, made desperate by the spreading famine, sneaks into the party's camp.



They savage food stores and attack when the characters interfere. The pack flees the round after two or more of them are killed or if two or more gunshots are fired. Use the Wolf stats from the *Space: 1889 Core Rules*, page 28. For each round it takes to drive the scavengers away, the party loses one day's worth of provisions.

- **Nubian Tribesmen:** The characters meet a band of five tribesmen hunting, scavenging and trading away from their farms. The tribesmen have no great love of the Khalifa's Arab raiders, who continually seize their food, and are neutral to the characters unless provoked. They will buy up to £6 worth of provisions from the characters at double the usual price.

- **Brigands:** The characters might have this encounter only if they follow the 100-mile waterless desert track overland between Dongola and Merawi. A band of Dervishes follows them from Dongola, three raiders for every two members of the characters' party. They are not of the Khalifa's favorite Baggara tribe, so they have no rifles, only bows, spears, and swords. They close in on the second day out of Dongola, intent on capturing as slaves any that will come without trouble (especially women) and killing the rest. If a third of them fall, the rest flee.

## Dongola

Dongola is the capital of the northern province of the Mahdia, a populous trade center and a barracks for thousands of soldiers. The main part of Dongola sprawls on the west side of the half-mile-

wide Nile, but the eastern road passes through a village fortified with the Khalifa's soldiers opposite the town. On both sides of the river, square buildings and lemon trees line dusty streets. Wheat and barley farms and cattle ranches spread out along the river on either side of the city.

If the characters are not accompanied by either *Pamphilos Anania* or *Abri Bey*, they are approached by a canny merchant named *Abdullah Shuhdi*. Shuhdi doesn't waste his time if those other known traders are around. Shuhdi first strikes up conversation acknowledging ruefully that the Khalifa requires foreign merchants to go to Omdurman to trade at whatever terms he sets; then he says he has heard that careful and discreet merchants can trade in Dongola instead of waiting until they reach Omdurman; and if the characters seem interested and discreet, he gets around to making offers. His offers are insultingly cheap. He wishes to buy tools, tea, coffee, or sugar for ten percent of its usual purchase price, which is a third or even a quarter of what most merchants would offer. He presses his case by boasting that he is friends with many of the emirs who command in Dongola. If the characters refuse him, he angrily wonders if they are in fact spies sent by Egypt, and implies he'll slander them to the army. He backs down only if the characters sell him £100 worth of goods for £10, or if they succeed at a hard *Diplomacy* test to make him like them.

If Abdullah Shuhdi goes away unhappy, the characters have only a few hours to get miles away from Dongola before two dozen riders come to confront them. If the characters ride into the harsh desert overland toward Merawi, the riders soon abandon the chase. If the characters remain on the river, the riders find them and threaten to open fire if they don't return. Unless the characters allow themselves to be taken and questioned, they and their boat face eight rifle attacks per round for four rounds before the riders give up.

Characters taken for questioning lose at least a few days with *Abderrahman Wad en Nejumi*, commander of Dongola. Each character has a 50% chance each day of being brought in to answer Nejumi's questions. A convincing argument and a hard *Diplomacy* roll convinces Nejumi of that character's harmlessness. Offering gifts to honor Nejumi reduces the difficulty by 1 per £10; but implying that this is bribery makes it a very hard test instead. Freed characters must wait for their remaining companions to be released.

From Dongola the characters can hire boatmen to take them from the head of the Third Cataract along the smooth waters 300 miles to Merawi. Or they can ride those 300 miles along the trails beside the river. The riverbanks south of Dongola are flat and low, with thin strips of cultivated land and palm trees on the east bank.

To save time, the characters can cut across the desert to Merawi, a barren track 100 miles long. They must bring plenty of water and provisions as there are no wells nor villages along the way. About 40 miles southeast of Dongola the trail passes a cluster of half a dozen small, crumbling pyramids in the ancient Meroitic style, narrow and close.





## Desert Travel

Away from the Nile, the roads wind over vast stretches of bleak, desolate desert. Endless, flat plains of fine, pinkish sand are broken here and there by stark, shapeless peaks of black rock. The wind often raises the sand up into dust-devils that coat everything and irritate the skin, eyes, and lungs.

Temperatures average 104 degrees Fahrenheit by day and 70 by night. The summer sun blazes unrelentingly in a steel-blue sky. At dusk, the sun sets in a spreading red glow that merges with the sand, making the horizon vanish until darkness falls. Characters who have been to Mars find something familiar in the Nubian sands. Less travelled characters may express surprise at the swiftness of the sunset (and sunrise) compared to England.

Except at a well, there is no water to be found in the desert. Characters must bring bulky, heavy waterskins for themselves and their animals. Each character needs to drink one gallon of water per day, which weighs eight pounds; washing uses another half-gallon. A horse in the desert needs 15 to 20 gallons per day, and will die from dehydration after a few days. A camel can go more than two weeks without water in the desert heat—but it will lose up to a third of its weight and must drink copiously to recover.

If the characters bring too little water, or if an accident befalls their waterskins, the consequences can be deadly. Each day of dehydration causes one point of lethal damage to a character, two points to a horse. A camel takes one point of lethal damage for every two days of dehydration.

The characters can travel 10 miles a day in the desert by foot or with a caravan, or 15 miles by horse or camel without a caravan. At the end of each day's march through the desert, each character must make an average *Body* roll or suffer one point of nonlethal damage. (See the *Space: 1889 Core Rules*, page 211 for details.) The following modifiers apply:

- Traveled even in the hottest part of day (double distance): +2 difficulty
- Carrying a heavy load: +2 difficulty
- Carrying a medium load: +1 difficulty
- Wearing European clothes (thick and confining): +1 difficulty
- Riding a camel: +4 bonus
- Riding a horse or donkey: +2 bonus
- Character is native to this part of the world: +4 bonus
- Character is not native but has experience living in the desert: +2 bonus

## Merawi

The characters can see **Jebel Barkal** ("Mount Barkal") long before they arrive at Merawi. It is a 100-yard-high sandstone butte that rises dramatically from the sands a mile from the river, the only formation of its kind as far as the eye can see.

Ruins of temples and palaces sprawl east of Jebel Barkal, overlooked by a freestanding pinnacle. A character well-versed in *Academics (History)* or a local hired guide can inform the characters that the Ancients regarded the pinnacle as a rearing serpent. Because the rearing serpent was worn on the Egyptian pharaoh's crown (where it was deified as Wadjet), Jebel Barkal symbolized Egyptian rule of the Sudan. When the Egyptians withdrew, a line of Kushite Nubian kings adopted their myths to sanctify their own rule; they even ruled over Egypt itself for a century (the Egyptian twenty-fifth dynasty).

Dozens of small, crumbling pyramids, the tombs of ancient Kushite kings with distinctive steep sides and pillared entryways, stand to the crag's west.

Dr. Whitman's notes call the pyramids the "Seven Sisters." Characters who examined his maps of the pyramids and the stars, or who consulted with Alice Whitman, likely already know where to look for Whitman's discovery. The Merawi villagers can point them toward Whitman's work, too, even though now it's buried in sand.

Merawi is the largest of a string of villages (Karima, Merawi, Merowe, Napata, Nuri), some depopulated thanks to rising famine, that mark the end of the smooth river where the treacherous Fourth Cataract ends. The Fourth Cataract is virtually impassible for 50 miles: few vessels try it and fewer still manage it. Beyond the cataract in the east, commerce runs from *Abu Hamed* south along the river to Berber and beyond. In the west, it runs from *Dongola* to *Al-Dabbah* and then over desert roads to *Khartoum* and *Omdurman*. There is little commerce in Merawi.

All of which made recent events remarkable.

First, the strange Englishman Dr. Whitman came months ago with his daughter, set up camp at the foot of Jebel Barkal, and hired locals to help him dig around in the sands until he uncovered a new set of ruins north of the mountain. His daughter returned north to Egypt, and a week later Whitman departed for Korti without saying where he would go beyond that.

Then, a few weeks ago, another party of Europeans came in an airship. Germans led by a man named Vogel, they spent a few days at the remains of Whitman's camp, then as a dust storm approached they attempted to fly away. But they were too slow: the storm wrecked their airship and covered Whitman's camp and discoveries up as if they had never been found. The Europeans spent a few days gathering supplies and hiring Arab guides, and then set off for the south. They said they would go to Omdurman.

The villagers don't say that the Germans left behind a gift and deadly instructions.

## Vogel's Timetable

Exactly how long ago did Vogel depart? It took him 24 days to get from Glasgow to Merawi. He spent two days in Merawi, then a day digging out from the storm, then two days gathering guides and supplies. That's 29 days after he departed Glasgow. Compare that to the characters' progress on their calendar. If the characters took, say, 40 days to reach Merawi, then Vogel departed 11 days ago.

This all presumes the characters have had a long journey from Cairo. If the characters managed to substantially shorten their journey, give Vogel his zeppelin back and see that he made good time! It's important that he stay ahead of them until they reach Meroë.

## The Trap

Vogel paid the men of Merawi generously to work for him and his soldiers. He spoke at length against the British and their corruption of Egypt, and the rightness of the Mahdi's jihad to drive the Christian British and the infidel Egyptian out. Vogel admitted he was not a Muslim, but said anyone could see what was right. Vogel said Dr. Whitman was a spy for the British, and that he meant to apprehend him and present him to the Khalifa as a gift to open the way for an alliance.

At the same time, Vogel saw that the Khalifa had disarmed the Merawi clans just as he did everyone except his own Taiishi tribesmen and soldiers on the troubled frontiers. Vogel presented



the Merawi leaders with a gift: a strange, heavy weapon of his own invention, an experimental gun, which Vogel would not be able to transport overland across the desert anyway. He asked them to hand it to the Khalifa when they saw fit—and in the meantime, to use it on any Europeans who might come to aid the spy Whitman.

Vogel and his men installed the gun atop *Jebel Barkal* looking down at Whitman's temple, beneath well-secured canvas sheets. He instructed Merawi's leaders to welcome the spies, if any came, and allow them to camp where Whitman had camped—but to secretly send two gunners up to the gun to wait. At nightfall, the Merawi warriors should form a silent perimeter around the spies' camp. An hour after nightfall, the gunners should fire on the spies' camp, using the light of the spies' campfires and lanterns as a guide. As the spies scatter in confusion, the warriors should capture them for the Khalifa and kill any who resisted capture.

## Day and Night

The Merawi welcome the characters, answer their questions about Whitman, show the wreckage of Vogel's airship, and offer to help dig out Whitman's discovery.

Local superstition says the mountain is a source of mystical earth energy, blessed by Allah. To Alice Whitman or a sharp-memoried character, that may suggest the "Martian energies" of Whitman's theorem.

For only £1, the characters can hire locals to dig the sand away from Whitman's ruins. It will take many hours, and can only be half done by night.

In the meantime the characters or their guides might realize something is amiss. A character who makes an average *Empathy* roll (it is easy for a Sudan native, or hard for a character who speaks none of the local languages) realizes some of the villagers seem furtive and on edge. The characters have until nightfall to winkle the truth out of them.

The villagers at first say they know nothing about Vogel, but if the characters seem open and honest, and describe Vogel's crimes, they can attempt a single tough *Diplomacy* roll. (It's only an average roll if Alice Whitman is with them and speaks indignantly about the attempted abduction.) If it succeeds, the villagers confer and then tell everything. If it fails, the villagers leave the characters to their own devices and return to the village—until they attack after dark.

All attacks that night are at -2 in the dim moonlight.

Vogel showed two canny-looking (Intelligence 3) Merawi men how to use the experimental gun. Each has the equivalent of one point of *Gunnery* skill that applies only to this gun, for a total rating of 4. Only one of them is needed to fire it; the other holds a small lamp to illuminate the complex switches and wheels. The gun is 2,000 feet from the area around Whitman's dig site, so the gunner aims two rounds before each shot to offset the -2 penalty for medium range and the penalty for visibility.

A character on the ground who looks up at *Jebel Barkal* for foes can spot the gun and its crew's little lamp with a hard *Perception* roll.

The village has two dozen tribesmen strong enough to fight. They have the same stats as Dervish raiders (see page 25) but wield only spears, scimitars, daggers, and bows. As they sneak up on the characters' camp, any character on watch can attempt an average *Perception* roll to hear them in the distance.

The Merawi have no stomach for a protracted fight. If two or more of them fall, or if the characters dig in with firearms and can't be dislodged by the gun, all the Merawi villagers flee and leave their town abandoned until the characters depart.

## Experimental Grenade Gun (Artifact 3)

The gun is a bulky cannon made of metal. It uses the *Gunnery* skill and launches grenades. As an area attack (see the *Space: 1889 Core Rules*, page 210), it ignores active defense as well as modifiers for creature size and wound penalties.

After the gun fires, it must be reloaded. Usually it takes four rounds.

Artifact	Dmg	Str	Rng	Cap	Rate	Spd	Price	Wt
Experimental Grenade gun	4L	*	1,300 ft.	1	1/4	S	£1,800	800 lbs
(area of effect: 20 ft.)								

\* The gun can be used only when mounted firmly on the open ground.

## The Deadly Temple

Digging for Whitman's find slowly reveals the disintegrating rubble of an ancient *mastaba*, a forerunner of pyramids, about 40 feet wide and 160 feet long. This is an exciting archaeological find, since all other known mastabas were built far to the north before the pharaohs came to Kush. Its long axis points north-south, toward *Jebel Barkal*.

The rubble reveals patterns like a house, with rooms separated by thick walls. In the north end, stairs lead far down to the south, toward the mountain. That surprises a character who is well-versed in *Academics (Archaeology)* or is an expert in *Academics (History)*, because mastabas were built not with stairs but with simple openings like chimneys leading to the burial chamber below. The chimney would allow the soul to rise and animate a statue, usually hidden within the walls, and so return to life. There was no need for stairs. This mastaba must have served some function other than or in addition to burial.

The stairs lead deep beneath the earth, through bedrock. Less sand coats the floors the farther one goes. They finally end in a large, high chamber held up by columns. The columns and chamber are carved in a very early Egyptian style quite distinct from the other *Jebel Barkal* pyramids.

## The Body

Past the first chamber, a short corridor leads toward another, narrower chamber. But in the corridor is a grisly find: the body of one of Vogel's soldiers, an engineer sent down to explore. He is well preserved after weeks in the darkness. A character who makes an average *Medicine* roll can tell he died from unusually swift asphyxiation.

Searching near the body, a character who makes a hard *Perception* roll finds a stone in the floor that gives a little under pressure. The walls on either side of that stone are carved with ancient symbols representing the breath of life. One of them is slightly recessed, revealing a crack in the bedrock.

Taking samples and examining them with an average *Science (Chemistry)* roll finds traces of an unrecognized mineral powder that must have been sealed behind the wall and released by the trap to disperse in the air. It is swiftly lethal when inhaled but the characters are safe as long as they do not snort it from the ground. Its unearthly origin and further scientific properties we leave to the reader's invention.



## The Ruined Chamber

The second, narrower chamber is carved with star motifs and contains the broken sarcophagi of Egyptians dead five thousand years. Hieroglyphics which might have identified them by name were carefully and thoroughly destroyed millennia ago.

## The Corridor of Stars

A tremendously long corridor leads out of the second chamber. It stretches away into blackness, far beyond the reach of any source of light. Lantern or torch light catches in bright blue crystals set into the corridor walls like stars. On the walls beside the corridor's entrance are strange carvings. They depict a lone priest walking into the corridor among the stars.

If a character enters the corridor, the nearest blue crystals softly glow, somehow drawing energy from the earth beneath Jebel Barkal. The subterranean stars give faint illumination as the character walks. A character who enters the corridor alone eventually emerges into the final chamber, safe and sound. The corridor is precisely 1,000 Sacred Egyptian cubits long, about 1,720 feet.

If two or more characters are ever in the corridor at the same time, the nearest crystals grow brighter and brighter until they are painful to see. After about one minute (ten rounds), there is a burst of blue-white light. It is an attack roll of 8 N against each character in the corridor. Another attack follows each round as long as two or more characters remain in the corridor. The light does not target characters' bodies. Dropping prone is an effective way to avoid them, but not perfect unless the character holds absolutely still. A character who crawls while prone suffers a 4 N attack each round rather than 8 N, but gets no benefit from active defense.

Sadly for the scientists among them, the characters have no way to learn who created this deadly trap, or how, or why.

## The Sanctuary

The long corridor ends in a small chamber of polished, smooth black stone in an ovoid (egg-like) shape. In the wall opposite the corridor stand the remains of a ceremonial oval arch of some strange black metal. The rest of the chamber was long ago smashed to useless rubble; the metal of the arch is unharmed and shows no sign of corrosion or tarnish. The characters can only guess the function of what may have been indentations and sockets in the walls. Within some pieces of black rubble the characters can see veins of greenish crystal, likewise of unknown origin. If taken for study, it baffles any geologist no matter how complete the laboratory.

The sanctuary is littered with the remains of Dr. Whitman's camp, a sign that he came this far safely, which is a relief to Alice: pencil nubs, empty food tins, the black remains of a tiny campfire where Whitman braved the smoke in order to make tea.

A charred notebook sits in the ashes and coal of the makeshift firepit. Vogel took the papers he needed and had his men burn the rest, but they did an imperfect job. The fire burned out while leaving some pages intact.

The notebook is filled with hieroglyphics and Meroitic script, attempted translations scratched through and rewritten, sketches and notes. Last come a few translated lines: "*Before he looked north with holy eyes, the great pharaoh turned his eyes south to*

*greater glory still. He followed the trail of stars from the house of the forbidden king to the chamber of night in the house of Amun-Ra.*" Whitman circled "house of Amun-Ra" twice.

The notebook also has fragments of a story by the ancient Greek historian Strabo that say the great pharaoh once visited the Pillars of Hercules without ever departing from Kush. Nearby, Whitman wrote "*Node??*"

A character who knows a little about *Academics (History)* recognizes Amun-Ra as a prominent sun god of ancient Egypt, especially revered by the Kushite pharaohs. The "house of Amun-Ra" is almost certainly a temple. There are countless temples to Amun-Ra. If the characters consult a map of the region and trace a line south from Jebel Barkal, the line comes near only one: the ruined temple of Amun-Ra at Meroë. In fact, a character with advanced knowledge of *Science (Physics)* could spend a day or two plotting the position of the long corridor of stars beneath Jebel Barkal more precisely. A line following it leads south-by-southeast and intersects with the Amun-Ra temple at Meroë precisely.

The notebook bears another page of great interest, mostly scorched. Whitman sketched parts of the map to show the alignment of certain symbols, amid sketches of constellations and notes in Egyptian hieroglyphics that indicate seasons. A symbol for Mars is circled vigorously. Alice Whitman, or a character who is a recognized expert in *Science (Physics)*, can decipher more. Whitman was using the map to make correspondences with the positions of stars to point to locations. One location he labeled "J.B." Another he labeled "M.—Amun-Ra?" Another is not on Earth at all—it is the symbol for Mars.

Whatever that means, the characters should soon discern Whitman's trail. They might find him and the villain Vogel both among the pyramids of Meroë.

## By Desert to Meroë

The characters have few good options for their pursuit of Whitman and Vogel to Meroë. The Nile winds far to the east before bending south and west again. Following the roads along it would take weeks. The river itself is broken by both the *Fourth Cataract* and the *Fifth Cataract* before it nears Meroë. And it passes fortifications at *Abu Hamed* and *Atbara* where the Khalifa's emirs may ask troublesome questions.

Vogel, and Whitman before him, instead crossed the Nile at *Merawi* and took the ancient caravan trail into the Bayuda desert. It runs for about 160 miles to *Metammeh* on the Nile. Boats can carry travelers across to *Shendi*. From Shendi it's 25 miles northeast to the pyramids of Meroë.

Guides who know the Bayuda measure legs of travel by the well: Across the river at Merawi to *Abu Dom*, there to hire camels and laborers, one day. Thirty miles from Abu Dom to the wells at *Kaumk*, three days. Twenty-five miles from Kaumk to the wells at Merawi (a different Merawi), three days. Eight miles further to the wells at *El Kalas*, one day. A long trek of forty miles to the wells at Abu Halfa, four days. Fifteen miles from Abu Halfa to the wells at *Gakdul*, two days. Forty miles from Gakdul to the wells at *Abu Klea*, four days. Fifteen miles from Abu Klea to the wells at *Shebacat*, two days. Ten miles from Shebacat to *Metammeh*, one day. Three weeks all told. Guides recommend against rushing the journey, but the characters' urgency may prevail.

See **Desert Travel** on page 27 for important rules for the journey.



## Encounters in the Bayuda

The caravan road runs over wide, glaring, parched expanses of rolling sand and between dark, stony buttes. It passes a number of squalid villages built around wells, homes and resting-places for nomadic Arabs. These are generally neutral to the characters and willing to provide aid. They have learned to accommodate thirsty and exhausted travelers, but they expect small gifts and signs of respect for that courtesy.

Pick one of the following encounters for every few days on the journey between Merawi and Meroë.

- **Desperate Village:** The characters arrive at a well and find the village has been overturned by raiding brigands who deserted the Khalifa's armies. The villagers hide when the characters approach, and only come out if the players make every effort to seem friendly. The village's fighting men are away by the Khalifa's commands, leaving old men, young boys, and women. The raiders killed the village elder. An old woman, *Asima bint Abdallah el Bedawi*, seems to be the voice of authority, but by long habit she is extremely reluctant to speak to male strangers. A male character needs a tough *Diplomacy* roll to draw her out; a female character has no trouble. Otherwise only a village boy named *Muhammad*, who hid from the raiders but whose mother Ghaniya was taken, speaks to the characters until his grandmother (Asima) scolds him and he flees.

The raiders departed only the day before. They rode in by night, nine of them carrying spears and swords. They slew the old men, and the boys and women who put up a fight, gathered up the young women and remaining boys as captives, and departed at the next sundown. They rode toward a rocky promontory 10 miles north, where desperate travelers sometimes go for its muddy, alkaline pool.

The villagers have nothing whatsoever to offer the characters but their friendship, and so Asima does not ask for help. But if the characters set out to rescue the captives and avenge the dead, she weeps, thanks them, and begs to know their names so that she can tell everyone of their bravery and kindness.

The brigands have camped in the lee of a low rock formation that stands over a brackish, muddy pool. They have little discipline. They set only one man on watch atop the rock at a time, and as the characters approach the guard is distracted tormenting a captive young woman he has brought with him. Use the stats for Dervish Raiders from page 25. The characters can kill all the brigands, or turn them over to the next band of Dervishes they meet for summary execution. Either way they will earn valuable goodwill among the Bayuda clans.

- **Haboob:** A tremendous dust storm rolls across the characters. Their guides recognize it in the distance and hurry to make camp and secure everything. Every character loses a minor belonging or two, and each must make an average *Survival* roll. Each character who fails loses something critical to the storm: a necessary belonging, a riding animal, or a non-player character servant or friend, whichever is most appropriate. A brief but severe rainstorm follows the haboob, turning all the dust to mud that dries within an hour.

- **Fever:** This encounter strikes only after the haboob. A few days after the storm, each character must make a *Body* roll. Each character who fails comes down with a debilitating fever. A feverish character takes one point of nonlethal damage per day and suffers a -1 penalty on every action. The character may attempt a *Body* roll once per day to recover; after four successes, the fever lifts. In a modern hospital this would barely be interesting; in the wilds it could be deadly.

- **The Warlord:** The characters meet a Jalayin warlord, Emir *Abu Sirawi el Bedawi*, riding with a band of about 10 Dervishes armed with spears, shields, and scimitars.

Sirawi attempts to bully the characters into going under his guard directly to Omdurman, whatever they tell him of their destination. He means to bring them in like a prize and humiliate his rivals on the frontier who let them pass so easily. Sirawi is quick to anger and quicker to shout and threaten. But all depends on the characters' demeanor. If they are stern and stubborn without being insulting—he cannot stand to be shamed in front of his men—or if they offer £20 worth of baksheesh for his “consideration” and thoughtfulness, he agrees to back down. But only after they swear to go to Omdurman to report to the Khalifa after they finish their oh-so-important errand.

If the characters travel with *Abri Bey*, he sees Sirawi coming and warns the characters that the emir is notoriously rapacious and vicious; they must let Abri do the talking and gird themselves for the worst. In fact Abri and Sirawi are old rivals—not enemies, precisely, but just this side of it.

Abri Bey's presence could make things better or worse. The two Arabs are suspicious and loud, and seem to be working themselves up to an argument that will turn deadly. If a player has a wise-sounding interjection, one of the characters can attempt a *Diplomacy* roll. Success defuses the tension, causes the Arabs to laugh off their hot tempers, and causes Sirawi to let them go with only their promise to report to Omdurman. Failure embarrasses Abri Bey, and since he can't take that out on the characters who are paying him, he takes it out on Sirawi. At last, a deadly insult leads to swords drawn and rifles shouldered.

If *Anania the Greek* guides the characters, he encourages the characters to offer gifts and plies Sirawi with flattery. Sirawi knows the merchant well and disregards him, suspiciously asking the characters why they are so far from the road to Omdurman. Awkward answers may require *Diplomacy*; if they do, and it fails, Sirawi begins to grow angry and intractable. At that point Anania abandons the characters altogether: he tells the emir every detail he knows about the characters' actions and plans. Only bloodshed will keep the characters from being taken prisoner. Sirawi then sends Anania on his way in peace.

If the characters or their guides tell Sirawi that they rescued captives from the brigands on page 26, his demeanor changes swiftly. Asima bint Abdallah el Bedawi is Sirawi's cousin. Unless the characters give him reason to conclude they are lying, he offers his hand in the European way and tells them that they have his thanks. If they have trouble with any Dervish in the Bayuda as far as Shendi, they should say that Emir Abu Sirawi el Bedawi has given them his friendship and protection.

- **Lions:** This encounter takes place only near the end of the journey, within a few miles of the Nile, where the pink desert sand gives way to scrub grass. A pride of lions has been driven to desperation by the famine. Four females stalk the characters from a mile or two off by day, and then close in at the dark of night. They try to kill and drag away a camel or horse, if one is available, or a character or non-player character who ventures away from camp. They can be driven off with a sustained series of gunshots, or if one lion is slain or two or more are injured. Use the stats for Large Cats in the *Space: 1889 Core Rules*, page 27.

## Metammeh and Shendi

The caravan road ends at *Metammeh*, a sprawling Nile trading town that is home to many Jalayin Arabs, including the tribe's chief



emir. Khartoum and Omdurman lie only 100 miles southwest; the characters have come to the heart of the Mahdia.

Across the Nile from Metammeh stands *Shendi*, a cluster of half a dozen substantial forts built of dried Nile mud set a thousand feet back from the river. German-built Krupp cannons in the forts face north along the Nile. Shendi has many houses, huts, and workshops, and stables for cavalry; there is excellent grazing along the banks of the Nile nearby. Characters with advanced knowledge of *Academics (History)* or who read their Sudan travel guides carefully know that some say Shendi was home to the biblical Queen of Sheba.

If the characters are accompanied by *Anania* or *Abri Bey*, their guides can simplify things by helping the characters pose as merchants or harmless academics. The more the characters act like soldiers, the more suspicion they will arouse.

If the characters claim to have the protection of Emir Abu Sirawi el Bedawi, and they seem honest about it, that earns them a great deal of trust. An emir who knows Sirawi will escort them and see that they cross the Nile and depart Shendi in peace.

## Captured!

If things go very poorly, the characters could soon find themselves captured and brought before the Sheikh of the Jalayin tribe, *Feki Klahaf Allah*. This stern, white-bearded man is clearly revered by his tribesmen. A character well versed in *Academics (History)* or who is fluent in Arabic recognizes that “feki”, related to “fakir”, indicates a wise or holy man. Khalaf listens first to his people; if a Dervish emir says the characters are spies, Khalaf agrees they are spies and says they must be sent to the Khalifa at once. Only if the characters give him a convincing argument—such as by telling him of mystical powers they expect to find at the end of Whitman’s trail in Meroë—does Khalaf change his mind. In that case he is likely to send a band of his trusted Dervishes to accompany the characters to Meroë—and then take them to Omdurman to present their discoveries to the Khalifa.

If worse comes to worst, the characters could find themselves captured for delivery to Omdurman and the judgment of the Khalifa. We leave the details to the imagination of the game master. The Khalifa lives in splendor in his new fortress despite the poverty of his country. He hates the British for their long years of imposing corrupt Egyptian rule on the Sudan. He firmly believes that his mission, inherited from the Mahdi, is to conquer the world in the name of Islam, starting with Abyssinia in the east and Egypt to the north, but he is cunning and worldly. He responds well to offers that may increase his power. But he would be just as happy to put the characters in a dungeon for many years to come.

## The Ruins of Meroë

The characters can follow maps and clues from Whitman’s notes to the vicinity of his last dig site, and then hire Nubian guides from the village of *Kabushiya* to bring them to the site itself.

*Meroë* was for hundreds of years the capital of the Kingdom of Kush. Jewish legend says it was home to the Queen of Sheba. It flourished for a thousand years before it was abandoned. Its largely unexcavated ruins are scattered over an area nearly a mile across, often indistinguishable from rough stones. They lie a little more than half a mile east of the Nile, where rough grasses and barely farmable soil give way to hardy trees and then nothing but sand and rock.

Two miles east of the ruins stand the pyramids of Meroë on two lines of hills separated by a valley, rising sharply from a sprawling tumble of basalt in the sands.

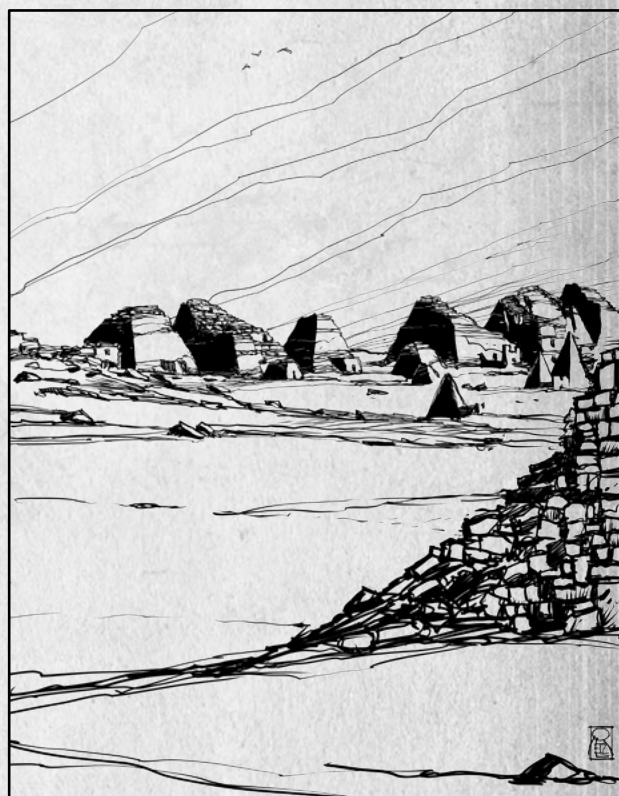
Guides from *Kabushiya* say another large party of Europeans came not long ago. Probably a week or two; how much of a lead did Vogel still have on the characters? Many weeks before that, another European came, alone but for a pair of young servants from Merawi. The lone European explored the ruins and the pyramids. When the other Europeans came, they joined their camp with his at the ruins of the Temple of the Sun. They helped Whitman dig in the ruins and then among the pyramids. Then one night they departed, leaving nothing behind. None of the locals know where they went or even in which direction. If the characters ask carefully, they find none of the locals actually saw the Prussians or Whitman leave. They only noticed that their camp in the pyramids had been unexpectedly taken down.

## The Temple of the Sun

At the edge of the ruins of the ancient city lies an extensive ruin that some historians think was a palace while others claim it was a temple of the sun god Amun-Ra mentioned by Herodotus. It rises in terraces to what may have been a sanctuary, where lie the remains of an obelisk. Looking closely, characters can find flecks of ancient yellow and blue among the crumbling tiles.

The characters have little trouble finding the remains of the German camp. They took their tents and supplies when they left, but they left refuse pits that they dug not far from the Temple of the Sun.

Whitman’s clues pointed to a temple of Amun-Ra in Meroë, and he spent a great deal of energy exploring the Temple of the Sun and then another, even larger Temple of Amun that was built a few hundred years later. The rubble at both temples has been excavated and sorted with care, thanks to the diligence of Vogel’s men. The remains say nothing to the characters, beyond the in-





nate fascination they may hold for historians. The only clue may be too oblique to decipher: the pieces of the obelisk in the old temple and the altar in the later temple have been carefully cleaned so Whitman could take careful rubbings with pencil and paper. One large fragment of the obelisk is set carefully with its relief facing upward. It shows a figure that seems to be a king lying on a funeral bench beneath a field of stars. A character well-versed in *Academics (History)* notices that there are no hieroglyphics to identify the figure, only a symbol that seems to indicate that the figure has no name. A nameless king, perhaps?

## The Pyramids of Meroë

The pyramids of Meroë stand in three distinct necropolises, built out of the rock thousands of years ago when Egypt was ruled by the pharaohs of Kush. The wind whistles uneasily through their shattered remains.

The Meroë pyramids, like many at Jebel Barkal, are small by the standards of Giza and uniquely narrow. The largest is just under 100 feet tall with sides rising at nearly 70 degrees. A rectangular entryway stands next to each pyramid, facing east in the direction of the rising sun. Inside is a shrine where offerings were left for the dead, buried in an inaccessible chamber far below.

The pyramids were built for kings, queens, and their sons and daughters. Most were excavated, badly damaged, or demolished in 1834 by treasure-hunters led by Italian explorer Giuseppe Ferlini.

The **south cemetery** contains nine pyramids and nearly two hundred smaller tombs, long-since desecrated by grave robbers. The **north cemetery** contains 41 pyramids and three smaller tombs. The **west cemetery** contains about 113 small tombs, mostly ruins.

The Prussians established a camp near the south cemetery. Several pyramids have been partially unearthed, the rubble removed from their entryways to allow access to the shrines within.

One pyramid, very notably, has an extensive excavation in front of it. A long trench has been dug to lead steeply downward into the ground beneath the pyramid. That pyramid's shrine is interesting to a character well-versed in *Academics (History)*. It bears no signs or marks whatsoever to indicate the royal personage supposedly buried underneath. The shrine is decorated only with the faintest remains of painted stars.

## The Chamber of Night

Beneath the pyramid, the trench does not open into the expected burial chamber for a king or queen. Instead they find a wide, ovoid or egg-shaped chamber of curving black granite, polished to a sheen. The chamber is empty. An oval arch of uncertain design—even an expert in *Academics (History)* cannot identify it—stands decoratively against the far corner. The arch is built of some unknown black metal exactly like that found at Jebel Barkal. Within the black metal of the arch black crystal dodecahedrons are set.

Set into the wall to either side of the arch are ancient levers and dials and wheels. Between and beneath them are greenish crystals, and the black rock is veined by thin lines of the same color. It looks very much like the sanctuary beneath Jebel Barkal, but intact. If they douse their lights, after a short while the characters will notice the crystals and veins are glowing faintly.

The walls near the arch are marked with symbols like those on the ancient map, symbols that look like hieroglyphics but are not.

The dials and wheels have been set at symbols whose meanings cannot even be guessed at. Each could be turned to other symbols or to a blank spot with no symbol.

The chamber smells faintly of blood, and dried blood stains the floor. A character who searches the bloodstains carefully and succeeds at a *Survival* roll finds enough traces of fur and footprints to conclude that camels were slain here and dragged toward the arch. But other things may be more pressing.

*Alastair Whitman*—a fifty-year-old academic scorched by the desert sun, wearing ragged and travel-stained Arab robes—stands like a statue near a cluster of those levers and wheels. Dust stirred by the characters' arrival traces soft motes of light against the motionless scientist. He seems to be surrounded by a field of strange energy. His unblinking face bears a look of determination, perhaps even desperation.

## Whitman's Confession

Whitman is trapped in a kind of stasis. It can be undone by resetting all the dials to their blank positions, which deactivates the strange machinery. When this happens, Whitman lets out a ragged gasp and then falls to the ground, clutching his chest. Blood begins to seep out of his ragged, travel-stained shirt and coat and onto the black floor from a bullet wound near his heart.

He looks around in shock. The characters have precious little time to question him.

If Alice Whitman is present, naturally she rushes to her father in alarm. He is grateful to see her one last time, and they have a deeply emotional reunion. But he is the first to say that he does not have enough time. He must tell what he has done—and what Vogel hopes to do.

Whitman's story depends on whether Vogel successfully abducted Alice in Glasgow.

If Vogel had Alice as his prisoner when he finally found Dr. Whitman, the Prussian used that fact to coerce Whitman's cooperation. Vogel told Alice to tell her father that his presentation received only mockery in Glasgow. She did, but said there was no way to know what sponsorship it may have received, because the bombings interrupted everything. Vogel brushed that aside. He said he was there, and he offered immediate assistance and the promise of funding and state-of-the-art scientific equipment. Whitman acquiesced, because he had little choice, but he resented the coercion.

If Vogel did not have Alice with him, he told Whitman that the British made a mockery of his daughter's presentation. He said Alice remained in Glasgow to speak on her father's behalf, though it was clearly futile. But Vogel saw the great value in Whitman's work that the British would not. He came to sponsor him on behalf of the German Empire. Whitman acquiesced, but was unhappy to be working under foreign sponsorship and at first hoped to rectify that.

Whether Whitman's partnership with Vogel was willing or not, he soon learned that Vogel had dire plans for his work.

## Whitman's Discovery

With shining eyes, Whitman says that he discovered nothing less than a gateway built by the Ancients using unfathomable science. A man could step through a gateway on Earth and emerge from a gateway on Mars, as easily as stepping from one room to another.



Whitman called it the Crystal Bridge, for the crystals that seem to be at the heart of the ancient science.

The first breakthrough came at Jebel Barkal. He found a few ancient metal plates engraved with dots, lines, and alien symbols. They did not seem to originate in Egypt, although he soon identified some of the dots and lines as a location map of the pyramids of Meroë and of Jebel Barkal. Coincidentally, he also discovered that they matched some Martian structures.

Only at the Meroë site did he fully comprehend the genius of the Ancients. The maps did not merely give the locations of faraway sites, they indicated the keys to use with the Crystal Bridge to reach those locations. The maps and the Crystal Bridge opened pathways he once thought impossible. This discovery would revolutionize the sciences.

Vogel saw a different kind of revolution: *"The Crystal Bridge would overturn national orders more completely than space travel ever could. Control of the Crystal Bridge would ensure Germany's dominance of the world, and Prussia's dominance of Germany, and the military upper classes' dominance of Prussia."* No longer would common laborers have recourse to demand favors and money from their betters—not when their labor is not required to move between worlds! When Vogel thought of the Crystal Bridge, he saw German regiments marching triumphantly across the solar system and then the universe. He became, Whitman hardly needs to add, quite insane.

Whitman realized all this too late. He had been working closely with Vogel to decipher the symbols and the workings of the bridge, lost in his passion for discovery. Only at the end, when they realized they had all that they needed, did Whitman see the enormity

of his crime. Claiming he intended to test the bridge, he set the dials in a way that he thought would not transport their bodies but only fix them in place, holding them in stasis. Just as he activated the final key, Vogel saw Whitman's intent and shot him. The stasis activated—but Whitman understood the machinery too poorly, and it extended only far enough to envelop him.

Presumably Vogel used the bridge as it was intended. If so, then he is no longer in the Sudan.

Whitman can tell the characters how to set the bridge for the journey that Vogel took. He had determined it using the ancient maps and a magnetometer, corresponding astronomical, magnetic data with a site not in the Sudan, not even on Earth—but on Mars!

If none of the player characters can save him, Whitman soon perishes from blood loss (Health -3 and *dying*), having held on with tremendous fortitude to tell the characters his last secrets and allow them to put a halt to Vogel's dream.

If the characters do not awaken and interview Whitman, they might learn these facts from journal entries that they can find in the ruins, perhaps in a spot where he covered them with a stone bearing the symbol of Amun-Ra.

## The Bridge

If Whitman is right, Vogel and his men are now on Mars, perhaps at a site of even greater power than this one. Thanks to Whitman, the characters have everything they need to follow the villainous Prussian. Do they dare take the Crystal Bridge?

# Chapter 5: The Crystal Bridge

*Wherein our heroes confront ancient secrets and a long-sought nemesis*

If the characters follow Whitman's instructions in setting the dials and wheels of the Crystal Bridge, there's a low, urgent hum of power and the arch suddenly fills with pale, blue-gray light. It gives off a smell of ozone and a tingle of energy that makes hair stand on end. Every instinct says to back away from it. Camels and other beasts retreat from it, noisily complaining. Reaching out to touch the energy in the arch, there's an unshakeable aversion like you're reaching for something deadly.

A character who touches the light instantly feels an overwhelming surge not unlike electricity—and vanishes. The character stumbles blinking onto a new world.

## A New World

The first character through sees a large chamber of black stone with a ceiling that curves overhead. The character stands on a raised floor of the same black stone. An oval arch behind the character is filled with the same light and frightful energy; touching it leads back to the Pyramids of Meroë. Black crystal dodecahedrons gleam in the metal of the arch.

Steps lead down to a lower floor beneath. A curving wall stands a short distance away, with an opening that reveals a corridor. Every curving surface is carved with unrecognizable hieroglyphs, worn

mostly away by the passage of incalculably long years. Within the surfaces, greenish crystals and crystalline lines glow faintly.

Flanking the corridor stand two surprised-looking guards in the ragged remains of Prussian uniforms—Vogel's men. They gape for a moment and call out foolish questions ("Who are you? What are you doing here?") before one thinks to aim his rifle and instruct the intruder to surrender. The other guard runs away down the corridor to warn others.

The guard should prove easy to overpower. He is below the characters, so they can get out of his line of fire by simply dropping to the floor and crawling. The greatest danger will be to newcomers, who stand blinking helplessly in the arch for one combat round after arrival. If the guard lives long enough to see his precarious position, he too retreats down the corridor for reinforcements.

## Memories of Light

The corridor opens after a short distance into a wider, open chamber, three hundred feet across. Along the walls at intervals of a few feet are set large green crystals, one line near the floor, another near the ceiling, and another in between. At the far side of the chamber another corridor leads away. Faint daylight can be seen there. From that far corridor the characters can hear faint



shouts—they sound German but no words can be made out—and occasional, desultory rifle shots.

As they approach the wide chamber, shapes of greenish light suddenly swirl with a smell of ozone and a hiss of energy. The characters hear the voice of Hans Vogel booming from the walls.

*"Please wait, my friends,"* Vogel calls, as the shapes of light congeal into vaguely human forms.

*"It required the deaths of a few brave soldiers, but now I am the master of this facility and its wonders,"* Vogel says. The shapes seem to take a flickering step toward the characters. *"Surely you would like to learn its secrets without risking it harm?"*

A tough *Empathy* roll senses a hint of uncertainty in Vogel's voice. How much of this place has he truly mastered?

If the characters pause to speak to Vogel—he can hear them through the crystals, which also convey his voice and the shapes of light—he is delighted. The projected light takes new shapes. They are hard to recognize, as the crystals have had many long millennia to come out of focus, but they seem to depict a lush landscape with long canals in the distance. Human or human-shaped supplicants kneel. Other, taller shapes place hands on the first of their supplicants. More of the tall shapes stand near a glowing gate that stands among them. They beckon to their cousins and step inside, vanishing.

Vogel says, *"Do you see our history? Doctor Whitman was quite correct. The builders of this place were mighty! They were as gods to the primitive creatures that we now call the peoples of Mars. They were as gods to the cavemen of Earth. But now they are gone. And now their miracles are mine to command. Surrender yourselves to my service and share in their power!"*

The vague light show fades and then begins again. In the distance more gunshots fire. If the characters give him the chance, Vogel says, *"Have you not guessed that you no longer stand on Earth? The Crystal Bridge has brought you to Mars! Outside are savages who worship this place without understanding it. My men hold them at bay. Soon I will turn the power of this facility outward. Then they shall know who commands their worship. Surrender yourselves to my service and share in my power!"*

If the characters venture into the chamber, Vogel utters a surprised curse in German. After a combat round, the light show vanishes and the crystals and crystalline latticework grow dim. After another combat round indistinct forms of light and power seem to step out of the walls and rush at the characters.

Vogel screams, *"Did I not say that these miracles are mine to command?"* He resumes as much of his monologue as he can while the characters struggle.

The guardian-forms have roughly human size and shape. One rushes at each character. They have no trouble keeping pace with the characters and attack every round, whether they move or not.

The guardian-forms are semi-solid and can be dispersed with damage. Each guardian-form has 10 Health, no active defense, and 5 passive defense. It takes half damage from bullets and stabbing weapons and double damage from explosions. At the beginning of each round, a damaged guardian-form "heals" 3 Health as the crystal projectors reconstitute it.

Each round, a guardian-form attacks with a dice pool equal to its Health, lashing out with scorching plasma for Lethal damage. An attack that does 4 or more damage dazzles the target, who then suffers a penalty as if in dim light for a round. A dazzled character who is dazzled again becomes blind for a round, then remains dazzled for a round.

Within 50 feet of the far corridor, a guardian-form grows less distinct. Its maximum Health drops to 9 at 45 feet from the corridor, and by another point for every five feet nearer. A character who enters the corridor is safe from the guardian-forms.

The wall-crystals nearest each guardian-form glow more brightly than the rest. A character can attempt to shoot a wall-crystal by making a *Firearms* attack. A crystal has a Size of -8, a Defense of 10 and a Structure rating of 2. Destroying one leads Vogel to scream in fury and shout orders in German for his men to enter the chamber of light and destroy the intruders. The guardian-forms all vanish as he shuts them off.

## The Perimeter

The corridor from the Chamber of Light leads to a chamber where daylight spills in from outside. This was the entry-chamber of the temple. A black metal door blocked the corridor for untold years; it has opened since Vogel activated the Crystal Bridge.

Low walls and high pillars stand between the entry-chamber and the red desert beyond. A bridge of black stone extends over a fissure, a walkway for those who need one. From the outside, the entry-chamber with its bridge looks like a small black gap in a larger mesa of the Astusapes Highlands. The cliff rises overhead a quarter of a mile.

Vogel's guards made their camp here. Vogel will not risk letting them camp in the Chamber of Light or by the Crystal Bridge itself. At the low walls, about a third of them are keeping watch at any given time. Another third sleep. The rest stand guard inside the facility, clean the camp, mend clothing, repair equipment, and cook the next meal. Butchered and salted camel haunches hang from ropes between pillars.

A shallow slope curves into one wall and away to an upper chamber. Only Vogel and his guards go there.

With the characters intruding from inside, the guards who were asleep are up and standing ready. Those who were doing camp-work have taken up arms to confront the characters in the corridor that leads to the Chamber of Light.

The characters can see the reason for the guards if they manage to wait and watch. Once or twice an hour, a large winged shape flits by outside: a High Martian warrior braving the guards and daring them to waste their ammunition. The sergeant commanding Vogel's men tries to keep them from firing so wastefully, but half the time they can't resist. They bring down a flyer about once every other day at the cost of a hundred rounds of ammunition.

## The Martians

A minor tribe of the Winged Horde kept a perpetual camp on a mountainside within sight of the temple-mountain, regarding it as a deadly place sacred to the Worm God. When Vogel's men suddenly appeared inside, the outraged Martians immediately attacked. Half of them were quickly cut down and the rest retreated. Some of those flew off to warn their people while the rest kept their distance and watched.

The Prussians sent a few patrols but they did little good. The Martians know every inch of the region and can hide or launch ambushes with impunity.

Martian reinforcements came after two days, a hundred warriors from the campers' tribe with three small war kites. They now have camps above the temple, safe from rifle fire unless the soldiers make a difficult climb. Word spread to the Winged Horde that the hated British—many High Martians have a hard time telling one Earthling from another—had staged another surprise attack. Some more High Martians are already on the way.



## The Control Room

A sweeping slope from the entryway leads up to a chamber that was closed off by a black metal door until Vogel's arrival. The door opened easily in the hours after the Crystal Bridge's activation; if enough time passes perhaps it will lock again.

The ceiling curves low overhead. Every shining, black stone wall is riddled with green and black crystals and crystalline paths, dials and wheels and levers, magnetic stones that can be arranged like stars in constellations, and countless hieroglyphs recognizable only where some might have been seen in the control panel among the Pyramids of Meroë. That control panel was a faint echo of this one. Its complexity implies staggering potential.

Hans Vogel has made this room his home. He loses hours at a time, comparing the copies of the ancient maps Whitman discovered and readings on Whitman's magnetometer with the bewildering controls. Guards in shifts of three keep watch, bring food, clean up, and run errands.

Some of Vogel's experiments have had utterly no effect. Some have caused alarming surges of power and sound that he scrambled to undo. Some have yielded useful tricks, like the ability to activate the recording and the guardian-forms in the Chamber of Light.

If the characters seem likely to overcome his soldiers in the perimeter room, Vogel's guards set up a desperate last defense on the slope while he attempts a last trick. Having seen Whitman create a stasis field on Earth, Vogel believes he can activate one of far greater scale around this facility. He means to freeze everyone not in the control room itself, perhaps even the Martians camped atop the mesa overhead. He has not made the attempt before because he was still testing the machinery. Some part of his mind knows the enormous risk. But desperation lends him a deadly sense of certainty.

The quicker the characters rush toward the control room, the more shortcuts he takes. As they come up the slope and his guards fall, he pulls the final lever to activate the full power of the Crystal Bridge. There is no going back.

Vogel looks around, gloating, expecting the intruders to freeze in place on his doorstep. Instead he and they and the Martians a mile away feel only a spine-tingling surge of power that seems to come from all around. An alarming hum of building energies resonates in the black walls.

Vogel soon realizes his mistake. He throws his hands up and begs the characters to wait. He says an alliance with him and his surviving men is the only way to escape the temple and the Martians. If the characters refuse, he falls on his knees and begs, throwing away every bit of the pride that has driven him. But it takes only an easy *Empathy* roll to see the betrayal and murder that he has in mind as soon as he sees a chance.

## Catastrophe

Green crystals in the black walls glow brighter and brighter and then shatter. Black dodecahedron crystals slowly start to glow red and then white. The walls shudder. The characters' feel a physical

urge to flee in their very nerves. Noses begin to bleed. After five minutes, each person in the temple takes a point of nonlethal damage. After another five minutes, each person in the temple takes a point of lethal damage. They feel the agony in their very brains.

If the characters look outside, they see the Martians have fled. Not a single Martian is in sight. The characters can cross the bridge and flee across the nearest mesa, if they wish; a path leads down to caves in its side where High Martians recently camped.

About twenty minutes after Vogel made his mistake, the temple implodes. There is a sound like a crack of thunder and a flash of brilliant light that seems to penetrate even the rock of the mesa; then the long, terrible rumbling and roar as the mesa where the temple was built collapses into the egg-shaped cavity it leaves behind.

If the characters ever make their way back to the gateway that stood beneath the Pyramids of Meroë, they find it nothing but dumb stone. Its power depended on the Crystal Bridge of Mars.

## Preventing Catastrophe

What if against all odds the characters stop Vogel from destroying the Crystal Bridge? When the army of High Martians arrives they will attack the temple and either slay or enslave everyone inside. Before that happens, perhaps the characters can join forces with Vogel's men and fight their way past the smaller force or even seize a war kite. Or perhaps the characters leave Vogel to his own devices and retreat back across the Crystal Bridge to the Sudan. If they leave the Crystal Bridge in Vogel's hands, eventually he makes a mistake that destroys it. If they leave it in the hands of the High Martians, they make a mistake that destroys it even more quickly. If the characters are somehow quick and clever enough to save the Crystal Bridge, it may allow them to reshape the balance of power in the Solar System. We leave those remarkable developments to you.

## Into the Badlands

Assuming the characters flee the Crystal Bridge and it destroys itself behind them, what next? Will they make alliance with any surviving Prussians? The soldiers see reason more easily with Vogel dead and proven so disastrously mad, and could prove helpful in escaping. The High Martians fled, but after a day or so they return to see what happened and to search for survivors. Do the characters find ways to hide among the mesas that the High Martians know so well? Do they make a fighting retreat from the poorly-armed but numerous High Martians? There is vicious infighting among the High Martian tribes. Perhaps the characters can make a treacherous alliance with one chief so he can use their pursuit to trap or humiliate a rival.

The Crystal Bridge lay in the Astusapes Highlands, north of the city of Parhoon. What do the characters eventually report to Lord Bury, or to their friend Tesla, or to Thomas Edison if they took him as a patron?

We leave these questions to you. The characters' adventure on Mars has just begun!

1889



Everything Jules Verne could have written.  
Everything H. G. Wells should have written.  
Everything Arthur Conan Doyle thought of  
but never published – because it was too fantastic.

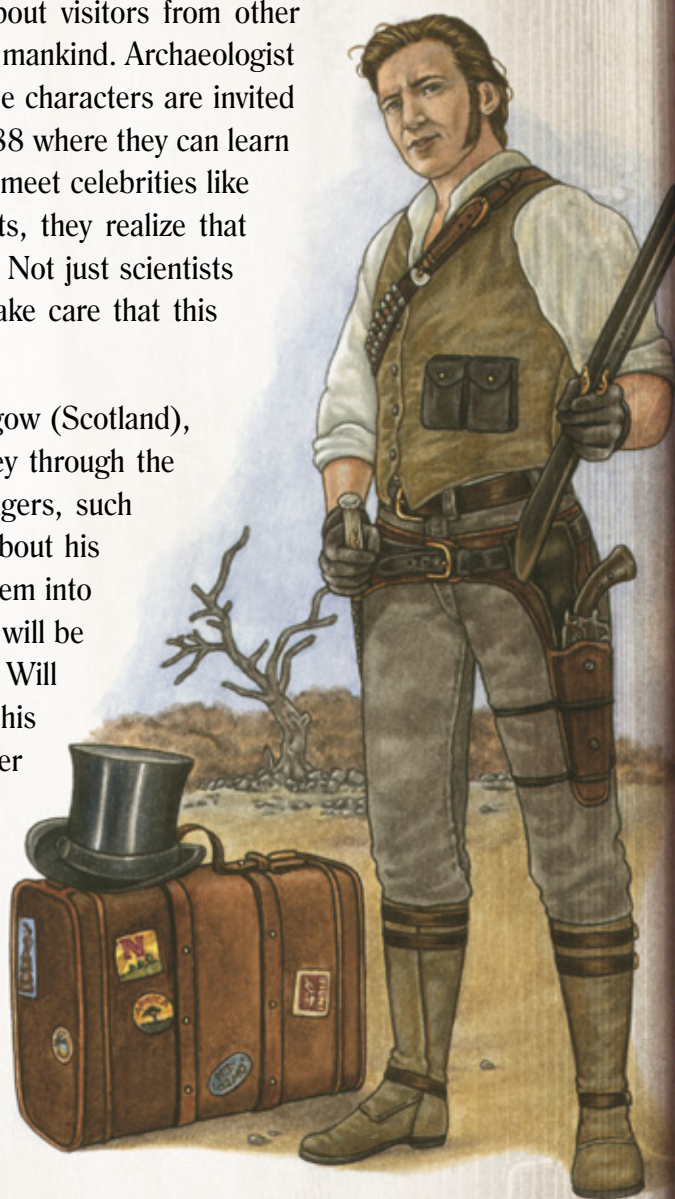
# SPACE 1889

## On the Trail of the Gods

Since the inventors Edison and Armstrong set out on their first journey to Mars in 1870, there has been speculation about visitors from other worlds to Earth as early as the prehistoric times of mankind. Archaeologist Alastair Whitman believes he has found proof. The characters are invited to join the Glasgow International Exhibition in 1888 where they can learn about the latest technological inventions and even meet celebrities like Nicola Tesla. When the exhibition receives threats, they realize that Whitman's discovery might be an explosive issue: Not just scientists are interested in it, and the characters have to take care that this knowledge does not fall into the wrong hands.

This adventure is set on Earth, especially in Glasgow (Scotland), Egypt, and the Sudan. The characters will journey through the Sudan where they will have to beware many dangers, such as the followers of the Mahdi, who are fighting about his succession. A long journey up the Nile will take them into currently unstable territories where the characters will be on their own. Will they choose the right company? Will they achieve the rescue of Whitman and escape his persecutors? The characters will learn the answer  
*On the Trail of the Gods.*

The adventurers can be of any nationality, even if the starting point of this journey is set in Scotland. The events in this adventure challenge various archetypes, especially Academics, Discoverers, Reporters, Scientists, and Soldiers, but other adventurous characters will be just as useful.



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