

SPACE
TRADE MARK

1889

**MORE
TALES FROM THE**

ETHER™

Loren K. Wiseman



Canal Pirates...
Swamp Terrors...

GDW

Lost Desert Tribes...
On 19th Century Mars.

Science-Fiction Role Playing in a More Civilized Time.

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MORE
TALES FROM THE
ETHER





CREDITS

"Caught in the Mire": Timothy B. Brown

"The Lurker in the Moor": Lester W. Smith

"Madness in the Moab": Tim Ryan

"The Mystery of Fort Dickerson": Elaine L. Pardoe

Developer: Loren K. Wiseman

Art Direction: Shea Ryan

Interior Art: Tim Bradstreet, Steve Bryant, Rick Harris

James Holloway, Rick Lowry

Text Manager: Michelle Sturgeon

Text Processing: Julia Martin, Julie Amdor, David Stephens



MORE TALES FROM THE ETHER

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Caught in the Mire

IN THIS ADVENTURE, most characters will already be in the service of H. M. government, far from the center of British colonialism on Mars. Those characters without backgrounds in government service may pick their own reasons for being involved with the Mercantile Lords of Thalia at a time when the lords are desperately seeking peace

with their neighboring canal city, Afirenz. For instance, a reporter might easily sell his story about an exotic Martian conflict to eager papers and readers back on Earth. Adventurers of many sorts can be found in the service of potentates all across the red planet—perhaps this is why the characters are present. In any case, one character should be the

representative of the British colonial office, helping to mediate a peace between these two warring cities.

BACKGROUND

THE ANCIENT TRADE routes through equatorial Mars are literally carved in stone, hewn out by fantastic powers that today can only be described as magical. The canals served not only to bring water to the thirsty lands and inhabitants of Mars, but also to tie them together in trade. For many cities, the coin and barge have proven mightier than the sword and bow.

Tradition holds that Thalia has been besieged and embattled dozens of times since the time of Seldon, hosting a large number of warlords,

Althar of Thalia (Veteran NPC)

RENOWNED AS the greatest warrior in the city, Althar has risen alongside Lord Braltar as his "right-hand man." The two have enjoyed a close personal friendship since before the assassination of Lord Shesh, as each commanded merchant vessels along the canals. In this time of war, Althar has proven himself a capable warrior and general, using the city's pathetic rabble army to hold off the enemy and even harry the walls of Afirenz.

Althar has been entrusted by the lord with the peace mission to Afirenz. He is the only warrior the lord trusts to carry out this mission, and to carry out the secret mission of locating and destroying the pirates' swampy lair.

Althar is a private Martian who rarely lets his true feelings be seen



in public. He spends a great deal of time with his troops—inspecting their weapons, trading for better ones, and planning strategies with his officers. However, he is enough of a trader that he will certainly find his place again once generals are no longer needed in Thalia.

Motives: Ambitious, Eccentric.

Appearance: Althar is a tall, proud Martian with deep, penetrating eyes and stern, unwavering features. The warrior presents a very Lancelotian image, which makes people forever wonder where the chink is in his armor.

Attributes Skills

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

kings, and barbarian hordes in its troubled history. But none have been more successful than the 300-year-old reign of the Mercantile Lords. The lords are a hereditary line of rulers who have tempered their military adventures in favor of wide-ranging trade along the ever-present canals. Though in actuality the line has been broken several times by mysterious death or outright assassination, the learned among the populace realize that becoming a lord is more a function of ability and ruthlessness than of direct lineage.

The present lord is the first son of Lord Shesh. However, during Lord Shesh's 17-year reign, Thalia managed to keep its trade lines open and profitable, even in the face of increasing piratical activities on the

nearby canals. When Lord Shesh was discovered to have been poisoned in his sleep chamber, an investigation turned up evidence linking the crime to the ruling family of Afirenz. Public sentiment immediately pushed the new lord, Lord Braltar, into a war with Afirenz, a war neither city was prepared for.

Even though new evidence in the murder of Lord Shesh points in virtually every direction but Afirenz, the war has dragged on for three long years. Conflict has been characterized by meager offensives on either side of the large swamp area between the two cities. Neither army is willing to enter the swamps, certain they would be no match for the Hill Martian pirates hiding there. By treaty, the canal has been de-

clared neutral territory, but the ever-present pirates have still virtually stamped out travel between the two warring cities.

At the request of Lord Braltar, the British colonial office has agreed to mediate a peace between the two reluctant combatants and has sent a representative to bring the two together. In a gesture of goodwill, the lord will send his ceremonial barge (heavily guarded against pirates, of course) down the canal as a gift to the ruling family in Afirenz. Once it has arrived, Afirenz will send a galley with three daughters of the family as brides to the lord and his high-ranking officers. The colonial office then hopes to arrange for the two cities to cooperate in an eridication campaign against the pirates.

Orthir, Captain of the Ceremonial Barge (Veteran NPC)

THE BARGE very rarely leaves Thalia for other canal cities, so its captain could easily take up permanent residence on dry land. But Orthir will have none of that; he keeps his quarters on the barge as his permanent abode. He will exclaim that he has had a canal beneath his feet for most of his long life and cannot keep his footing otherwise.

Jovial and outgoing, Orthir also has a serious side—he is patriotic to his lord and the traditions of that office. The barge is an important symbol of the long line of merchant rulers in Thalia. It was once used to ferry the lords in search of new markets and to maintain friendships with other rulers. Secretly, Orthir aspires to the days when Thalian trading galleys plied canals in virtually every corner of Mars.



Orthir runs a tight ship and has been busy preparing for what could be the barge's most dangerous mission in years. He believes in the notion that only the ceremonial guard may ride on the barge—a fighting force more decorative than effective. Even Althar has argued this point with the aged captain, but he has held fast to his interpretation of tradition and honor.

<i>Att.</i>	<i>Skills</i>
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 2, Close Combat 4 (edged weapon)
Agil: 4	Stealth 3, Marksmanship 2 (bow)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mapping)
Int: 3	Observation 3, Gunnery 2 (muzzle-loading cannon)
Chr: 2	Eloquence 1
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (gashant)

Motives: Loyalty, Responsibility.

Appearance: Orthir is an elderly Canal Martian who prefers to be seen in public only in his dress uniform. The court tailors have had to let it out a few times over the years, as the captain has put on considerable weight.

REFEREE'S SYNOPSIS

ALTHAR IS A hero to the people of Thalia; as a warrior and a merchant captain, he has won the hearts and minds of Thalia's people. His closeness to the lord has permitted him to act outside normal procedure at times, with authority second only to his master. What the people do not realize is that Althar and the lord are actually hoping for an ambush so they can locate the base camp of the swamp pirates.

The human characters, for whatever reason, will accompany Althar and the barge on the journey along the canal to Afirenz. Its course runs through the heart of the pirate-infested swamp, as everyone knows, so escorting soldiers and boats will be plentiful. Althar has overseen the outfitting and deployment of the expedition.

When the barge is attacked, Althar is to make the best stand possible, and then escape the ambush with as many men and boats as he can. With these he is supposed to track the victorious pirates, find their camp, and await reinforcements.

The human characters will be captured by the pirates, but they will be turned loose since they are of no ransom value. In the swamp, hungry and exhausted, they will find Althar and his troops, and warn them that the pirates plan to move before reinforcements arrive. The war against the swamp pirates will have to be waged now, with the few materials and men at hand.

The Barge

THE CEREMONIAL barge has seldom been used in the last 10 years; but, under the direction of Orthir, it

has been kept in good condition. Offered now as a gift to help end a war, Orthir was, at first, somewhat torn between his wish to obey his lord and his love for his craft. Seeing his loyal servant so divided on the issue, Lord Braltar stepped in and personally ordered Orthir to remain captain of the vessel under its new owners. Orthir is now consumed with joy, since he can remain with his barge and still follow the orders of his lord to the letter.

The ceremonial barge is an enormous craft of wood, reeds, stone, and gold leaf. The craft was originally built to be a diplomatic vessel and to impress future trading partners—a task which it serves magnificently. The forward and flanking battlements ride high off the water, and the central tower rises higher still, fully 30 feet above the waterline. It has masts for sails, but travel by oar is considered more stately—the single rowing deck requires 100 strong backs to make headway against the current.

The barge has several elaborate features. The royal suites are reserved for the lord and his retinue, or his appointed representative on a particular journey. This suite is comprised of a dozen rooms, including bedrooms and reception rooms, plus a swimming pool and kitchens—stocked with the finest delicacies. The three other suites are reserved for guests, and although they are somewhat smaller, they provide luxurious accommodations for their fortunate occupants. The remainder of the barge is devoted to the operations of the ship, from crew quarters to a rowing deck and steerage room. The barge is ornately decorated with gold and jewels—treasures from

across Mars—for the enjoyment of its privileged passengers.

The Treasures Of the Barge

THOUGH OF NO particular religious significance, the ceremonial barge is central to the theme of mercantile canal trading and the lineage of the great lords. As such, it has become the repository of much of the wealth and glory of Thalia, the pride of its aristocracy, and a worthy gift to stop a long and troublesome war.

The suites are elaborately decorated with such fineries as marble statuary, washbasins, and pillars, and all the furnishings are emblazoned with gold, silver, and gems of all shapes and sizes. There are rogo wood tables crafted by the finest artisans of distant Yaonis, scented hangings from the witch people of the Duo Badlands, and even silk rugs and robes from China—gifts from British traders who have travelled between the worlds.

A small fortune is locked up in the barge—it's not enough to bankrupt Thalia once it is given away, but certainly enough to tempt thieves and pirates. Many Martians have lost their lives at the hands of the guards, their blood still not completely bleached out of the sandstone battlements.

Mission of Peace

THE FIRST THREE days out from Thalia have been virtually without incident. The grand barge was ceremoniously launched on its treacherous journey by the lord, who was officiating at a festival in honor of the event. Now it is majestically cruising through the swampland along the canal, as if challenging the

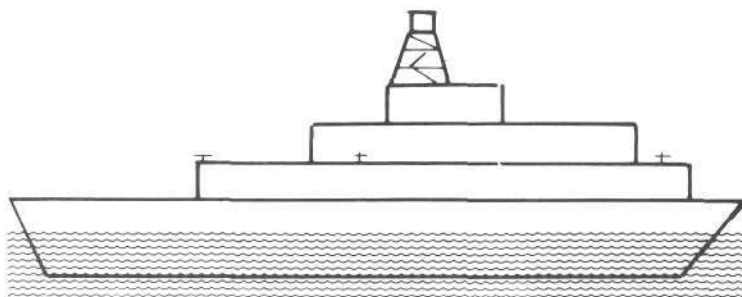
elements to impede its progress.

Althar has positioned boats in front of the barge and to its rear to protect against the dangerous Hill Martian pirates known to infest the swamps. From the cover of the dense foliage they can strike with their sleek, fast boats to seize any prize that ventures through their domain. Althar is convinced that the pirates will not attempt to take such a well protected barge, but he is, nonetheless, proceeding with caution.

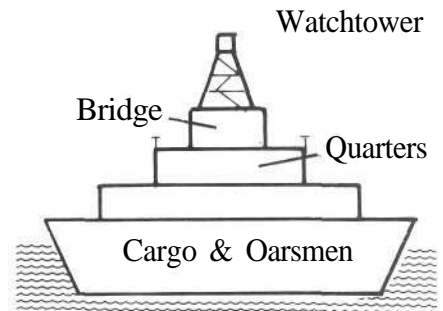
The humans will be placed on the barge. Those attached to the British colonial office will be afforded accommodations in the luxury suites. Others will, no doubt, be put up in the lower decks with the crew. Every day Orthir will be seen tending the ship, working the crew to prepare the ship for its new owners. Underlying all their activities, however, are the tension and fear associated with travelling through the swamp, knowing that watchful eyes are following the

barge, coveting its riches.

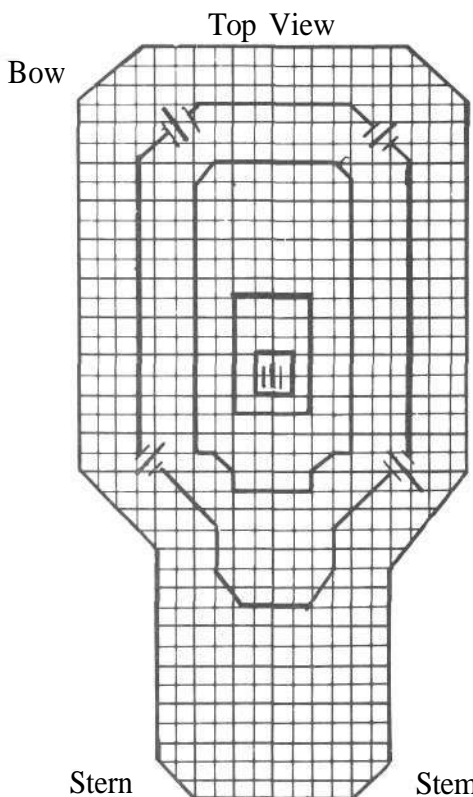
The humans' activities during these first three days will be limited. Aside from observing the passing marshlands and their beautiful wildlife, they might make friends with some of the crew, become acquainted with Althar or Orthir, or ask questions about the journey. They will certainly get a good idea of the layout of the barge, so they may claim to be familiar with the escape routes once the pirate attack begins.



Side View

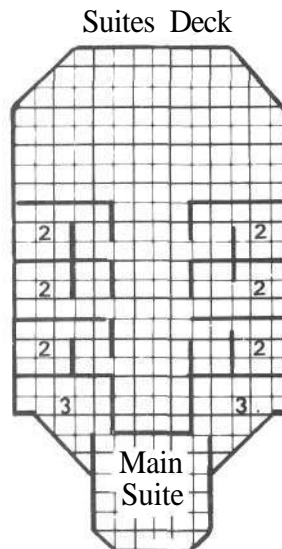


Cross-section



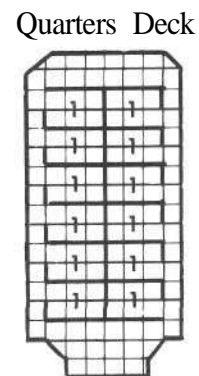
Top View

Bow

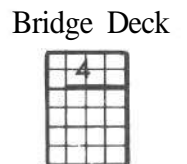


Suites Deck

Main Suite



Quarters Deck



Bridge Deck

Stern

Stern

THE BARGE

KEY

1. Guards Quarters
2. Secondary Passenger Suite
3. Servants for Main Suite
4. Captain's Quarters

— Sweeper Gun Position

Scale is 6' Tactical Squares.

PIRATES OF THE MARSHES

PRESENT THE OPENING scene of the pirate attack to the players on the morning of their fourth day of travel.

The dew of the chilly morning is still evident on the deck and battlements of the barge when you arise for your morning meal. The Sun is just breaking above the foliage level of the surrounding swamps, preparing to create another blistering equatorial day.

Suddenly, you notice a commotion

up ahead among the military boats—the advanced scouting boat is floating down the canal back toward the barge, and its two occupants are riddled with arrows! The barge soldiers call Althar to the deck, and he arrives just as the pirates unleash their deadly ambush.

Dozens of nets fall from the tall trees onto the boats close to either shore, while a flotilla of pirate vessels emerges from the brush. A rain of flaming arrows hails down upon the military boats from an unseen army of Hill Martians, their

barbarian howls terrifying many of the Canal Martian warriors. The pirate vessels, crewed by savages rowing hard against the canal, engage the forward boats, as a few detach to come toward the barge.

To the rear you turn to see a huge barbarian pirate hack through the last portions of a tree trunk, sending its enormous weight crashing down on the leading boats there, smashing them and cutting off the rest of the boats from the barge. Another swarm of arrows cuts through the air with a terrible hiss, cutting down many of the canal sailors before they can react. Suddenly Althar is nowhere to be seen, but the sergeant of the guard has begun directing efforts as the first of the savage pirates threaten to board the barge.

The battle for the barge is going to be won by the pirates—that much is certain. You should allow your characters to make a "final stand" on the suites deck with several of the Canal Martian guards (treat them as caravan guard stock NPCs). Run this final combat scene as you wish, but remember that two things will happen: Althar will be nowhere on the barge at this time, and the pirate leaders will not allow their soldiers to kill any humans. (You may wish to present a dramatic scene where, just as a pirate soldier is about to deliver a catastrophic blow against one of the characters, his pirate captain punches him square in the face before he can strike.)

In the end the characters will be rounded up with a few other prisoners, placed in a boat, and taken into the swamp under heavy guard. Only a few guards and soldiers from the barge flotilla are alive; they will be rounded up into five boats, all

WORTHLESS IN BARTER

PROVIDED the characters do not escape on their own, or if they are recaptured, they will be brought before Tark, the leader of this pirate band. Only the humans will be summoned to Tark's campfire; if Orthir is still with the characters, he will be separated from them by the pirate guards.

Tark is a striking figure, with his multicolored robes and his heavy jewelry, helping his favored pirates devour a ferocious-looking animal turning on a spit above the fire. The atmosphere is wildly exuberant as the pirates celebrate the grand victory they had earlier that day.

"Ah, the humans!" announces the great leader, and all eyes turn to the captives brought before him. "Curious little things, aren't they?" He looks around him for approval from his troops. "I should keep at least one as a pet, don't you think?" The rest of the pirates dutifully chuckle.

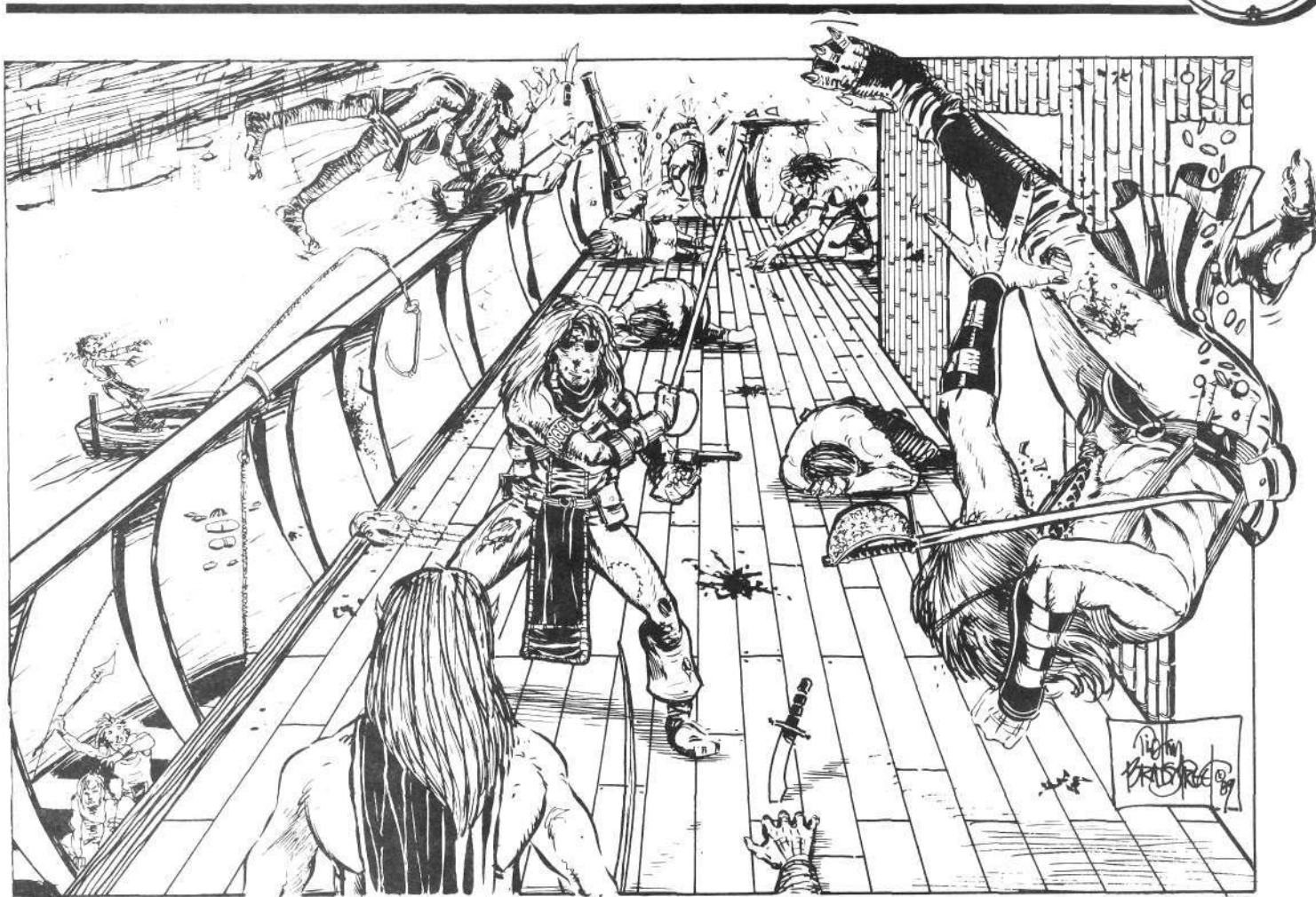
"But you see," he continues, rising and tossing his dagger about as

he talks, "I have no quarrel with humans, but," sticking the dagger at one human's throat and lowering his voice, "I have no great love for them, either."

"You present something of a problem and a solution, so hear me out. I will spare your lives, though you are worthless to me in barter. No one in Thalia would pay a cissawaan's bladder for you, but they might for some of these others. I am, therefore, going to set you loose, to travel through the swamps back to Thalia with news of our victory. At least a few of you might live through the experience."

He returns to his seat, turning finally to the humans. "Of course, if you value your lives, never set foot in my swamps again, humans. Away with them!"

At this the humans will be led to the edge of the encampment and set loose to face the swamps without food or weapons, and with perhaps 100 miles between them and Thalia.



under the watchful eyes of heavily armed Hill Martian pirates. The characters will realize that the Hill Martians often take prisoners who might be ransomed back to relatives or friends. Those who cannot be ransomed are often killed, and the likelihood of anyone in Thalia paying ransom for humans is slim.

As the day progresses, more pirate vessels from the ambush will catch up to the prisoner-laden boats—some carrying wounded Hill Martians and others carrying loot from the pillaged barge. Many will boast that they have taken all the riches from the barge and have set fire to its empty hulk. Orthir, one of the prisoners in the same boat with the characters, will have to be restrained at this news—his cries echoing ominously through the dark swamplands.

Escape

THE CHARACTERS WILL arrive at the pirate encampment by evening, and they will be taken to the prisoner pens immediately. Faced with the imminent possibility of execution, they will, no doubt, wish to escape and take their chances in the swamps.

The prisoner pens are located along the northern edge of the encampment, as shown on the map above. The camp is set on a very muddy and soft area of high ground, which is easily excavated, if necessary. The area is covered in dense trees and foliage, and many of the bushes are of the lo-duc variety—very tough and spiny, impenetrable without a machete. One thing is very evident: All the pirates are packing

things up and are not planning to stay here much longer.

Each of the five pens contains around a dozen prisoners from the barge ambush. The humans will be in one pen, along with Orthir and five other Martian guards (caravan guard stock NPCs, without weapons, of course). The pens are constructed of a bamboo-like reed, and the doors are tied shut with heavy rope.

The characters could attempt to dig their way out (with the help of some of the guards), or they might trick one of the pirates into opening the door. Also, they might organize a mass break, tearing apart the sturdy but manageable pens by sheer strength of numbers, but not without bloodshed—the guards can call upon assistance from the nearby encampment.

THE IMPENETRABLE SWAMP

FORCED OUT OF the pirate encampment at the end of a bayonet, the characters are faced with the most unpleasant prospect of survival in the steaming swamps. They have no food or weapons, and the only thing they can be certain of is that they won't freeze to death in the sweltering heat of the equatorial marshes.

Use the land travel rules from **Space: 1889** for foot travel. Remember that the characters will only be able to move 10 miles per day in the swamp, which is one hex on this small-scale map. The map covers the area from the pirate encampment to the main canal all the way back to

the city of Thalia. Several special areas have been noted and will be described later.

These swamps are particularly hot and steamy. Visibility in the daylight hours is minimal until midday, when much of the mist is burned away. Often in the morning the Sun is barely definable in the sky, so finding directions is nearly impossible.

When checking for encounters each day, rolls of 5 indicate the party is lost, as in **Space: 1889**. For this scenario, rolls of 3, 4, and 6 also indicate the party is lost. Ignore weather as a possible result. If the party is lost during the day, move the expedition one hex closer to the area labeled Althar on the map.

When rolling for specific encounters, substitute Swamp Pirates for Swamp Pirate Camp. There is only one camp, and unless the characters are in that hex, they won't encounter it. All pirate encounters will be pirates on patrol from Tark's main encampment.

Food: Characters who successfully kill animals they encounter may eat them. If an encountered animal is not killed, or if there is no encounter at all in a day, add 2 to the fatigue roll of everyone in the group.

As the referee, you can see that the characters will not be able to find their way through the swamp, nor will they locate enough food to keep themselves alive. Only when they run into Althar and his soldiers will they get nourishment and be able to continue.

Special Locations

SEVERAL special locations are marked on the map. Each one is described here.

Ambush Site: Very little is left of the barge. While it was once a thing of beauty and splendor, it is now a burnt hulk, half-sunk in shallows at the edge of the growth encroaching on the canal. Several smaller boats, in similar condition, can be found—the pirates were very thorough, cleaning everything from the battlefield that was useful to them. The characters may be able to scrounge a couple of swords and bows, but neither food nor muskets are left among the dead.

Woodcutter's Village: A community of Hill Martian woodcutters lives in the swamp near the canal. They are not associated with any particular city, keeping pretty much to themselves in the swamp. The com-



ONCE YOU FEEL the characters are sufficiently hungry, tired, and lost, and they are within the area marked Althar on the map, present this encounter to them.

Staggering lost through the marshes, splashing waist-deep through the stinking, filthy waters, you collapse from exhaustion against the tangled roots of a slimy black tree. Halfdelirious with hunger, you hang onto those wicked-looking roots for what could be minutes or hours—you just can't tell. Suddenly you see soldiers all around you—Canal Martian soldiers. You're convinced it's an illusion as you finally succumb to your fatigue and lose consciousness.

When you awaken you are on a makeshift cot in a tent and are being tended by a Martian soldier. You recognize him as one of the guards on the barge just as Althar comes through the door. Althar!

ALTHAR IN HIDING

"I thought you were killed!" you exclaim, still fighting for consciousness.

"I thought the same of you. How did you get here, human?"

Althar will go on to explain his actions, how he and Lord Braltar devised a plan to draw the pirates into an ambush so that Althar could follow them to their camp. He is now awaiting reinforcements from Thalia and hopes to strike in just a few days.

Here the characters should interrupt, interjecting their knowledge that the camp is about to be moved. Any attack against the pirate camp will have to be made soon, in one day at the latest!

Althar has a force of 25 soldiers armed with rifles. He also has enough rifles to arm the humans, but no more. The characters should point out that at least 50 Martian prisoners are back in the pens; if they could be freed and armed, they could triple Althar's numbers!



munity collectively barter its wood with canal boats that stop at a designated spot once every few weeks.

The community consists of 10 families with 20 men (hill brave stock NPCs, armed with axes). They have never seen a human before. The leader is a strong Martian named Grunth, who will be wary of the aliens but will also be sympathetic to anything starving in the swamp. He will gladly listen to what the humans have to say.

The woodcutters have had several skirmishes with the pirates. Pirates have taken a few of their women and

have burnt their village once, so there is no love lost between them.

Referee: If they can be acutely persuasive, the characters might be able to gain the woodcutters as allies against the pirates.

Hermit: A mud hut can be seen on a small hillock jutting slightly above the surface of the water. The characters notice the warm glow of a fire and the welcome smell of roasting meat coming from within the confines of the hut.

The characters have stumbled upon the abode of Wivin Scurch, a very old, extremely eccentric Canal Martian who gave up life in the city

40 years ago when his female left him for another Martian. Wivin has gone quite mad since then. Nonetheless, he still knows how to catch food and keep himself comfortable in the swamp.

Wivin has never seen a human and will act as if the characters are new members of the fantasy world he has created for himself. He will acknowledge the existence of the characters, but will slip in and out of his fantasy world—he is useless as a source of information. The characters will, at best, be able to gain a couple of days worth of food from poor Wivin's stores.

RETURN TO THE PIRATE CAMP

TARK IS JUST about to move his entire camp further back into the swamp, so everything is in a state of chaos. The treasures from the barge have been crated up for transport, and a herd of wild ruumet breehr has been captured to be used as pack

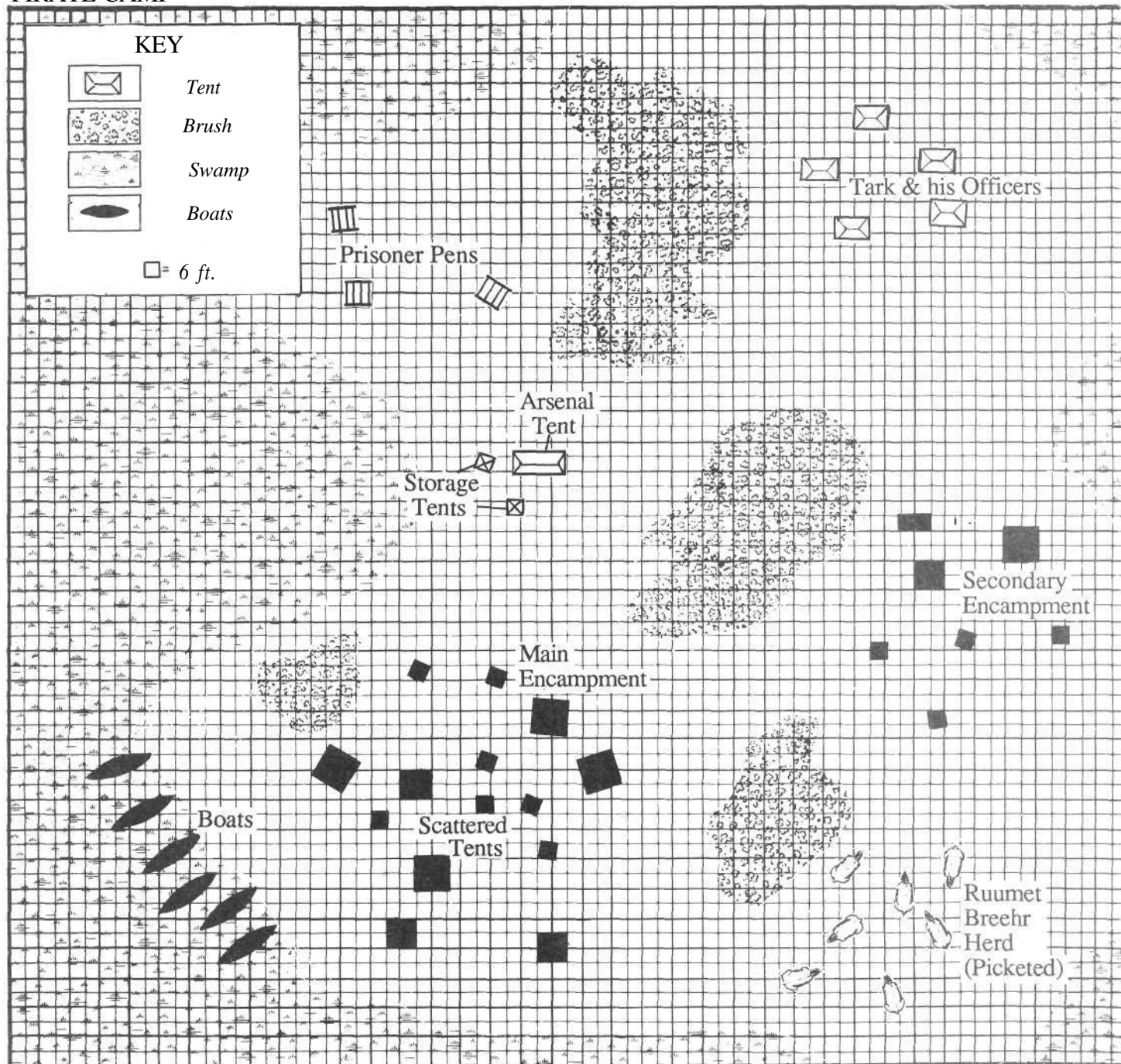
animals, since there aren't enough boats for the move. Such is the general state of the camp when the characters and Althar arrive.

Specific locations within the camp are described below, together with the total number of Hill Martian pirates in that area at the time of an assault. Tark's entire command consists of 150 pirates.

Prisoner Pens: The same prisoners are in these pens as when the characters left them. They are underfed and demoralized, but they will anxiously cooperate with any plan to free and arm them against the pirates. Fifty Martian soldiers are here, plus Orthir. There are also three pirate guards.

Armory Tent: This tent has been

PIRATE CAMP



emptied, but the weapons are crated up just outside it. Only 20 muskets with ammunition are here, but there are plenty of sabers and great swords for the taking. The tent is guarded by two pirates, and five more pirates are working in the immediate area.

Tark's Tents: Tark and his generals have constructed a perimeter with their tents, holding council in the center. Fifteen pirate guards surround these tents.

Main Encampment: The bulk of the swamp pirates reside here, either in tents or in shacks made of brush

and timber. Although the camp is not guarded, at least 60 of Tark's pirates will be here at the start of the attack.

Mess: What food is available is prepared here. Twenty pirates will be in the mess area.

The Herd: A great many pirates are now concerned with the handling of the newly acquired ruumet breehr. Twenty of these pirates will be located here.

Boat Dock: The boats are being loaded down with booty and supplies from the camp. Twenty-five pirates are presently at work here.

Attack By Night

SHOULD ALTHAR deem it wis-
er to attack by dark of night, the
number of pirates will be divided up
into the following groups in these
locations.

- Prisoner Pens: 3 guards.
- Arsenal Tent: 2 guards.
- Tark's Tents: 5 guards, 5 sleeping.
- Main Encampment: 5 guards, 114 sleeping.
- Mess: 2 guards.
- The Herd: 5 guards.
- Boat Dock: 10 guards.

Tark (Veteran NPC)

BORN OF HILL Martian parents on the Zephyrian Plain, Tark ventured forth at a very young age in search of glory. He served, for a time, as a mercenary, first in Aeolia and then in Sekoor, perfecting his mastery of the gashant and the great sword. As an adventurer he has travelled widely among the equatorial cities of Mars, making fortunes and losing them just as easily. He first teamed up with the swamp pirates while in desperate need of gainful employment. Since then he has moved efficiently to a position of leadership, so he figures he'll stick around, at least for a while.

His spies in Thalia alerted him to the barge expedition, and his greed would not let him pass up the opportunity. Quarrels among his pirate lieutenants broke out at the presentation of the ambush plan (many feeling the losses would be too heavy, no matter what the prize, and that such an ambush would bring serious retribution

from the cities). Tark has had to demote several key officers because they would not be silent, and now he is in good graces with his men only because the raid was a success.

Tark has no love of the swamp pirates and sees this as merely another in a continuing series of episodes in his adventurous life. Once a battle begins going poorly for the pirates, Tark will very quickly slip into the swamp and make good his escape.

Motives: Adventure, Greed.

Appearance: Tark's lean build belies his tremendous strength. He seldom wears more than his loincloth and breast jerkin, but occasionally he dons more "pirate-like" attire for the benefit of his men. A good por-



tion of the brown hair on Tark's back was permanently burnt away in some previous adventure. He is shrewd and exudes confidence and strength.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 3	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 3, Close Combat 4 (bashing weapon)
Agl: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 4 (bow)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 3 (foraging)
Int: 4	Observation 3
Chr: 3	Eloquence 2
Soc: 5	Riding (gashant 3, ruumet breehr 2)

SCENES OF BATTLE

BASED ON information from the human characters who have been inside the pirate camp, Althar sees no choice other than to initiate combat as quickly as possible. A reinforcing battalion of soldiers is en route from Thalia, but it is not expected for several days. Althar is convinced that he may not be able to destroy the pirates with the forces at hand, but he may shake them up and disperse them for the time being, bloodying their noses on their own turf.

Althar's plan is a simple one. Obviously, he will need to penetrate the

pirate camp in secret, avoiding the patrols and guards at its perimeter. The prisoner pens are the key, in his opinion. The Martians inside make a considerable fighting force, provided they can be freed and armed.

Althar proposes to send in a select force to secure whatever weapons the pirates can provide, and then secretly release the prisoners and distribute the arms. And additional raids are planned to disrupt the pirates' boats and their newfound herd of ruumet breehr. Maintaining secrecy for as long as possible is the key—once the pirates are alerted, the real fighting begins. Althar wants his men to be

in a commanding position before the pirates know *what* is going on!

Running the Battles

THE INITIAL SCENES of the battle are on a small enough scale to be role-played. Each of the four initial raids is covered here. Humans will most likely be involved in some of these raids, but the players may wish to play the Martian NPCs when no humans are present. In effect, allow the players to be Althar, deciding how many soldiers are present at each scene, and running all the characters as necessary. All four of the raids take place simultaneously.



Weapons Raid

THE TEAM must sneak into the camp through the brush to approach the weapons tent, the location of which can be pinpointed by the human characters. Many of the weapons available are already crated up. The guards are awake and alert, but otherwise will present no surprises. A total of 20 muskets and about 100 great swords and sabers are in and around the tent.



Prisoner Pen Raid

THE PCS approaching the prisoner pens will have an added complication—they will arrive as the guards are about to change, so three additional pirate guards will arrive to mess things up. The problem can be presented as follows.

The prisoners all appear to be asleep when you creep up to the pens. The three guards are in place, just as they were when you were held there several days ago. Quietly you sneak out from behind the brush, dagger in hand, ready to dispatch one of the unsuspecting guards, when from down the path

you hear, "Look out!" Three more pirates are on their way up the path, and the guard you were about to take out whirls and knocks you down with his musket. Cries for help stir the prisoners, and, no doubt, the sleeping pirates.

The prisoners will be able to enter the fray, especially if Althar's men hack through the ropes and bars of the pens. They are unarmed, but the sheer strength of numbers should bring the battle to a quick conclusion. It is certain that many of the pirates have been alerted after the ruckus at the pens.



Boat Raid

THE BOAT guards are all asleep and can easily be taken prisoner, provided the approach is made quietly enough. Once the area is secured, Althar wants as many of the boats destroyed as possible. A Martian with an ax will be able to destroy a boat in three turns. Those with torches can set a boat aflame in one turn.

After five turns, pirates from the main encampment will begin arriving through the entry area at the rate of one-half of a die's worth per turn. The battle will be among the most fierce, as the pirates struggle to escape and protect their livelihood.

RESOLUTION

YOU MAY JUDGE the outcome of the attack by the results of the four scenes described. For instance, if only one or two of them go well, the battle will probably go to the pirates. If three or four go well, the pirates will probably be disbursed into the swamp, likely without their boats or weapons.

You may use the map of the entire camp to play out the battle. Althar himself will lead his main

force. Tark will do the same, but will disappear into the swamp if things go badly for the pirates.

The humans will be congratulated for helping rid the swamp of pirates, and Thalia will, in turn, welcome more British contact.

In more concrete terms, each character will receive a gift of £50 value, with the leader and any heroic characters receiving more. This can take the form of a unique gem, piece of

jewelry, or other artifact presented with great ceremony by the lords of Thalia. The PCs now have valuable contacts in the region. Rewards from British officials will be less tangible, but no less valuable. The diplomatic service will be impressed with the PCs' performance and more inclined to trust the group with sensitive missions. Likewise, contacts with governmental departments will prove useful.

Ruumet Breehr Raid

THE RUUMET breehr are corralled near the main encampment, where many pirates lay sleeping at the late hour of the attack. The ruumet breehr are still half wild. Althar's Martians can easily disrupt the ruumet breehr, forcing them to stampede through the main encampment. In the confusion, the Martians may get into better position before the pirates realize an attack is on.



The Lurker in the Moor

MARS IS TYPICALLY thought of as an arid planet, locked in the throes of a slow death from want of moisture. But oddly enough, in a few locations on Mars, this image just does not hold true. One of those regions is the vast Mylomeroen Swamp that lies to the northeast of Syrtis Lapis, the British Crown Colony. In this adventure, your player characters will have the opportunity to brave the dangers of that vast moor as they pursue the fame and fortune to be gained in the capture of a rare blossom.

REFEREE'S SYNOPSIS

WHILE TRAVELLING somewhere near the northern reaches of Syrtis Lapis or the southern border of the Umbran League (whichever suits your campaign best), the player characters are attacked by a band of aerial pirates. After defeating their attackers, the PCs discover a young woman whom the pirates held as hostage, and an orchid-like flower of unusual beauty and fragrance. The plant is withering, but the girl convinces the PCs of its value and explains that she can lead them to the one spot where more of them can be found.

Following the young woman's guidance, the party members work their way deep into the Mylomeroen Swamp, encountering strange people

and stranger creatures along the way. Eventually, just after discovering the blossoms' location, their beautiful young guide is carried off by a large, ferocious beast—the dreaded knoe shoshu.

The PCs track the knoe shoshu to its lair, where they find their beautiful young guide surrounded by over a dozen more beasts. In a desperate gamble, they burst into the creatures' midst, grab the girl, and flee with her, pursued by the enraged creatures.

Finally, they evade their pursuers and return to more civilized climes, gaining renown for their gallantry, as well as wealth for the blossom's discovery.

A Fool's Ambush

IT IS EASIEST to referee this portion of the adventure if the player characters are travelling by some sort of aerial flyer. If the PCs do not own such a vessel, you may wish to give them some reason to purchase passage on one before this adventure begins. Also, the PCs will need some reason to be travelling near the Mylomeroen Swamp. They might be voyaging to or from the cities of the Umbran League, or they could be patrolling the northern borders of the Astusapes Highlands, for example. Whatever the reason, it should take them within a couple hundred miles

of the Mylomeroen Swamp. Once the group has reached this locale, the adventure proper can start. The referee can read the following narrative section to begin.

Your vessel is gliding smoothly through the chill upper air of Mars, far above the dry plains. Far to the south, the rocky Astusapes Mountains stretch across the horizon. But to the west, north, and east you see only parched flatland, broken occasionally by ranges of sere hills.

From your high vantage point, you can also view a network of canyons that lies just a few miles to the east of your position—mute testimony to the plentiful water that flowed through this region in ages past. The canyons cut through the rock of the planet's surface, laying bare the strata of red and brown stone beneath.

As you watch the canyons slip by beneath your vessel, the noonday Sun suddenly winks from a shiny surface low on the wall of a particularly large crevasse. From the looks of the flash, the object must be either glass or some untarnished metal, neither of which has any business lying in a canyon this far from civilization. Perhaps an aerial flyer has crashed recently, leaving survivors to be rescued or cargo to be salvaged! Or maybe the flash marks the dwelling of some hitherto undiscovered race of Martians!

Thoughts of treasure to be claimed and fame to be won fill your mind as your ship begins to descend.

What the players do not know is that the flash of reflected sunlight came from a large bronze mirror on an adjustable pedestal, just recently placed here by pirates to lure passing ships into an ambush. As the

PCs' vessel descends into the canyon to investigate, a pirate vessel ascends from its hiding place in a nearby crevasse. By the time the adventurers discover the mirror, the pirate vessel will be hanging in the air above them, preparing to fire.

Whether the referee uses the basic **Space: 1889** rules or those in **Sky Galleons of Mars**, this portion of the adventure will involve ship-to-ship combat. A map of the combat area is included on this page. The PCs' vessel begins the combat at point A—ground level. The pirate vessel begins at point B—low level—and gets one free turn to fire before the PCs can prepare their own weapons. From that point on, combat proceeds normally.

In setting up the scenario, the referee will have to decide on a vessel to use for the pirates (based upon the

capabilities of the PCs' ship). If you are using ships from the role-playing rules and the PCs have a *Bloodrunner* or *Small Bird*, give the pirates a *Small Bird*. If the PCs have a *Hullcutter* or *Aphid*, give the pirates a *Hullcutter*. If the PCs have a *Whisperdeath*, give the pirates one as well. If the PCs have something other than one of the vessels mentioned above, give the pirates a vessel that is roughly equivalent.

At the onset of this combat, the players should be sweating. Not only does their enemy have a ship that nearly matches theirs in fighting capability, he also has the drop on them, as represented by his higher altitude and his free turn of fire.

What the players should not know is that the pirates have a Green crew and are also a little inept in their handling of the ship. As referee, you

should roll your dice out of the players' sight, and if the players are having a bad time of it, have the pirates take an extra round to reload a weapon or two now and then. If necessary, you might even have to "fudge" a die roll once in a while if the rolls are going against the PCs. Remember, the PCs need to shoot the pirates down and search their ship in order to begin the next part of the adventure.


Note: If it seems that the PCs might decide to turn tail and run at the very beginning, you might wish to have the pirates get a "lucky" hit on their ship's lifters, forcing them to follow the course of the canyon they started in for a round or two. If you are careful to ensure that the pirates take some serious damage just afterward, thoughts of turning tail will likely flee the players' minds.


FOOL'S AMBUSH

KEY

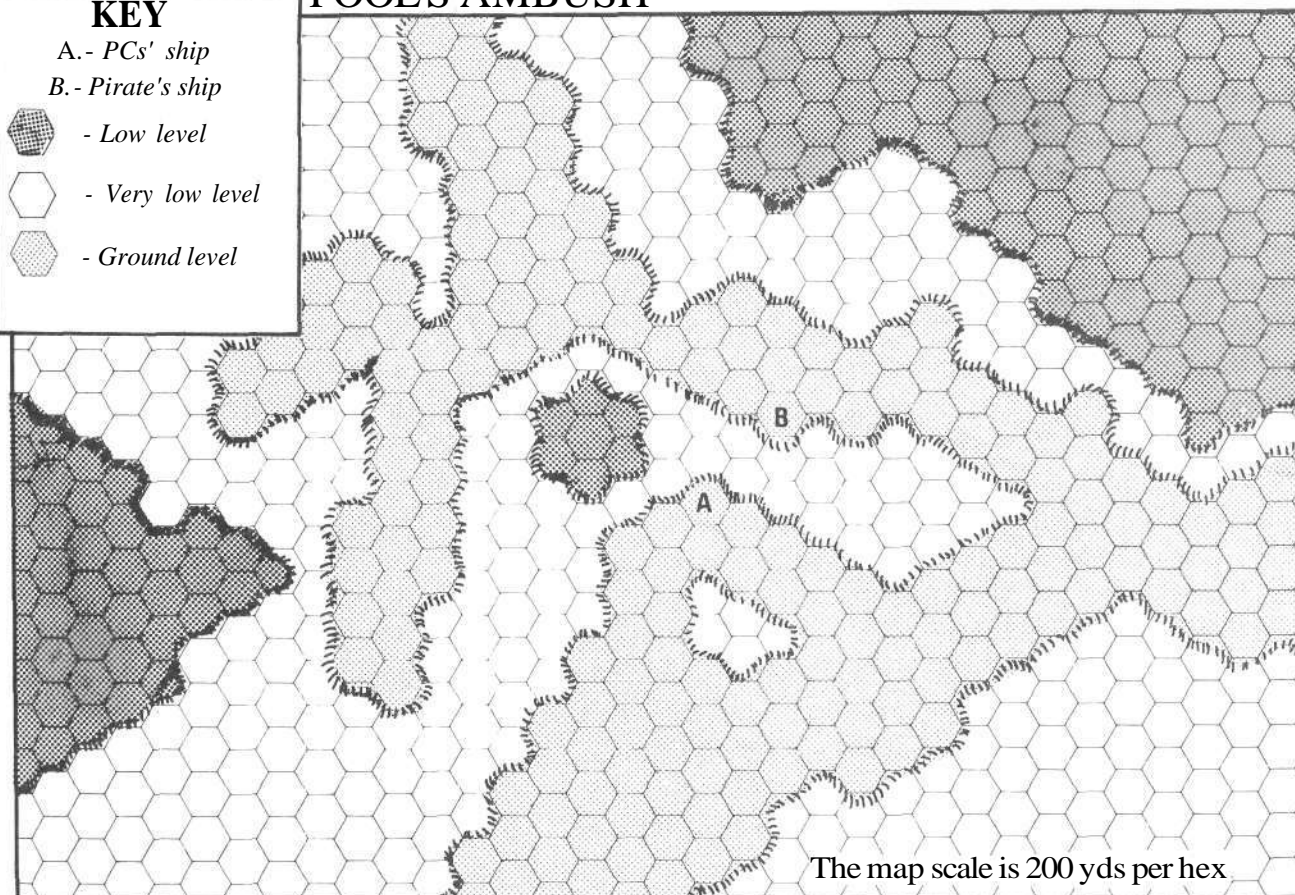
A.- PCs' ship

B.- Pirate's ship

 - Low level

 - Very low level

 - Ground level



The map scale is 200 yds per hex.

THE HOSTAGE

ONCE THE PCs have shot the pirates' vessel out of the sky, they will have an opportunity to search it. If any of the pirate crewmembers were still alive at the end of the ship-to-ship combat, they will be grabbing food, water, and personal weapons, and fleeing into the rocky terrain as the PCs land. As referee, you might wish to have a few of the pirates still on the wrecked ship when the PCs board, to give them someone to combat.

In searching the ship, the PCs will find 40 man-days of food and water stores, £120 worth of coins and cheap jewelry, a few papers, a suit

of mail, a case with three Springfield rifle-muskets (see Muzzle-Loading Rifle under Equipment in **Space: 1889**) without powder or bullets, a carefully wrapped but slightly withered orchid-like flower of remarkable beauty and delicious aroma, and a young American woman gagged and bound in the main cabin.

The lady is Emilie Van Warren, daughter of Dr. David Theodore Van Warren, an American botanist of some note. When the PCs first discover her, they will find her unconscious from the buffeting she suffered during the crash of the vessel. Anyone who succeeds at an Easy task against Medicine will be able to rouse the young woman and deter-

mine that she has taken no serious injuries. In the absence of a successful Medicine roll, Miss Van Warren will awake naturally the next morning, little the worse for wear.

Miss Van Warren's Story

ONCE EMILIE Van Warren awakens, her first reaction to the PCs' presence will be a cautious expression of thanks for rescuing her from the pirates. She will then ask what the group's plans are for her. As the PCs' heroic natures reveal themselves in their initial conversations with her, she will relax into a more misty-eyed expression of gratitude, but she will not break down into hysterical sobs of relief. The ref-

Emilie Van Warren (Green NPC)



EMILIE VAN WARREN is the daughter of an American botanist, Dr. David Theodore Van Warren, and is also a fairly knowledgeable botanist in her own right. She is a very pleasant young woman who is devoted to the advancement of knowledge and who knows that this makes her somewhat unusual for the age in which she lives.

Miss Van Warren is quite capable of suffering through whatever hardships might be necessary to achieve her goals (as is evidenced by her survival through the terrors that destroyed her father's last expedition, in which he explored much of the Mylmeroan Swamp and discovered an orchid-like flower of unusual beauty). Miss Van Warren is completely determined to mount a new expedition to collect living specimens of that plant, so that her father's name might

gain the fame that she believes it deserves.

Motives: Adventuresome, Knowledge.

Appearance: Emilie Van Warren is a slim young woman in her mid-twenties. She is of moderate height, with dark hair that always seems about to slip from the loose knot she keeps it pinned up in at the back of her head. She has dark brown eyes that reveal a quick and deep intelligence, as well as a steady determination.

Although she is generally quiet rather than outgoing, and although she does not spend the time primping the way other young women might, she has an unconscious grace and a natural beauty which make themselves very evident to most members of the opposite sex, often to Miss Van Warren's chagrin.

Att.	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 1 (bashing weapon)
Agil: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 2 (pistol)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 2 (mapping)
Int: 5	Observation 4, Science 3 (biology), Linguistics 1 (Koline)
Chr: 6	Eloquence 5
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse 1, camel 1), Medicine 1

eree should work to convey to the players the sense that Miss Van Warren is a very self-controlled young woman who has recently been through a hellish experience. The story that she then reveals to the group will substantiate that impression.

The significant events of that story follow. Dr. Van Warren, her father, came to Mars to do comparative work on the relationship of Terran and Martian flora. A widower, he did not want to be separated from his only living relative through the many months necessary for this study, so he brought her along as a research assistant—she is a well qualified botanist. Shortly after their arrival at Syrtis Major, the doctor developed a fascination for the few major swamplands of Mars, theorizing that they might yet hold plant life from the planet's earlier ages of development. So he put together an expedition to the Mylomeroen Swamp, one of the two major stretches of marsh and bog within safe reach of the British Crown Colony. Emilie insisted on accompanying him, despite rumors of piracy in the region.

At first, the expedition went better than could have been hoped—the doctor quickly established friendly relations with a few local villages of swamp dwellers, and he discovered various types of exotic plants. Within a fortnight, the doctor catalogued over 1000 different species for later study. Then, in a remote location, he came across a stand of orchids (one of which the PCs found on the wrecked aerial flyer). He spent two days studying them before taking a sample and declaring his intent to return to Syrtis Major with it. Both he and his daughter agreed that the

bloom's beauty and perfume would make it prized on Earth, and if it were cultivated and marketed, the resulting funds could finance the doctor's continuing study indefinitely. With these high hopes, the expedition prepared to leave the swamp.



During the night, however, disaster struck. Half the expedition was carried off in the darkness by hideous shapes, and the other half (including the doctor and his daughter) escaped only by fleeing blindly into the night. The next morning, these survivors discovered that they were hopelessly lost. But casting out in what they believed to be a southerly direction, they began to work their way through the swamp.

For three days, they toiled along with no idea of their location. Then, in the evening of the third day, a second calamity occurred. Without any warning, swamp pirates attacked the party and slew everyone except the girl, whom they held for sale into slavery. As they took possession of the expedition's boats, the pirates unceremoniously dumped the bodies of their victims over the sides into the water, along with anything of no immediately apparent value.

Through it all, Emilie sat stunned at her father's ignominious death. When the pirates prepared to toss her father's orchid back into the swamp, however, her cries of outrage at this desecration of the doctor's final discovery convinced the scoundrels of the plant's potential worth, and it was saved.

Over the next eight days, the brigands headed north through the fens, intent upon reaching Meroe with their newfound treasure. During this time, Emilie learned a smattering of the Koline trade tongue from them, enough to instruct them in caring for the plant her father had given his life to bring to light.

Then, as they neared the swamp's northern boundary, fate took another strange turn as the swamp pirates were attacked by pirates from the air. Again, Emilie watched the slaughter helplessly, and again she and her father's orchid were preserved. She spent just two days as a captive of the aerial pirates before they were destroyed in their attempt to ambush the PCs.

Through it all, Miss Van Warren has held up pretty well—she is made of stern stuff. The flower, however, cannot recover. When Emilie discovers this, she will do everything within her power to convince the player characters to mount another expedition into the Mylomeroen Swamp to retrieve more specimens. If the PCs wish to return to a city first to outfit themselves, she will agree. Under no circumstances, however, will she tell the PCs how to locate the plant—she insists upon coming along as guide, explaining that she remembers important landmarks to guide the party to the orchids' location.

THE MYLOMEROEN SWAMP

AT SOME POINT in ages past, the long stretch of canal between the Free City of Mylarkt (located approximately 400 miles northeast of Gorovaan) and the Umbran League's city-state of Meroe suffered extensive damage along much of its length. Some scholars suggest that the area might have been the focal point of a severe earthquake, and they point to a few toppled ruins in nearby cities to support their contention. Whatever the cause of the damage, however, neither Mylarkt nor Meroe has ever had the resources necessary to repair the breaches.

These breaches have allowed water to spill out freely into the terrain to either side of the canal. But unlike other damaged canals that dried up once their integrity was broken, the Mylomeroen stretch remained a viable watercourse and turned the territory for hundreds of miles around into a vast swamp. Water from the relatively nearby northern polar ice cap joined with occasional run-off from the Astusapes Highlands and spilled from the canal into the natural basin between Mylarkt and Meroe, creating the Mylomeroen Swamp.

This vast marshland measures roughly 400 miles from north to south and 250 miles from east to west, and it covers almost 90,000 square miles. It is home to numerous exotic species of plants and animals, as well as to a number of poor Canal Martian settlements. Inhabitants of the area typically dwell there for one of three reasons: Some cultivate *saafel*, a kelp-like plant with fleshy pods that serve as a food staple; others fish or trap in the rich backwaters of the region; and many are brigands.

Terrain Features

THE FIRST THING that strikes a visitor to the swamp is the proliferation of wildlife. Perhaps nowhere else on Mars is the foliage so thick or the creatures so numerous.

Next, the observer will note the extreme haziness of the atmosphere. Although Martian skies tend to be wonderfully clear elsewhere, over this vast tract of steaming vegetation the air is generally filled with water vapor, ranging from a light haze to a dense fog. For this reason, it is fairly easy to become lost when traveling off the main watercourse.

Over the centuries the canal itself

has sunk out of sight into the softening ground. The original canal can now only be seen during the low flow season. Traffic between Meroe and Mylarkt follows the main watercourse as it would a normal canal.

From the main watercourse stretch secondary waterways that twist deep into the body of the swamp. Like the main watercourse, these secondaries remain relatively constant in their paths over the years. It is along these waterways that the permanent farming and fishing villages have sprung up, and some trade occurs between these villages and the larger Martian cities outside the swamp.

Beyond these secondaries lie the regions typically called "the backwaters." Here the terrain changes constantly in response to the effects of the current and plant growth. What is relatively solid ground with thick vegetation today may be washed out completely tomorrow. On the other hand, what is a tertiary watercourse today may be blocked by debris tomorrow. But the changes in terrain are especially dramatic when viewed over the course of several seasons. Occasionally the ruins of ancient sunken villages are even brought to light during low flow as the water recedes.

THE VAN WARREN ORCHID

THE VAN WARREN orchid is a native flower that grows in select locations in Mars' few swampy regions—perhaps only in the Mylomeroen Swamp. It is a bulbed plant with a beautiful bloom that begins with a deep red color near the stem and fades to an ivory tone near the petals' edges. Inside this blossom stands a stamen that is a glossy blue-black.

The flower gives off a strong, sweet scent that is very relaxing to humans, chasing away minor pains and fatigue, and lending a sensation of general well-being. It is possible that the plant may be of some use in human medicine, but that remains to be discovered.

Travelling in the Swamp

WHEN THE PLAYER characters enter the Mylomeroen Swamp to begin their search for the Van Warren orchid, they will have to do so by boat. Their guide, Emilie Van Warren, is familiar with the landmarks only from the ground level, and in any case, the mists in the air prevent clear view of the landmarks from above.

The map shown on page 23 illus-

trates the layout of the swamp. On it, the main watercourse, the secondaries, the permanent villages and pirate camps, and the location of the Van Warren orchid bed are all indicated. Blank hexes on the map (all hexes except major or secondary waterways) indicate backwater areas that change often with the effects of water level and current. Also indicated on the map is the path of travel that Dr. Van Warren's party took in exploring the swamp and discovering the orchid—it is the path that Miss Van Warren will try to follow.

Movement is conducted as in the Water Travel and Explorations sections of the **Space: 1889** rules book (pages 116-17 and 122-23), with the

exception that as long as the PCs are following a primary or secondary watercourse, there is no chance of becoming lost. (Note that the referee will be using Emilie Van Warren's skill in Wilderness Travel (mapping) to attempt to retrace this route, not the skill of any of the PCs.)

Each time the group encounters a blank hex, the referee should roll on the Backwater Terrain Table below to determine what type of terrain fills the hex. And if at any point the PCs leave the swamp entirely for more than two weeks' time and then later reenter a backwater hex that they have been in before, the terrain type should be rerolled. This is to represent the constant changes that occur

in the swamp. (If the referee wishes to keep track of such things, he can even reroll if the PCs have not left the swamp but have been away from a particular hex for more than two weeks.)

Once per day, the referee should roll for a possible encounter, as in the **Space: 1889** rules, but the encounter chart later in this adventure should be used instead of the one in **Space: 1889**. In addition, any permanent villages or permanent pirate camps that the PCs run across should be treated as planned, stationary encounters, as should their discovery of the Van Warren orchid bed. Descriptions of these encounters are also located later in this adventure.

DEALING WITH BACKWATER TERRAIN

BACKWATER TERRAIN

1D6

Die Roll	Terrain Type
1	Dry Ground
2	Moor
3	Intermittent Water
4	Mainly Water
5	Mainly Water
6	Completely Flooded

Explanations

Dry Ground: This hex may be traversed on foot in any direction. The ground is solid enough to support men carrying heavy loads, with very few boggy tracts to work around. Vegetation consists primarily of knee-high grass and light brush. Treat passage through this hex as 10 miles of foot travel.

Moor: This hex consists of very marshy ground with occasional small pools of water. The vegeta-

tion in this area is similar to that of dry ground but often hides spots of soft mud or even quicksand. Travel through this hex must be by foot. And due to the need to search for firm footing, passage through this hex should be counted as 20 miles of foot travel.

Intermittent Water: This hex is divided about evenly between water and marshy land. Copses of cypress-like trees dot the area, and water grasses grow very tall. It is possible to traverse the hex either completely on foot or completely by water. To do so, a traveller should wind back and forth across the hex, looking for the best pathway there. Roll 1D6 x 10 for the number of miles this hex represents due to this winding travel.

The other way to traverse this hex is straight across, travelling by boat when in water and on foot when land

is encountered. When travelling this way, the hex should be treated as 15 miles of travel, divided evenly between water and land travel.

Mainly Water: This hex consists primarily of large pools and watercourses, broken occasionally by bars of ground and dotted with islands. Vegetation is similar to that in intermittent water. When travelling by boat, it is fairly easy to find a way around any dry ground in this hex; therefore, it should be treated as 15 miles of water travel. It is impossible to traverse this hex on foot.

Completely Flooded: This hex is completely covered by water. In some places it may be shallow enough for grasses to protrude above the surface, but in general the hex can be treated as a lake. Travel must be by boat, and the hex counts as 10 miles of water travel.

SWAMP ENCOUNTERS

ENCOUNTERS THAT the PCs will have in their exploration of the Mylomeroen Swamp will fall into two broad categories. The first consists of encounters indicated on the map on page 23—things such as permanent villages, permanent pirate camps, and the location of the Van Warren orchid. The second includes random events that will occur to the PCs in the backwater regions of the swamp. Events in the first category, invented encounters, are explained on this page; random encounters are described on pages 24 and 25.

INVENTED ENCOUNTERS

AS THE PCS RETRACE the path of Dr. Van Warren's ill-fated expedition, they will come across a number of permanent villages, primarily along the secondary waterways. It is also very possible that they might stumble on a swamp pirate camp if they make a wrong turn. Finally, to complete the adventure, they will have to discover the growing grounds of the Van Warren orchid. Each of these invented encounters is described in detail below.

Permanent Village: The PCs come upon a permanent settlement of Canal Martians in the Mylomeroen Swamp. These Canal Martians are very poor in comparison to those living in or near the major cities. They subsist on fish and local plants, along with bread made from saafel. This saafel bread not only serves as the staple of these villagers' diet, but it is also considered something of a delicacy in the cities of the Umbran League and therefore serves as a trade item.

The homes of these villagers are

built upon poles sunk into the banks of a watercourse. During the two flow seasons of the year, their floors are about six feet above the bank's surface, right at the water's edge. During low flow, the water level in the swamp can drop drastically, and the water's edge may retreat as much as 25 or 30 feet from the homes. And during flood, the waters often reach floor level or slightly higher.

A typical village will consist of 10 to 20 homes arranged along one bank of a watercourse, with perhaps half a dozen canoes tethered to each building's legs. An extended family lives in each home. The family usually consists of a male, his spouse, his sons, their spouses, and his grandchildren. Often a widowed brother or sister of the family leader will live there as well. Female villagers tend to fish and harvest the ubiquitous saafel, while males hunt wildlife and gather less accessible plants.

The inhabitants of swamp villages are usually very suspicious of strangers at first because of their hatred for swamp pirates. But once they have determined that the strangers are not swamp pirates, however, the villagers are exceedingly hospitable. It is not uncommon for visitors to leave feeling humbled or shamed by these poor people's generosity.

Swamp Pirate Camp: Swamp pirates are uniformly the most despicable creatures that Mars has ever produced. In general, they are escaped convicts, renegades, and other outlaws so hated by other Martians that they have had nowhere else to hide but in the swamps. The cruelest of their numbers tend to become their leaders, and swamp pirates are notorious for ambushing merchant parties, then brutally slaughtering all the

captives they take who have no ransom value.

Two things prevent these pirates from becoming a real threat to cities outside the swamp, however. The first is that they are so universally hated that it is not uncommon for even cities that are traditional enemies to cooperate in hunting out these bandits and executing them. The second is that as the dregs of Martian society, swamp pirates rarely have better than mediocre fighting skills, and their ability to organize is poor. Therefore, they remain little more than a nuisance to merchants, explorers, and swamp villagers.

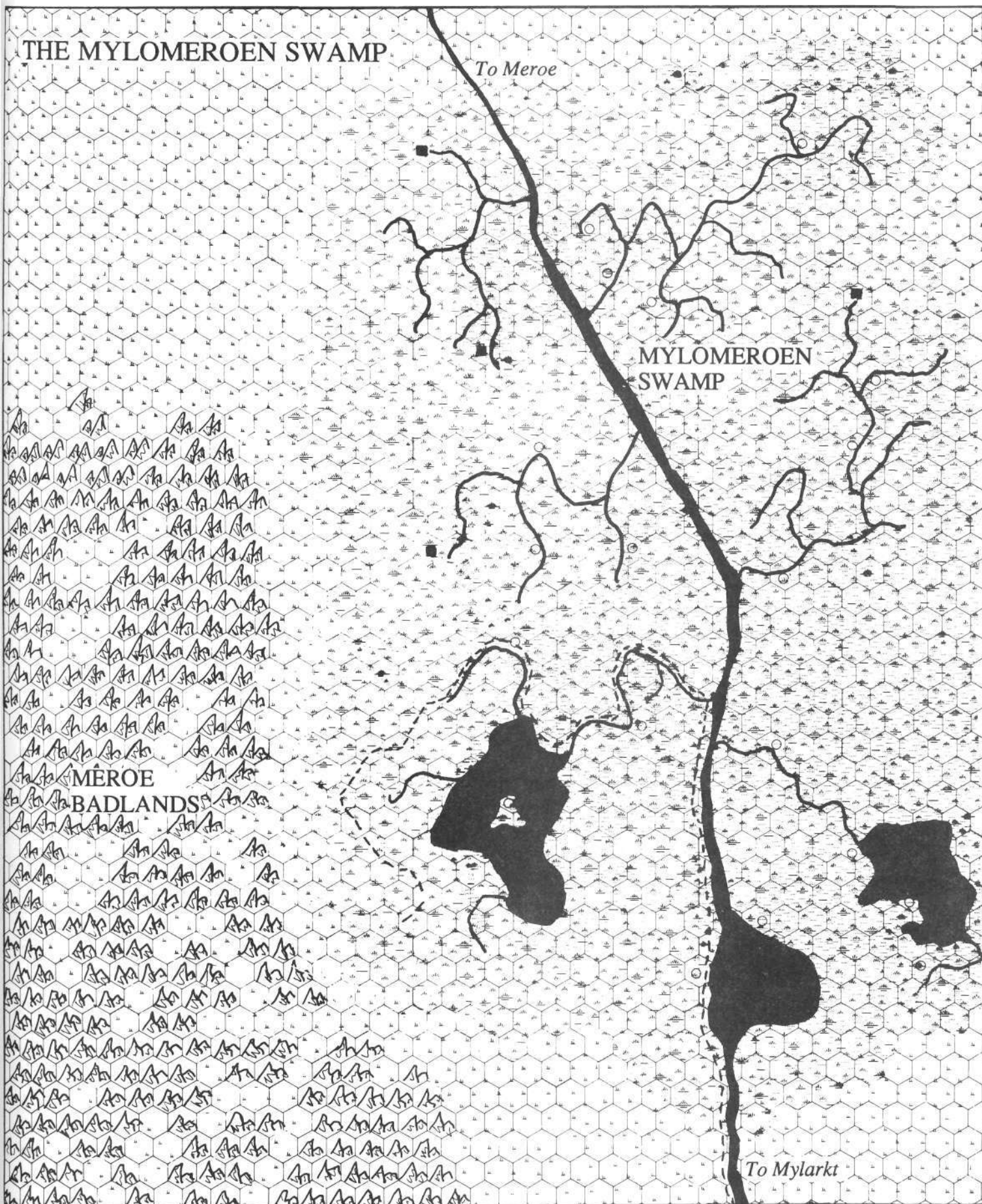
If the PCs stumble across a swamp pirate camp, they will notice that the camp consists of a pitiful collection of up to a dozen hovels and lean-tos, housing about 60 pirates. Several canoes will usually be close by, about one for every six pirates. And a quarrel will often be in progress.

The best way to deal with a swamp pirate camp is to avoid it. However, if a battle must be fought, it is best to attack the pirates ferociously, in hope of breaking their morale.

Van Warren Orchid Bed: The terrain in this hex falls under the category Intermittent Water, as was described previously. In this hex, the PCs will find a very small island with a thick copse of vine-covered trees. The Van Warren orchid flourishes in the marshy ground in the shade of these trees.

It is fairly simple to dig up a few of the plants and wrap them in burlap for the return trip.

Just after the PCs find the orchids, however, the knoe shoshu will strike, dragging Emilie Van Warren off to its lair (see The Lurker section on page 26).



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

AS THE PLAYER characters explore the Mylomeroen Swamp, they will most likely have a number of random encounters. At the beginning of each day, the referee should roll to determine if a random encounter occurs. On a roll of 1, 2, or 3, an encounter occurs. On a roll of 4 or 5, the party has a chance of becoming lost—make a Moderate roll against Emilie Van Warren's skill at Wilderness Travel (mapping) to determine if they are lost. If the party is lost, the referee should move them one hex in a random direction at the end of the day.

If an encounter is to occur, the referee should roll on the Random Encounter Table on this page to determine what that encounter will be. Once that is done, he can decide what time during the day the encounter will be most appropriate. (For example, if "quicksand" is rolled, it will not occur while the PCs are in a total water hex.)

Random Encounter Descriptions

THE DETAILS OF the possible random encounters are explained below.

Quicksand: One of the characters in the party has discovered quicksand—by falling into it. It is a Formidable task against Strength to get out. But up to two other characters can roll as well, and the total of all three characters' rolls can be added together for the task. If a character goes for more than two rounds without succeeding at this task roll, he is pulled under and drowns.

Swamp Pirates: As in the basic **Space: 1889** rules, this is an en-

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

2D6

Die	Roll	Encounter
2		Quicksand
3		Swamp Pirates
4		Green Koko
5		Ruumet Breehr Herd
6		Stinging Flies
7		Lurker
8		Native Hunters
9		Cissawaan
10		Temporary Village
11		Strangle Vine
12		Ancient Ruins



counter with pirates in small boats. Roll one die to determine the number of boats involved; six pirates will be located in each. The pirates will try to capture the characters to determine if they are ransomable, then plan to kill any who are not.

If the pirates lose half their number in battling the PCs, the remainder will flee.

Green Koko: While the PCs are travelling along a waterway, a green koko darts out from nearby foliage, slips over the edge of their boat, and attacks one of their number, attempt-

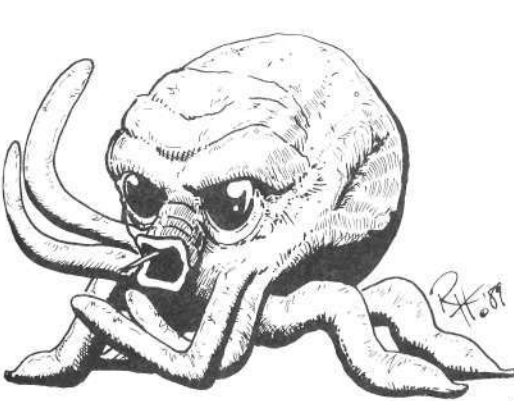
ing to drag him over the side into the water.

If the character is in a canoe, the canoe will be capsized by the weight of the snake, and all its occupants and cargo will be tossed into the water. Characters without Swimming skill can cling to the overturned canoe but are dependent upon others to rescue them. Characters with Swimming skill, however, can try to turn the canoe upright. To do so requires a Formidable roll versus their skill. After combat with the green koko is resolved, the PCs can try to recover lost cargo. Roll 1D6 x 10 for the percentage of cargo recovered (the referee chooses exactly which items).

Ruumet Breehr Herd: The PCs discover a small herd of wild ruumet breehr. If the adventurers are in a water hex at the time, the beasts will be wallowing in the shallows. If on land, the beasts will be grazing.

Ruumet breehr will not attack unless they perceive a threat, but this may be as simple a thing as the PCs approaching too close. If the group wants to work its way around the herd, add five miles to the travel distance for this hex (to represent time spent looking for an alternate course and cautiously watching the animals to make sure they do not spook).

Stinging Flies: As the PCs pass a stand of tall water grasses, a swarm of viciously biting insects attacks and pursues them for up to half a mile. The bites do no permanent damage, but they are extremely painful, forcing the PCs to flee almost blindly to get away from their tormentors. Roll 1D6: On a 4, 5, or 6, the adventure group becomes lost and wanders one hex in a random direction before continuing the day's travel.



Lurker: Any player character who rolls less than his Observation on 1D6 will notice a dark shape in the surrounding foliage. The dark shape has been following the PCs throughout the day (except when they are in a dry ground hex). If they approach the lurker, it will disappear into the surrounding terrain, only to return again later.

This shape is a knoe shoshu; it has been following the group to scavenge whatever it can from the PCs' leavings. The purpose of this encounter is to make the players edgy and to foreshadow the abduction of Emilie Van Warren after the Van Warren orchids are found (see The Lurker on page 26).

Native Hunters: The PCs come across a group of 1D6 x 10 native men in a hunting party. If this event occurs on land, the natives are gathering food plants; if it occurs on water, there will be one canoe per three natives, and they will be hunting water fowl with bows and a few firearms.

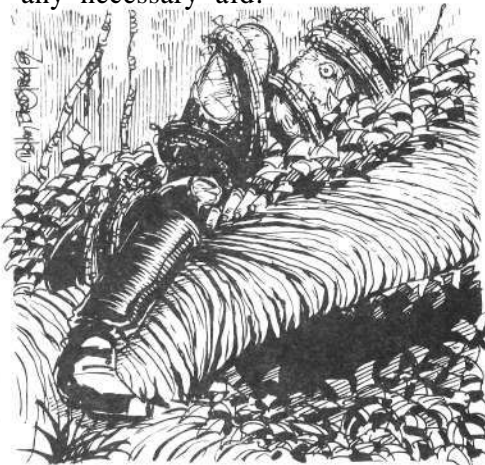
In any event, the natives will be very suspicious of the PCs and will attack if approached too closely, unless the PCs are obviously in dire need of help and have no intention of fighting.

This event can be used by the referee to restock the PCs' supplies or provide medical aid.



Cissawaan: The PCs spot a swarm of cissawaans headed their way through the water. If the group acts quickly, it can avoid the voracious little beasts, but the referee should roll for a chance of the PCs becoming lost afterward, as under Stinging Flies.

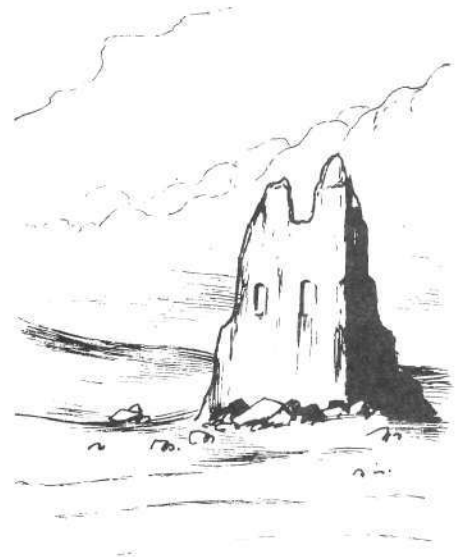
Temporary Village: On the banks of a small watercourse, the PCs discover a small village of swamp dwellers (1D6 huts). If the PCs approach cautiously, with a great display of nonaggression, the villagers will speak with them and give them any necessary aid.



Strangle Vine: While the group is passing through a section of dense foliage, one of the PCs becomes entan-

gled in a long, tough vine. As he works to extricate himself, the vine slowly twists itself about him and worms tiny rootlets into his skin! If he is not freed from the vine, it will eventually drain him of all his vital fluids.

To work free from a strangle vine requires success at an Impossible roll against Strength, but up to four characters can roll and add their totals to the victim's. Alternately, if the vine can be severed from its roots, it will slowly relax its hold. But to do this, a character must make a successful Difficult roll against his Observation, followed by a successful Moderate roll against his Edged Weapon skill. It is possible for one character to attempt this solution while several others struggle to pull the victim loose.



Ancient Ruins: A lifting of land in this area has brought to light the ruins of an ancient canal village. There is a 10-percent chance that the PCs may find something of value in the ruins, such as a small barrel of gold or silver coins, for example. Other possible finds are left to the referee's imagination.

THE LURKER

ONCE THE PLAYER characters have discovered the location of the Van Warren orchid and have obtained a specimen of that plant, the referee should run the next encounter. To begin, he may wish to read aloud to his players the narrative section below.

The most difficult part of your quest, it seems, is now over. Several specimens of the Van Warren orchid now lie in the bottom of your boat, wrapped securely in damp burlap for protection.

You brush your hands together to knock loose the dirt on them, and then you toss your tools back into the boat.

Passing your gaze over the hummock to take stock of the other party members, you notice that Miss Van Warren has stepped through a gap between two trees and is bending over to examine something at ground level. You are just about to call out to her not to wander too far when a

fleshy tentacle whips around her torso and drags her down. Her terrified scream tears through the normal swamp sounds, leaving a stunned silence behind.

As you run for her, she disappears from your view. Her second scream is interrupted by a loud splash. Cursing, you reach the gap between the trees just in time to see her dragged under the surface of a waterway a few feet away. A large, dark shape tows her behind as it propels itself through the water. Crying for the others to follow with the boats, you shuck your boots and dive in after Miss Van Warren, praying that somehow you can overtake whatever it is that has captured her.

THE CHASE IS ON

WHAT HAS GRABBED Emilie Van Warren is a knoe shoshu—a large, deadly scavenger that haunts the backwaters of Mars' swamplands. It is, of course, this creature that the adventure party's members have glimpsed lurking in the back-

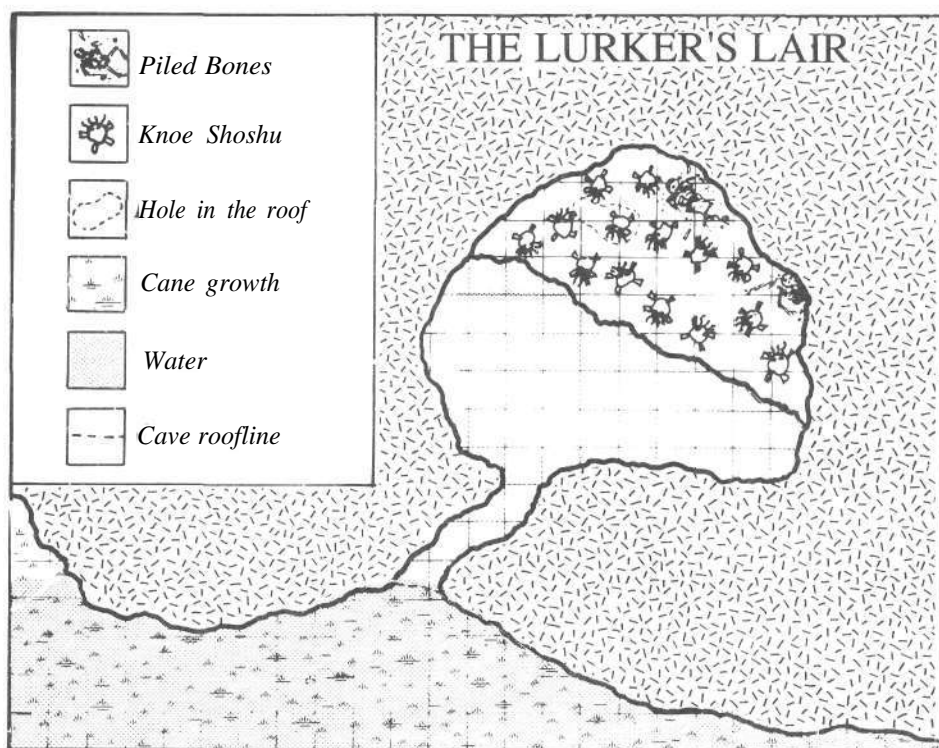
ground several times since they left the secondary watercourse. This beast has injected Miss Van Warren with its poison, and she has lapsed into unconsciousness.

Chasing the Knoe Shoshu: If any member of the party has Swimming skill, the referee can let him chase the beast as it flees. The knoe shoshu has a 15-yard head start and swims another 10 yards each turn. A swimming character, of course, rolls dice equal to his skill to determine how many yards he covers per turn.

The referee should run this chase as a tantalizing event; it should seem to the players that their characters have some chance of catching the thing, but actually this encounter is designed to ensure that the beast gets away. (It is important to the next part of the adventure that the beast escape with Miss Van Warren.)

The knoe shoshu should lead any swimming characters on a merry chase for about 10 rounds before they catch it; it will then fight them for about two rounds, then it will dive down deep, escaping from its pursuers and towing Miss Van Warren behind.

To ensure that the characters do not lose the beast too early or overtake it too easily, the referee can use the swamp terrain to good advantage. If the characters are quickly being left behind, the referee can explain that the waterway is broken by frequent bars of land, forcing the knoe shoshu to slowly drag its prey over such places. Every time the beast has to do this, the PCs can have a free turn to roll their Swimming dice. In other words, for that round, the knoe shoshu will not gain any distance at all, and the characters will be able to close the gap somewhat. If the



characters are catching up too quickly, however, the referee can explain that the water they are in is very deep, and the beast keeps diving down and changing direction. In each such round, the beast gets its normal 10 yards of movement, but the PCs must waste the round peering about until the knoe shoshu surfaces. (Since it does not wish to drown its victim, it will not dive for more than a turn without resurfacing.)

Finally, the PCs catch up with the beast—the referee should be careful that this happens in deep water. It will fight for about two rounds, without releasing Miss Van Warren, then it will dive away from its attackers and not resurface until it is out of sight behind some nearby vegetation. At this point the PCs will have to give up the chase and resort to tracking the beast (see below). But they will have learned an important lesson about its fighting skill.

Tracking the Knoe Shoshu: After the knoe shoshu escapes from any swimming characters (or if no characters had that skill to begin with), the PCs will try to track the beast through the swamp and follow it by boat if they wish to rescue Emilie Van Warren. They can begin by searching for signs in the direction the beast was fleeing, making a Difficult level task roll once every 15 minutes (game time). A successful roll means that the tracking character has discovered signs of a body being dragged overland.

Once the first successful roll is made, further rolls can be made every five minutes (game time), at Moderate difficulty, and will reveal either further signs of a dragged body, a few drops of blood from the beast or Miss Van Warren, or a torn

bit of the young lady's clothing snagged on vegetation (referee's option). After 12 successful rolls (not necessarily in succession), the group will discover the knoe shoshu's lair.

THE LURKER'S LAIR

WHEN THE PCs discover the lair of the knoe shoshu, the referee can read them the following narrative description.

Pressing on along the trail of the beast that carried Miss Van Warren away, you come to a thick screen of tall grasses similar to Terran bamboo. A few strands of long, dark hair hang from the cracked joint of one plant—the hair is obviously Miss Van Warren's. Poling your boat through the cane, you discover the dark, mossy mouth of a cave that stretches back into the side of what is obviously a permanent island. The arched mouth is nearly 10 feet across and is easily six feet from water level to its top. Measuring the water level, you find the floor to the cave mouth to be three feet below the surface.

A few yards inside, the light becomes brighter, and you soon move through the bend in the passage. A hole in the roof illuminates the interior of the cavern beyond, revealing a space approximately 15 yards in diameter. Toward the back, the cavern floor rises above water level, giving way to a sandy shelf.

As you peer closer, your blood runs cold. Miss Van Warren lies unconscious amid a pile of moldering bones and rotting clothing. Scattered around her on the sandy shelf lie over a dozen knoe shoshus, dozing in the cavern's coolness.

To get Emilie Van Warren out of the cavern safely, the PCs will either have to slip stealthily to her side and

carry her out, or fight and kill all the knoe shoshus. Neither of these tasks will be easy.

If they decide to try to sneak inside, they may either enter through the cave entrance or climb down a rope dropped through the hole in the roof. The hole is eight yards above the cave floor. In one movement action, a character can descend a number of feet (not yards) equal to the roll of his Strength dice or climb upward half that distance. For heavily burdened characters (such as one character carrying another character), halve both those values again.

Once inside the cave, each time a character enters a new square, he must make a Moderate level Stealth roll to avoid waking the knoe shoshus. If a roll is failed, the knoe shoshus in the same square as the character will wake and begin attacking in the next turn; the character has the rest of the turn in which he failed the roll to conduct any action he desires. Once the first knoe shoshu begins attacking, however, the combat will wake the remaining beasts, and they will begin attacking one turn later.

If someone manages to sneak all the way to Emilie Van Warren's position and lift her up, she will cry out in her unconscious state, waking all the beasts in the cave.

Once the party members have Miss Van Warren in their possession, they can attempt to escape with her. They will first have to fight their way back to their boat, then flee from the remaining knoe shoshus. The beasts will continue to pursue the party until it has left the hex in which the Van Warren orchid was discovered. They will then give up pursuit.

LEAVING THE SWAMP

NOW THAT THE player characters have the plant they came for and have rescued the girl who brought them, it is time to leave the swamp-lands. The referee should not dwell on the events of the return journey in as much detail as he did on the events while coming in (to avoid a tedious denouement after the excitement of the adventure's climax). But, he may wish to have the group take a mental step back from the situation and play the exit trip something like a board game, letting the players see exactly where their party is on the map and playing out any encounters without the detail given to them on the trip in.

The fact that the player characters do not have to rely on Miss Van Warren as a guide on the way out—since they all know the route they took coming in—may help speed things up. Finally, the referee can revert to the *Space: 1889* rule book's normal 2 in 6 chance of an event in

a Martian swamp to make the exit play faster. And he can even ignore any Lurker events, since it is likely that the players have had their fill of knoe shoshus for a while.

But if even this level of detail begins to bog things down, just skip the exit from the backwaters and pick up with the PCs' arrival back at the swamp's primary watercourse.

Since time is of the essence in getting the Van Warren orchids back to civilization in good shape, once they reach the primary watercourse, Emilie Van Warren will suggest that the group take passage on a merchant ship. It is easy enough to find one bound for the British Crown Colony willing to take on a few passengers. Once passage has been purchased, the referee can skim over the trip back to Syrtis Major, picking up the action when the group arrives in that town.

IN SYRTIS MAJOR

WHEN THE adventurers arrive in Syrtis Major, Emilie Van Warren

wastes no time in taking the Van Warren orchid specimens to an acquaintance who is skilled in cultivating exotic plants. During the few days he is working with the specimens, the referee can guide the player characters through some minor adventures in town.

Soon, however, Emilie Van Warren will get back to them with the news that seedlings have been started from the plants and have been shipped back to Earth. It appears that the Van Warren orchid will, with proper care, thrive in domestication and several medical companies are very interested in the possible use of the plant in manufacturing medicinal drugs.

WHAT THE PCS GET

BESIDES the experience and renown you might hand out for the adventure, each of the PCs will also get an immediate payment of £100 as their share of the down payment on rights to market the plants. Each year thereafter, each PC will also receive a royalty on the sale of the plants, determined in exactly the same way as a royalty for an invention (as explained on page 13 of the *Space: 1889* rule book).

In addition, of course, the PCs will have made a knowledgeable, wealthy friend to turn to when necessary—Emilie Van Warren—a friend who feels that she owes them much more than she can ever repay.

The PCs will also have first-hand knowledge of the backwaters of the Mylomeroen Swamp, as well as an exciting story concerning the ferocity of the knoe shoshu, a story which should at least get them a free drink now and then at any pub they might frequent.





CONCERNING LATER ADVENTURES

WHEN THE REFEREE prepares to run this adventure, he might wish to give some thought to planting the seeds of future adventures in the events of this one. Several possibilities come to mind.

- Once the tale of their adventure is well publicized, the player characters might be hired by a museum to bring back the carcass of a knoe shoshu for public display. They might even be hired to capture one live for a zoo.

- A coin brought back from the ruins of a sunken village the PCs encountered in the Mylomeroen Swamp might reveal that it was actually no village at all, but was the highest point of an entire city. An archaeologist might want to hire the PCs

to take him to the place they found the ruins. It is also possible that those ruins might open into a vast, underground complex full of ancient artifacts.

- The captain of a pirate band the PCs encountered might come looking for vengeance. This is especially appropriate for a one- or two-session adventure.

- The aerial flyer that first attacked the PCs, precipitating the entire adventure in search of the Van Warren orchid, might have been carrying captured papers from Oenotria, giving orders for the assassination of a prominent statesman in the Umbran League. The PCs could undertake to deliver those papers to that statesman in hope of gaining a reward. As an added complication, they might get to him just as the assassin strikes, implicating them in his killing, especial-

ly since they are carrying the orders to assassinate him.

- A member of a swamp village the PCs visited might find them to tell of the swamp pirates uniting under a charismatic leader. The pirates are attacking village after village, wiping out all the inhabitants, and the PCs are the only hope the villagers could think of to aid them in mounting a war against the pirates.

If any of these possibilities sound interesting to you, or if they give rise to any ideas of your own, just remember that you do not have to flesh them out yet. Instead, merely plant the initial clues for each at the appropriate place in this adventure and wait to see if the players bite at any of them. That will be soon enough to begin developing them into full-fledged adventures.

Madness in the Moab

RAMPANT RUMORS

THE CHARACTERS are in the Martian city of Sigeus Portus. Photocopy the following newspaper articles (the first is dated 14 days prior to the beginning of the adventure—the dates should be adjusted to reflect the chronology of the referee's campaign), and give copies to the players.

For every hour the characters spend in a public place in Sigeus Portus (a pub, hotel lobby, marketplace, etc.), give the characters one of the rumors from the Rumor Table (determined randomly). If the characters receive the rumor by talking to a

citizen of Sigeus Portus, read the rumor straight through. If, however, the characters eavesdrop on a conversation in a noisy place (such as a pub or marketplace), read only bits and pieces of the rumor, to represent the haphazard nature of such information. They may, of course, hear the same rumor (or parts of one) several times, and never hear some of the rumors at all—this is the nature of life.

Rumor Table

1-2. I hear tell that a village out in the middle of the Moab has been attacked by some human raiders. They strike only at night and have carried

off the queerest things: small pieces of wood, metal scraps, and empty water skins. No one has been killed yet, but these Moabs claim that the raiders have stolen a ruumet breehr as well.

3-4. That Dr. Fairbanks is mad as a hatter. I think the desert Sun boiled what was left of his brains and any power of reason he had remaining. I wouldn't be at all surprised to find him digging through some sand dune like he was an ohnam reekh.

It's a pity about that young Lillian Dewitt woman. What a turn of fate for her to strike off on an expedition with Fairbanks. That reminds me of something a friend of mine told me. He's a student at the university where Fairbanks used to teach and said some older students told him Fairbanks was dismissed from the university after being absent for nearly three months without prior notice. He finally showed up at the dean's office with a vest pocket full of sand and a cockamamie tale of being captured by a band of Canal Martians in the desert—said they had forced him to carry some heavy baggage, and he had to learn to find his own food and water.

These older students swear they saw him drunk in an alleyway during the time he was allegedly a prisoner in the desert. Either way, Fairbanks is a loon.

5-6. Did you see that article in the *Times* today? I mean, I feel sorry for those two and everything, but only a fool would mount a desert expedition in this heat. And that map they printed in the newspaper doesn't even have any water holes marked. If the survey team was depending on that useless scrap of paper, then I'm afraid there's no hope.



on or before the often contemplated with a precision of which we, on reduced in circum- practice and is a be deplored, but to the embassy of without which, we from the chief of exercise in futil- by a simple and disengage without military action.

phic Service

seek permission to publish a telegraphic scheme proves to investors for the of a number of including Duke gent-Darby, Lord ad, and Sir James

stockholders have do not believe the present grave prob- the vast distances sit. Critics of the cannot guarantee and will need to military guards. under the law, if without the hire of s, not to mention s a question much of the citizens of to be seen.

crivals

Jos. Riley, master, ty passengers and sundry dry goods.

McCain, master, in ballast, to be to depart on the and other items.

S. Halcyon (Gork- Parhoon, en route y pirates. Twelve were rescued by reward is offered

Schmitt, master, in ballast, bound oints north.



Lady Swanscombe visits St. Barbara's Orphanage in Parhoon (story on page 2).

Moab Survey Team Long Overdue Times Offers Reward

The survey team which embarked from Sigeus Portus on July 25 to examine the quake in the Moab Desert is missing.

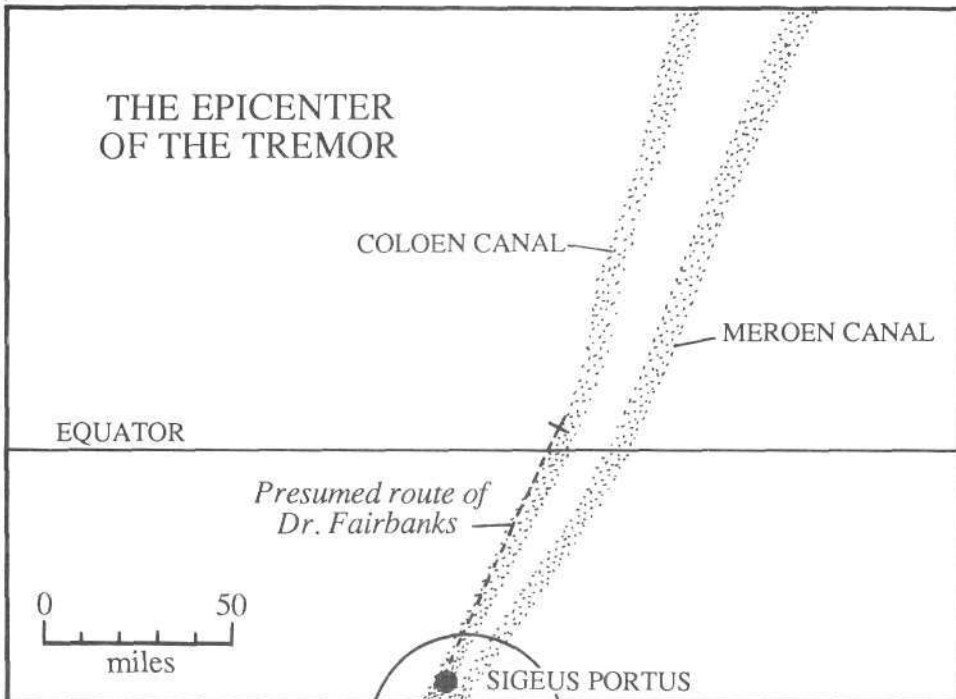
On the expedition is geologist Dr. Gregory Fairbanks and *Times* reporter Lillian Dewitt. The team was scheduled to report back five days ago.

This newspaper is offering a £50 reward for

information concerning the fate of Dr. Fairbanks and Miss Dewitt. A £300 reward is offered should the survey team be located and returned to Sigeus Portus.

A reproduction of the survey team's map is appended to this article. Rewards may be collected at the *Times* office in Sigeus Portus.

(continued on page 4)



Belgian

News of a new attacked the Belg repelled, but with Reports are scarce calling themselves the Coprates, but unprecedented. To

The attack came natives and a few armed with spears, cartridges from a found everywhere modern weaponry. by these traders. be deplored by of renegades, or is inconceivable.

While the editors the gumme plant regrettable that the violence of such a of British subjects is unfortunate.

Industrial Our Editors'

There are certain give great importa education. It is no the old system off gone into disuse the knowledge and at a trade, is he manages to do cal employment is through an old-fas the causes that ment of the old sy the influence of fact as we may, that the influence unfit those subject fluences for the

This situation is taught the basic shop recently whe not a man-jack of principle of the pulley.

Porteus Mercha arrival of a car calicos, jerseys, fine linens, in at bargain rates



OUTFITTING THE EXPEDITION

SIGEUS PORTUS is large enough that the characters may fully outfit themselves for the expedition. They may buy weapons and camping equipment, and even rent gashants ruumet breehr, or horses (if available)—it is *highly* recommended this be a mounted expedition. The characters will need at least one animal to carry water, and probably more (roughly one animal per 10 humans, plus one for every four baggage animals should be enough for a week's journey through the desert).

The Marketplace

AS SIGEUS PORTUS is a slightly remote area of Mars, equipment prices should be raised by at least 50 percent, initially. Merchants in the marketplaces enjoy haggling—they expect their customers to argue and make counteroffers. If the characters do not haggle, the merchants will assume they are very wealthy people and may increase all the prices *another* 50 percent for anything else the characters try to buy. All purchases should be role played, with characters making occasional throws against their Bargaining skill for a Moderate task.

A gashant (or a horse) can be

rented for 12 shillings a day, plus two shillings a day for food—gashants (and horses) can travel 20 miles per day. Ruumet breehr can be rented for five shillings a day (including howdah), plus five shillings a day for food—ruumet breehr are capable of travelling only 10 miles per day. The characters may haggle with these merchants as well.

DESERT TRAVEL

IT IS THREE days' travel (60 miles) by gashant from Sigeus Portus to the site of the survey team's destination. If the characters insist on travelling by foot, consult page 114 of **Space: 1889** to determine the effects.

Most of the travel can be accomplished by following the low scrub and patches of weeds which grow above the dead canal. The players may be able to intermittently hunt very small game, and an occasional oasis may provide water and a little shade.

Each day the characters travel in the desert, roll a die: On a result of 1-4, a tremor shakes the characters and causes small sand slides; on a result of 5, the characters have found an oasis; on a result of 6, roll on the Weather Table below (reproduced from **Space: 1889** for your convenience). *Note:* Generally, a roll of 5

during land expeditions indicates that the characters are lost, but since they have an established landmark to follow (the dead canal), the party (as a whole) will not have to worry about being lost in this adventure.

WEATHER TABLE

Die Roll	Result
1-4	Clouds
5-6	Windstorm

A windstorm in the desert is naturally a sandstorm. Travel during a sandstorm is impossible. Furthermore, roll a die for each animal (or person on foot); on a 6, the animal or person is lost. The referee should decide the exact effects—a person may be separated from the group and found later that day, etc. Basically the intention here is to create some delay and cause minor problems, not destroy the expedition.

Monotony and Madness

ONCE THE characters are a few miles outside Sigeus Portus, they will be surrounded by nothing but the immense desert wasteland. The barren expanse of the sun-baked desert, the relentless Sun, and an occasional sand dune will be the characters' only sights. The one thing that keeps them from being lost forever is the sparse trail of weeds and gnarled

shrubby which grow above the dead canal.

As the days drag on, the extreme heat, the dry air, the blinding desert Sun, and the monotony of the same scenery can begin to cause mental fatigue. Heat waves rolling off the hard ground may appear to be the cooling waves of a pond. Harsh white light reflecting off a sand dune may take the shape of a strange white building.

Each day that the characters travel in the desert, have them roll Intellect attribute dice for a Moderate task to avoid mental fatigue. If the characters are travelling by night, roll for an Easy task. Failure means that the character gains one mental fatigue point and has one hallucination (the

referee may determine exactly what form this hallucination takes: an oasis filled with cold water surrounded by the victim's family and friends, a fleet of British aerial flyers crewed by High Martians, a tall spire, an alien building, etc.).

For every mental fatigue point gained, the character temporarily loses one Intellect point (it is possible to have negative Intellect). If a character's Intellect drops to zero, the character has come completely unhinged: He will babble incoherently, stare straight ahead in a catatonic state, and have at least two hallucinations per day. He will not be able to walk or ride a horse by himself, but he can sit in a howdah. If the character is left to himself, then he

will most likely wander off in a random direction.

The only way to lose mental fatigue points and regain Intellect is to sleep all night. In the morning, the character may roll Intellect attribute dice (using his original Intellect score) for a Moderate task. Success means the loss of one mental fatigue point and the addition of one Intellect point. Failure means no measurable change in the character's condition. In either case, the character must roll again normally that day for mental fatigue.

At the referee's discretion, a character who recovers after having had his Intellect reduced to zero may not remember anything that happened during his madness.



AN OCCASIONAL OASIS

THE MARTIAN desert has very few oases, and almost all these will be found along dead canals. Should the characters be fortunate enough to find one, however, then they will be able to obtain fresh, relatively cool water and the only shade to be

found for many miles around.

An oasis will always be in a small "valley" or extreme dip in the desert terrain. It is only at these locations that the desert's surface is close enough to the underground water table for water to spring up and form a

pond. At the center of the oasis will be a small pool of water with a few short trees surrounding it.

If the characters are desperate for food, then they may be able to catch a few small, leathery lizards here.



MORE THAN A MIRAGE

NEARLY 60 MILES north of Sigeus Portus is a small "village" of Martian desert dwellers. Some 30 Hill Martians live in this semipermanent encampment, which consists mainly of tents and an earthbank corral holding several ruumet breehr and gashants. The encampment is situated on top of the dead canal, in a small valley, and is built around a pond of water no more than 10 feet

wide. Have each character make a quick roll against his Observation skill. A successful roll will reveal that this pond has formed very recently, as no trees or shrubs have grown around it yet.

Referee: The recent earthquake brought this pond of water to the surface.

The Hill Martians speak Koline fluently, and a smattering of Parhooni (skill level 1) and English (skill level 1).

Arrival By Day

IF THE CHARACTERS have been travelling by day, they will reach the village in the late afternoon. If they take the time, the characters will observe that the village is very busy. It appears as though the Martians are rearranging the layout of the encampment, perhaps for better defense capability. (They are actually tearing it down in order to move on.)

If the characters attempt to avoid the encampment by travelling around it, have each character roll Stealth attribute dice for a Moderate task. Increase the difficulty by one level, if the character is riding in a howdah.

If any character fails his roll, one of the Hill Martians from the village will raise an alarm. Six Martians will appear with bows and spears, and take up defensive positions along the edge of the encampment.

If the characters are so brazen as to attack, the Hill Martians will fight to the death. If the characters wave the white flag or approach peacefully, the Hill Martians will allow them into the village but will keep their spears in hand and leveled at the characters.

Remember that these Hill Martians believe humans have attacked them at night for nearly 10 days. So once they have come face-to-face with the hostile Hill Martians, the characters must earn the Martians' trust and friendship.

The spokesman for the characters' party must present his story clearly and roll Eloquence skill dice for a Difficult task. If he succeeds, the Martians will immediately relax slightly and will allow the characters to come into the village, albeit with

some lingering suspicions.

If the spokesman fails his roll, the Martians will chase the characters off, shouting at them, "Go back north, red devil brigands!"

If the characters proceed north, turn to the section entitled Beneath the Shifting Sands. If they elect to hide outside the village until nightfall, then go to the section entitled Arrival By Night.

If the characters gain the trust of the Martians, Grahtorn Eilk, one of the elders of the tribe, will come talk to the characters in English.

"Please be forgiving to my people. For past 10 nights two human ones as yourselves come and steal our possessions. We not wish to kill. We give threatens, but still these devils, they return.

"They two come from north after great shaking desert. My people, we had been here only five nights when the shaking began. They come every night, and much talk there is of bad omens and the anger of the elder ones.

"We wish to only live as we have. Our lives, we are proud of the many, many years we spend taming the desert. To kill is not our way, yet some one thing must be done.

"If you can get rid of these red ones as yourselves, we offer you our always lasting friendship. Our debts we do not forget."

The characters will learn little else from the Hill Martians before nightfall. If asked about the survey team, Grahtorn Eilk will say that the player characters and the two brigands are the only humans the tribe has seen in months. If the characters stay until dark, go to the next section; otherwise, go to Beneath the Shifting Sands.

Arrival By Night

IF THE CHARACTERS are travelling by night, or if they stay near the Martian encampment until nightfall, they will witness the attack. Several hours after nightfall, two figures will appear near the edge of the encampment. Read the following description to the characters.

Far from the gaslamps and electric lights of any city, the desert night is incredibly deep and dark. As you stare across the valley, you can barely discern two humanoid figures approaching the camp; they are carrying some sort of spear and moving very slowly. The Hill Martians shift about nervously.

As you concentrate on the figures of the humans, you realize that something here is amiss. Their dim shapes seem hunched, yet they move with a smooth, definitely alien, gait.

Suddenly, the entire scene is illuminated as two of the Hill Martians

point crude carbide lanterns at the intruders. The short, thick stature, reddish skin, and pale hair of the two brigands make them appear human, but their faces, their small webbed ears, and their long tunics seem to indicate that they are Martian.

The light from the lanterns terrifies the intruders; they give a shrill scream and scurry quickly out of sight to the north.

The characters will soon lose sight of the brigands but may be able to track them. Roll Tracking skill dice for a Difficult task the first hour of tracking; roll for a Formidable task the second hour; and roll for an Impossible task the third hour. Successful Tracking rolls will lead the characters north, but after three hours, the tracks will disappear. If the characters do not pursue the brigands immediately, they may either decide to travel north at night along the dead canal or to wait until morning.



BENEATH THE SHIFTING SANDS

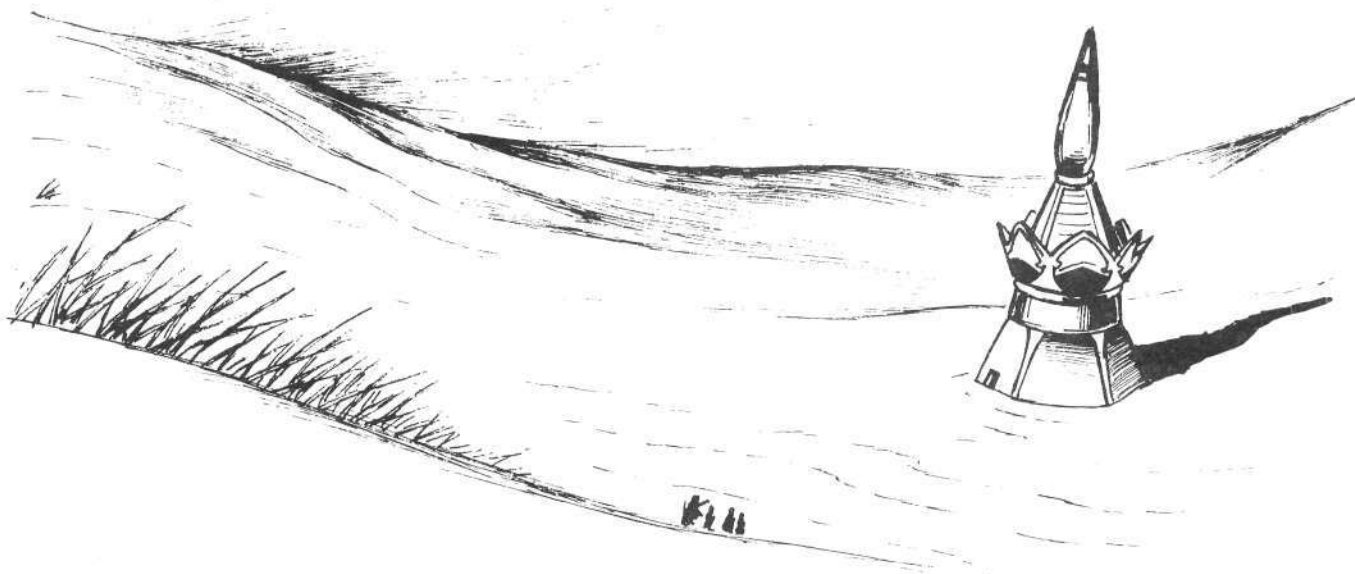
IN THE FIRST light of morning, the characters will come upon a tall spire rising out of the desert sand. It sits 50 yards away from the dead canal and is some 20 feet tall.

The referee may want to play this as a hallucination—perhaps a feverish character spots it first. Even so, once it is pointed out, all the characters will see it.

The spire is a blinding white, pointed steeple made of stone; as the characters approach, they will find a small opening situated at the base of the structure. A successful Observation skill roll for a Moderate task will reveal that there is no mortar between the stones of the spire. Each stone was cut to exact size and fits so tightly with the ones next to it that no gaps are readily visible. The surface of the spire is smooth and incredibly hard (nothing the characters

are carrying with them could possibly scratch it). The opening at the base of the structure is four feet high and two feet wide, and has no perceptible door.

Looking into the spire from here will reveal a floor of sand approximately one foot lower than the bottom edge of the opening; to enter the spire, the characters must jump down into it. The inside of the spire is dark, so nothing else can be discerned from outside.



REFeree'S NOTES

THE PLAYER characters have stumbled across an ancient Canal Martian city which was buried thousands of years ago and has been partially uncovered by the recent earthquake. This city dates back to the time of the naBrifanoon, some 5000 years, when the dead canal was a vital waterway to the north.

As the characters investigate, they will slowly realize that they have found an entire city (although

99 percent of the city is inaccessible because many of the buildings have collapsed, and the streets have been filled with rock and sand). The map represents the one percent of the city which can be explored. In area 22 of the map there is a six-foot-wide pit; if you wish to add more levels to the underground city, you may find this a convenient place to put the connection.

There will be two earthquakes while the characters are still in the

underground city: One will happen when the characters reach area 9 on the map; the other is up to you to trigger. The second quake, which takes place when the characters are in area 23, will begin to sink the city back into the depths of the desert, burying it beneath countless tons of sand. When you decide it's time for the second quake, give the PCs five minutes or so to get out (preferably after they've found the survey team).

ENCOUNTER TABLE

2D6

Die Roll	Encounter
2	1 Moab
3-4	2 Moabs
5-6	Broken Spear
7-8	No Encounter
9	Sand
10-12	Mushrooms

Explanations

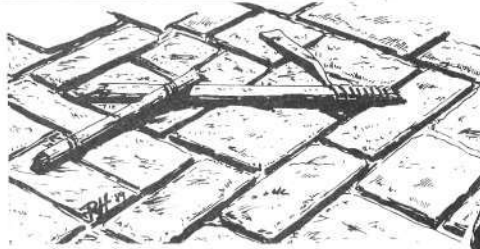
The following are encounter explanations.



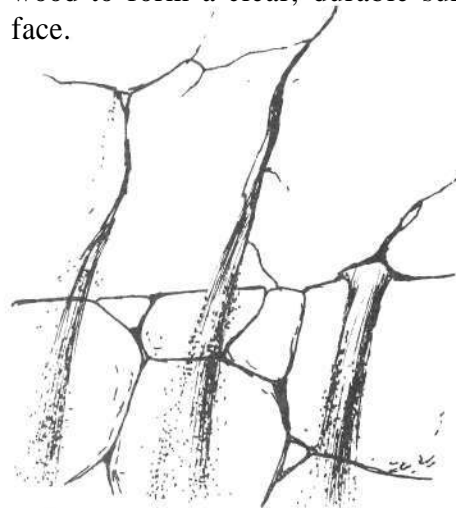
One Moab: Disregard this encounter and roll again if the characters have not reached area 11 yet. The characters stumble upon a solitary, sleeping Moab. At the sound of the characters' footfalls, the Moab will awaken, screech, and run away. The characters may chase the Moab, but they will lose him.



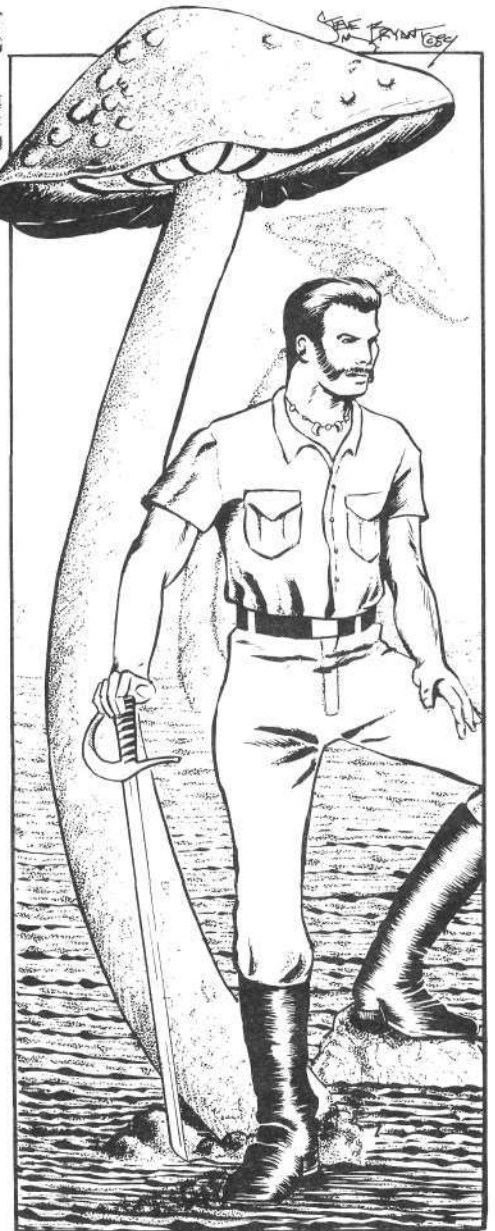
Two Moabs: Disregard this encounter and roll again if the characters have not reached area 11 yet. The characters confront two Moabs armed with spears. The Moabs wave their spears uncertainly and yell in a high-pitched voice. Any aggression on the part of the characters will send the Moabs running away.



Broken Spear: A broken spear is found lying on the floor. The wooden shaft of the spear has been snapped in half, making the spear unusable. The spearhead is gone. If a character picks up the spear to examine it, he will find the shaft is incredibly smooth and hard. A successful Biology skill roll for a Moderate task will identify the spear as Martian ironwood (a once plentiful resource) which has petrified. A successful Chemistry skill roll for a Moderate task will reveal that the wood was treated with some sort of preservative which bonded with the ironwood to form a clear, durable surface.



Sand: Several cracks in the walls (formed from the vibrations of the earthquake) have allowed sand to slowly spill into the room. This encounter should be used by the referee to heighten the fear and sense of danger in the adventure. Let the characters believe this area is unstable, and if there is an earthquake while they are down here exploring, they may be buried (along with the city) forever.



Mushrooms: Moisture from the dead canal has seeped through the floor, and enormous mushrooms have sprouted up. Each mushroom is approximately eight feet tall with a stem the size of a telegraph pole. The Moabs use the leathery, flexible skin of these mushrooms for clothing, and the meaty stems for food. The mushrooms are edible by humans, but the characters must be allowed to determine this for themselves—perhaps by looking for signs of harvest, etc.

THE MOABS

"MOABS" IS THE name Miss Dewitt has given the ancient Canal Martians who inhabit the underground city. The Moabs are descended from ancient Canal Martians. As such, they have graceful limbs but massive chests, small pointed ears which are not webbed, and only three fingers and a thumb on each hand. But because they have lived underground for thousands of years, the Moabs are significantly different than modern Canal Martians. The Moabs are stooped so their hands always touch their knees (making them shorter than humans). They have ruddy (nearly human) complexions and pale white hair, and they speak in shrill voices. The Moabs can also see equally well in light or darkness; they prefer the dark, except when making clothing.

The biggest difference between the modern Canal Martians and the Moabs is their language. The Moabs speak Old Koline with strong elements of Son-Gaaryani. To communicate with the Moabs, the PCs must know either Koline or Parhooni, or have Linguistics skill. Characters

who successfully roll against their Koline skill for a Moderate task, against their Parhooni skill for a Difficult task, or against their Linguistics skill for a Difficult task will be able to communicate with the Moabs.

Each time a character wishes to speak to a Moab or understand what a Moab has said, he must roll the dice. Failure at the task need not be total failure: The character may say something offensive if he is speaking, or he may only understand part of the Moab's speech if he is listening. (This is left up to the referee's discretion.)

When playing the part of the Moabs, remember two things: They are both curious and frightened of the humans; and, when found in large groups, the Moabs will cling to the characters, touching their hands and picking at their clothes (especially at anything shiny and metal). The Moabs may even steal small things and play with them.

Moabs only arm themselves when hunting greiscon tous; they would never think of committing violence against each other.

The Moabs may be persuaded to show the PCs where the other humans are, but the Moabs will try to lock the PCs up, too.

THE CITY DESCRIBED

MOST AREAS on the map are numbered. Descriptions of these rooms can be found below. Roll two dice on the Encounter Table anytime the characters enter an area on the map which is not numbered (both rooms and hallways). Unless otherwise noted here, the ceilings in all areas are 12 feet high, all doors are closed, and all areas are dark. The walls are all made of a light brown

stone and, like the spire, are fitted together so well that there are no seams.

Each area has thin, dull tubes, approximately one-half inch thick, running along the ceiling.

Should the characters break these (by throwing something heavy at them, firing at them, or pulling them off the ceiling), the tubes will explode and shower a glass-like material on the characters.

Have each of the characters make a quick roll against Agility: Failure means that the character takes one wound.

1. The spire is the tallest building in the city and is the only structure "above ground." The opening here is four feet tall and two feet wide (it is actually a window—the glass is gone).

The ceiling here is also 12 feet high, but it is actually only eight feet above because the floor is covered with four feet of sand.

A short, sloping passageway leads to the west. This is actually a set of stairs covered by sand. When the characters step into the passageway, the sand will slide and shift, and the characters will tumble down into area 2.

2. A foot of sand covers the floor of this room, and a narrow, continuous frieze of hieroglyphics and pictures runs along the room's walls. The pictures show Canal Martians in everyday life (sailing large canal ships, looking out of windows onto lush gardens, etc.).

A successful Observation skill roll by one of the characters for a Difficult task will reveal that, given the proportions of the Martian figures in relationship to the rooms in the hieroglyphics, and also considering the



rooms the characters have seen, the Martians pictured in the hieroglyphics must have been nearly eight feet tall.

A successful Linguistics or Archaeology roll for an Impossible task will reveal that the hieroglyphics seem to be some ancient form of Old Koline, but the words are so different as to be unreadable.

The stairs on the other side of the west doorway have only a scattering of sand and can be walked upon normally.

Note: At this point, the characters may be led to believe they have discovered an ancient burial site.

3. This room is empty, except for the large window (four feet tall by two feet wide) on the south wall. The "glass" in the window is clear but has a faint bluish tint. A successful Chemistry skill roll for a Moderate task will reveal that the "glass" is actually a mixture of glass and mineral. A successful quick roll against Intelligence will reveal that the bluish tint was probably intended to cut down on the harsh desert Sun's rays.

Since this room (and every room below it) is completely buried, all that can be seen through the window is a wall of sand.

4. A small amount of sand is scattered on the floor here. Although there are no footprints, a successful Observation skill roll for a Difficult task will reveal that the sand has been kicked and walked through.

5. The stone which forms the walls of this room is a dull red. Thousands of years ago this room was used by priests as a retreat from the commotion and noise of the city. The subdued red stone had a soothing effect on the priests; the characters, too, will feel strangely relaxed here.



Characters who fail a quick Intelligence roll will not want to leave the room; they will have to be either left here or physically dragged away. The effects last one hour or until the characters are removed from the room.

A successful Observation skill roll for a Moderate task will reveal a few scratch marks on the wall and several small red pebbles on the floor in the northwest corner of the room. (Dr. Fairbanks took a sample of this rock.)

6. Only sand can be seen through the window here. A pale blue light comes through the west doorway.

7. Some squiggly tubes in the ceiling here are casting an eerie blue light over the entire room. The design the lights make on the ceiling is intricate and very beautiful, with each tube being a slightly different shade of blue. It is obvious this is not only functional lighting but is an alien, albeit breathtaking, form of art.

8. This is another spire much like the one that the characters originally entered, but obviously not as tall.

9. Like area 7, the squiggly tubes here cast a blue light, but the design they form on the ceiling is altogether

different. From the window, the characters may look down into the sunken garden (area 17) and see everything except the large metal door which leads to area 18.

Sometime while the characters are in this room, an earthquake will shake the entire city. Any character who fails a quick Agility roll will be thrown to the floor. The quake lasts approximately 30 seconds. Two long narrow cracks form in the southwest corner of the room, and sand begins to filter in slowly.

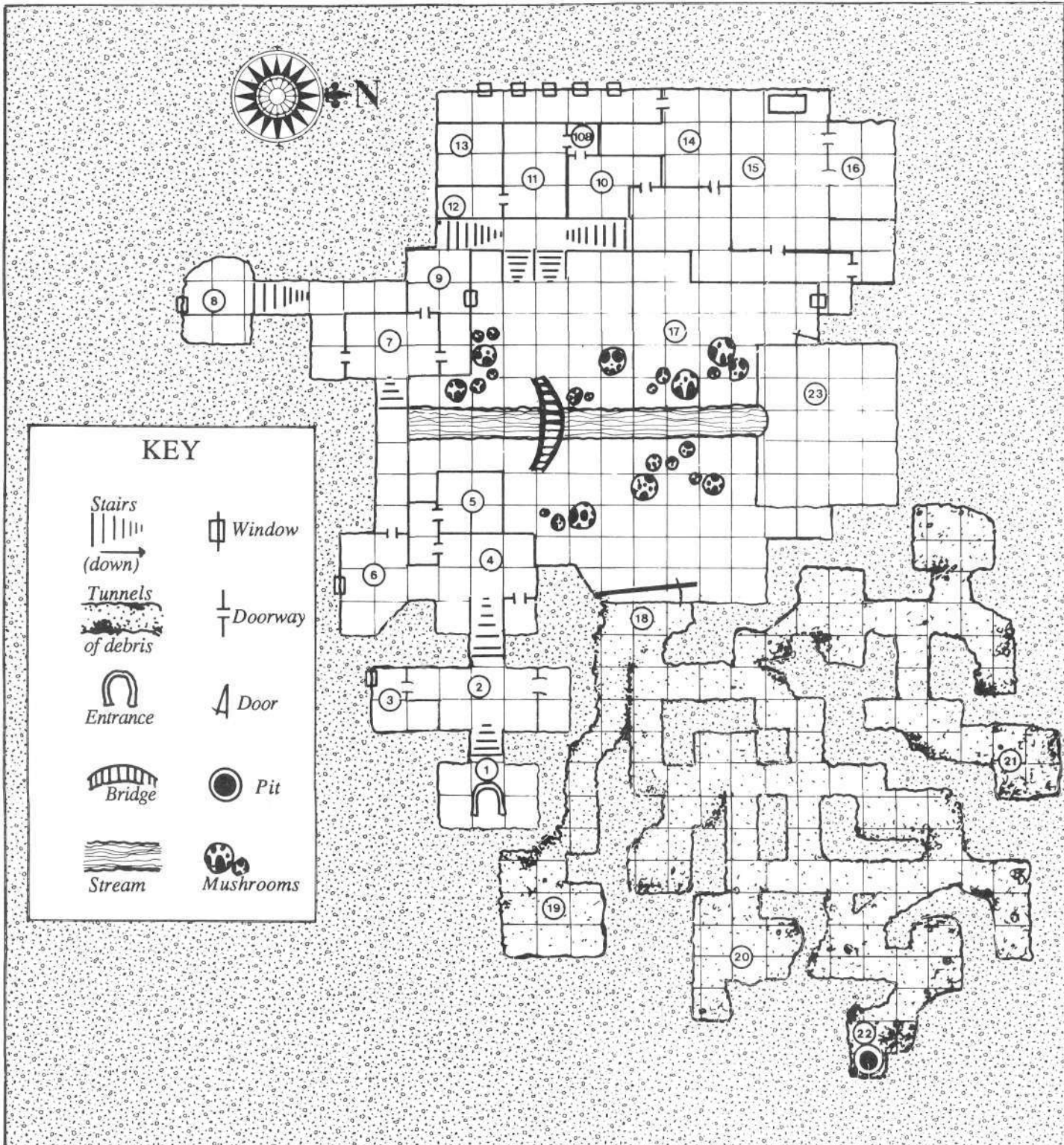
10. Scattered on the floor of this room are various-sized pieces of mushroom hide. The larger pieces have been cut into exact rectangles; the smaller pieces have no regular shape. (The Moabs have been using this room to make clothing from the mushroom hides.)

The tubes on the ceiling of this room form another intricate, yet unique, pattern which casts a greenish light.

10a. As soon as a character steps into this area, he will be able to see the four Moabs assembled in area 11.

11. Four Moabs are sitting here in a circle. As soon as the characters enter, the Moabs will jump to their feet and approach the characters.

THE SUBSURFACE CITY



12. Two Moabs stand here looking through the window in the door at the prisoners in area 13; the door is barred. Any character with a Strength greater than 2 can remove the bar and open the door.

13. Dr. Fairbanks and Miss Dewitt are being held here. The tubes in the ceiling of this room cast a greenish light. When Miss Dewitt sees the player characters, she will immediately jump to her feet; Fairbanks will take a few moments to carefully pack his books into his knapsack and raise himself to his feet in a somewhat more dignified manner. Miss Dewitt will take out her pen and notebook, and begin asking the closest character questions. Although both Fairbanks and Miss Dewitt look tired, they have remained mentally alert.

14. On the floor along the west wall lies the obviously dead body of a greiscon tou, a carnivorous lizard. The greiscon tou has eight legs, enormous clawed feet, a short tail, and a gray, scaly hide. Its eyes are set far apart, and its mouth is long and jagged like a crocodile's. It is approximately eight feet long from nose to tail. Three spears hang in the nook on the south wall.

Characters who approach the lizard and actually move its head around will find a puncture wound in the underside of the greiscon tou's neck. A successful quick Intelligence attribute roll reveals that the lizard has been dead for only a matter of hours (there is no smell, and the limbs are still flexible).

15. This is the largest living quarters for the Moabs. Roll $2D6 + 10$ to determine how many Moabs are here—none of them will be armed, and one-third will be children. Large pieces of mushroom and small pieces

of meat are on a stone table in the northwest corner.

16. This smaller living quarters contains $1D6 + 2$ Moabs. These Moabs are not armed.

17. This is an enormous garden with a stream and a bridge in the middle. Once 100 varieties of plants grew here, but all that grows here now are the mushrooms. The floor is a soft, dark, rich soil. The walls bordering the garden are 30-feet tall; the ceiling seems to be made of the same clear material as the windows. If the characters have a strong light source (such as a carbide lamp), they may be able to discern solid sand and rock pressing against the ceiling.

The entire room is very warm and moist. The clear stream in the middle of the garden trickles out of an opening in the north wall. A successful quick Intelligence attribute roll will reveal that this stream was once much wider (the bridge spans a greater area than necessary). The door on the west wall is closed. Forcing it open requires some sort of sturdy metal tool (crowbar, pick, etc.) and a successful Strength attribute roll for an Impossible task (two people may join their efforts).

Along the west wall is a metal door 12 feet wide by 14 feet tall. Across the door lies a heavy wooden bar of the same material and manufacture as the spear handles. Propped against the wall are 10 spears with good, sharp heads. Two people working together can lift the bar off the door and open it. (When the second earthquake is triggered, this door will fly open, and the greiscon tous on the other side will be set free.)

18. On this side of the door is another bar which can be placed across the door to lock it (this is to

keep the greiscon tous from escaping). The walls and ceiling are made of irregular, broken pieces of rock with sand and glass filling the holes; the floor here is sand. The ceiling drops from 18 feet at the door to only five feet where the passages split. The ceiling in all passages is only five feet tall.

19-21. These are the three lairs of the greiscon tous. Roll $1D6$. On a roll of 1-3, only one greiscon tou is there; on a roll of 4-6, two greiscon tous are present. The greiscon tous will attack once, then attempt to escape into the maze of debris and wait for the characters to pass.

22. A pit about six feet in diameter twists down into the darkness.

23. When the characters open the door leading into this area, a cloud of sand and dust will roll out, along with a soft humming sound and a wave of heat. The dim shapes of large pipes and kettle-shaped boilers can be seen. (This is all the characters will be able to make out.)

Note: Inside this building is the ancient workings of the water pump which has been moving water through this garden for thousands of years. Let the characters peer inside for a moment, then trigger the earthquake.

ANIMAL CHART

Type: Greiscon Tou

#App.: 1

Size: 1 x 1

Movement: L15

Wounds: 3

Save: 1

Weight: 200 lbs.

Weapons: Teeth (3, 2, 0, 1)

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

ONCE YOU HAVE triggered the earthquake and let loose the greiscon tous, the characters will have about five minutes to make it back to the spire before the city slips back into the sand. None of the Moabs will seem alarmed, and certainly none of them will follow the characters out. If the PCs insist on bringing a Moab with them, both Dr. Fairbanks and Miss Dewitt will discourage the characters, saying that the Moabs would never survive in the society of modern Martians and humans.

Once outside the spire, the characters must quickly leave the area as the sand begins flowing down into the ground to fill the hole that the sinking city is leaving behind.

The characters will have a nice hot ride in the desert and plenty of time to discuss with Dr. Fairbanks and Miss Dewitt exactly how much of this story they want to tell (remember how Fairbank's name was muddled by the desert kidnapping incident). Back at Sigeus Portus, the characters will receive their £3000 reward from the *Times* and will be heralded in the papers as the rescuers.



Dr. Gregory Fairbanks (Trained NPC)

and although these were competently written, they have not sold well and are not popular in academia. The reason is that Gregory hypothesized the existence of small "self-contained ecosystems" beneath the desert. He believed that air and water could be present in pockets, which would allow life to exist buried in the desert.

His colleagues were very unsympathetic to his work, but the ancient Canal Martian city which he and Miss Dewitt have discovered proves that his theories were correct.

Fairbanks has a knack for being caught in precarious situations and has had his share of ill fortune. While on a short solo expedition some five

miles outside of Sigeus Portus, Gregory was captured by hostile Hill Martians and forced to carry supplies for them until he managed to escape three months afterward. As a result of his prolonged absence, he lost his job at the university has been labeled a "crackpot" in Sigeus Portus.

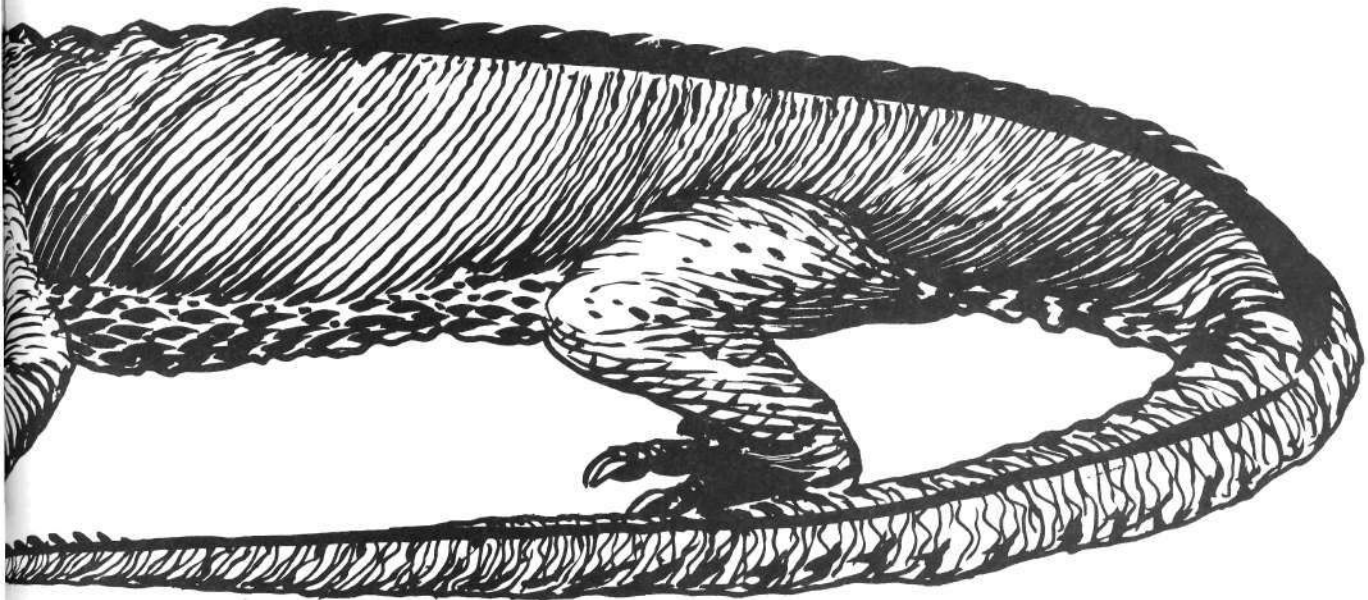
Motives: Adventuresome, Curious, Diligent.

Appearance: Dr. Gregory Fairbanks is slightly taller than average, with square shoulders. He wears glasses, has a beard and a mustache, and wears rather nondescript clothing. He always carries a small leather knapsack with his tools and several reference books.

DR. GREGORY Fairbanks is a well educated British scientist whose specialty is desert geology. Gregory has published two books,

Attributes Skills

Str:	3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged weapon)
Agl:	1	Stealth 1
End:	5	Wilderness Travel 4 (foraging), Swimming 2
Int:	6	Observation 5, Science 5 (geology)
Chr:	2	Eloquence 1
Soc:	4	Riding 2 (horse)



Miss Lillian Dewitt (Green NPC)

MISS LILLIAN DEWITT is a young American reporter who has been with the *Times* for only three months. When everyone else refused to take the assignment with "that crazy Fairbanks fellow," Lillian volunteered because she thought it would be a good way to make a name for herself. Although Lillian is new to the *Times* staff and is generally inexperienced as a reporter, she is well liked by everyone she meets and is thought to have a great future as a journalist.

Like Dr. Fairbanks, Lillian takes her work seriously and is very diligent.

She has respect for Dr. Fairbanks and his work; no matter what else happens, if she gets back to Sigeus Portus, she fully intends to write an article which will clear Dr. Fairbanks and reinstate him as a knowledgeable and level-headed scientist.

Motives: Curious, Diligent, Professional.



Appearance: Miss Lillian Dewitt is only 24 years old and appears to be even younger. Her simple dress, wide-brimmed hat, and long hair make her very attractive, but she strives to remain professional at all times. Lillian carries a small bag with several notebooks and writing instruments. She is constantly jotting down her observations and anything that Dr. Fairbanks says.

Lillian has had time to study the speech of the Moabs and has been able to communicate somewhat with them. To successfully talk with the Moabs, roll her Linguistics skill for a Moderate task.

Attributes	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat (bashing weapon)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 1 (rifle)
End: 1	
Int: 4	Observation 4
Chr: 6	Eloquence 6, Linguistics 4 (French, German, Koline, Parhooni)
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (horse)

The Mystery of Fort Dickerson

THE BRITISH colony on Mars is in a constant state of growth from either internal population growth or immigration. One of the results of this expansion has been the constant political skirmishing that has recently erupted into war between the Oenotrian Empire and the British colony. One reason for the problems between British and Oenotrian interests has been the growing domination of Martian trade by the British, particular-

ly mercantile companies such as the Hesperian Basin Trading Company (HBTC).

FRONTIER OUTPOSTS

IN AN EFFORT to solidify their presence on Mars, the factors of HBTC have constructed several outposts on the outskirts of the explored territories. These outposts are built near or directly next to canals so they have an adequate supply of water

during the constant dry season that prevails on Mars. Many are constructed on the ruins of old Martian settlements or outposts along one of the canals.

The HBTC forts/outposts also serve the purpose of protecting the company's employees in the region. While they are not heavily manned, they are equipped with adequate firepower to threaten most light to medium sky galleons as well as any ground raids that might be launched by hostile ground forces. The forts provide a haven for those local citizens who also face the constant threats of living on the edge of the bold new frontier.

The outposts were primarily built to serve as a hub for commercial activity, of course, and profitable trade remains their *raison d'être*. The

THE HESPERIAN BASIN TRADING COMPANY

THE HBTC AND companies like it have a long history in Great Britain, stretching back to the middle ages when merchant families formed cooperatives to exploit certain regions and freeze out competition. One of the earliest formal companies was the Muscovy Company, formed in Elizabethan times to trade with the territories around the Baltic. More recent examples include the Hudson's Bay Company, formed to exploit the North American fur trade, and the most famous such firm, the British East India Company (it is commonly known as "John Company"), which effectively ruled much of India until the company was closed down in the 1850s. At its height, John Company had merchant ships, fac-

tories, plantations, trading stations, and warehouses throughout India. It also had a small navy and a sizable army of both British and native soldiers to protect its interests. Many historians believe that it was partly the actions of the British East India Company that provoked the Sepoy Rebellion.

The HBTC, of course, is not as powerful as John Company, but it has only been around for a little over four years and, like John Company, maintains an army. The soldiers of this force are humans, some with military experience, others without. The company hires retired army sergeants for the noncommissioned ranks. Officers are largely company executives with some military training, with a smattering of former ar-

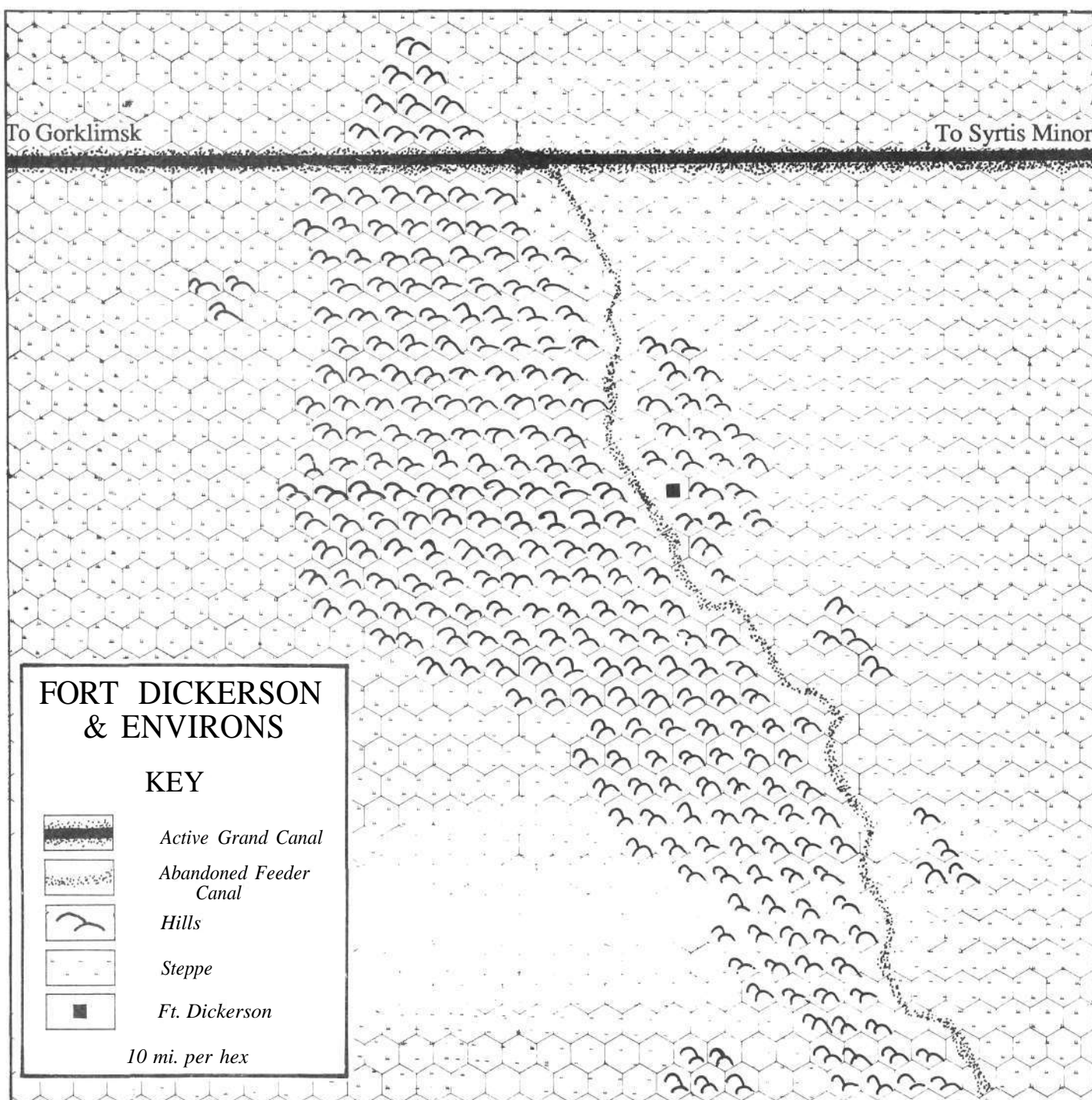
my officers. The equipment they receive is equal to that of the British army, but their training and discipline are considered substandard by professional military men. In its defense, however, HBTC never intended for its forces to be used as a full-strength offensive army, but merely to defend its outposts. At this, they are remarkably good.

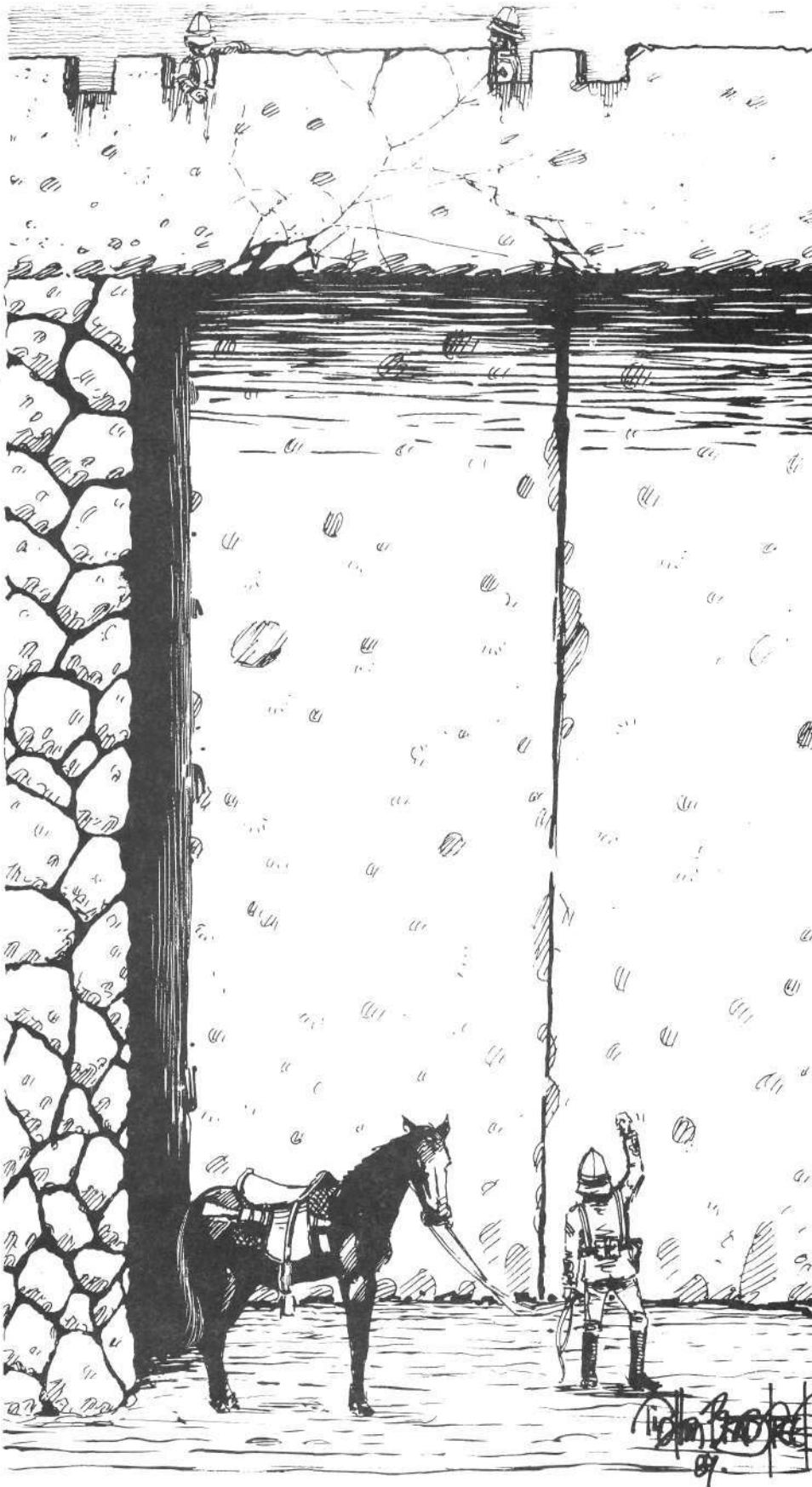
The soldiers of the HBTC are officially organized into two regiments according to present-day British regulations. But in practice the regiments are split into company-sized units and dispersed among the various company outposts. Assignments are rotated on a regular basis, and soldiers do not usually spend too much time in any one place.

company trades British, Martian, and other manufactured goods for the raw materials of whatever region the outpost is located in. Numerous trappers and explorers use these small forts as a base of operations, exploring the wilds of the Martian terrain with a place to return to for safety—a haven in the wilderness.

While these outposts are ever-growing in number, they are usually many days distance from a larger garrison or city-state. This isolation often leaves these positions as dangerous targets for marauders who are more than willing to risk the wrath of the British Empire for personal gain. Communications between

such outlying forts and larger contingents of soldiers usually takes place using periodic message runners, but some stations are equipped for signaling within the local region with small heliographs, which are not large enough to signal more than 15 miles, but are adequate for warning the nearby locals of any danger.





FORT DICKERSON

FORT DICKERSON is located along a dead secondary canal some 12 days southeast of the city-state of Gorklimsk (branching off of the living Gorklimsk/Syrtis Minor canal). The outpost was built on the foundations of an ancient Martian tower, which had long ago fallen into disarray and collapsed. And by the time the British explorers had discovered it, all that remained was a mound of rubble.

An engineering specialist named William Poles designed the fort using many of the massive stone blocks that had once been part of the tower. The fortress stood four rods above the ground and had only one approach, a winding pathway to a heavy stone gate. While tunneling through the foundation to find water, Poles discovered several chambers of what appeared to be rooms, although there was not enough space in the hole for exploration. He noted the position of the rooms and passed the information on to the Royal Archaeological Society's representative in Syrtis Major. The rooms were sealed up again, awaiting proper investigation, and were soon all but forgotten by the garrison.

The outpost was completed in June 1887 and has been in use since then. Because the narrow stretch of the dead canal has proven to be widely travelled by the Appolis and Seleti Hill Martian clans, the trade at Fort Dickerson is heavy. Several explorers use the post as a base of operations in exploring the regions to the south. Other adventurers and fortune seekers use Fort Dickerson as a stopping-off point in their travels—a safe place to stop and rest.

William Poles' reported discovery of antechambers in the foundation of the outpost has recently brought a small group of archaeologists to explore the secrets hidden deep under the present outpost. For over a year the renowned Doctor Phillip Whitehouse has been conducting a series of digs along the base of the present-day fort and has made several boasts of being close to uncovering a find that "will shake the foundation of what we know about the Martians." Dr. Whitehouse is known from time to time to be a braggart, and most of his claims, while somewhat significant, have not altered many theories.

No raids against the fort have been recorded since its construction. Furthermore, the outpost is considered to be a relatively safe place, especially when it is compared to some other places.

HBTC outposts usually have approximately 65 personnel (what would be called a "short company" in the army) assigned as a garrison. This mix of personnel can be deceiving since the number includes supplemental personnel such as clerks, cooks, etc. The actual number of combat soldiers assigned to defend the fort is closer to 57.

In most outposts, because of their isolated locations, about half of the garrison will be trained in riding, usually gashants or ruumet breehr. This is not enough to give the company any significant long-distance striking power, but it is sufficient to patrol the near vicinity of the outpost.

Lookouts are posted at all times in tall towers built from the native stone. The towers are equipped with heliograph signaling apparatuses, but at Dickerson this equipment is rarely used except to communicate with

closeby patrols since no other outpost is within signaling range.

Each outpost is equipped with cannon weaponry for protection from sky galleons. These weapons range in size from a six-pounder on up and are usually mounted so they can fire at steep angles to attack incoming flyers. Such a fort will usually also maintain several smaller guns, such as Nordenfelt or Maxim guns, for protection as well. The guns are manned at all times.

Aside from barracks and at least one magazine, the interior of the outposts is usually made up of a number of small huts and buildings. Many have small hotels and bars run by HBTC subcontractors catering to the unique adventurers who travel the Martian sands. Shops and a market square are also very common, although they are not permitted in some forts due to the forts' proximity to raiding Hill Martians.

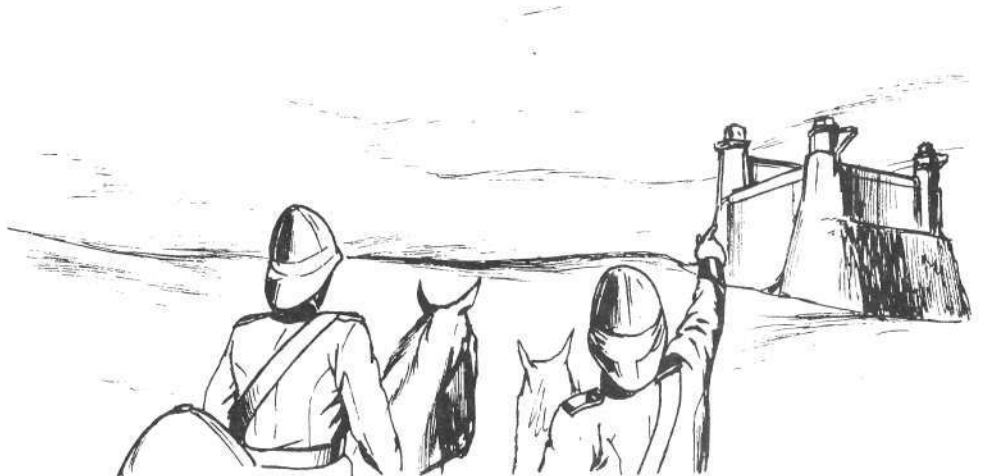
The most guarded position in any outpost is the well. Without water there is no hope for survival under the blazing Sun. Thus, wells are usually guarded and protected around-the-clock. Some forts have stockpiled water butts in various other locations about the fort as a precaution, in case the well goes dry.

TROUBLE IN THE WILDERNESS

THE HBTC DISTRICT manager has reported that the first of the rotating soldiers due back from the fort failed to arrive when expected. Indeed, they have been late by nearly five days. The commander of Fort Dickerson, Lionel Perry, is well known for his precision operations and leadership. Thus, it is assumed something has happened to Fort Dickerson.

The last caravan of traders coming in from the area two weeks ago reported that the fort appeared as it always had on previous visits. These Hill Martians often travel the old canal route since it offers plant life and ample water for survival. According to an interview with them, there was no indication of anything wrong or of any difficulties of any sort at the fort. Only the usual civilians and garrison soldiers were present.

HBTC has, therefore, decided that an expedition must be mounted to find out what has happened. The characters are hired by HBTC for their local expertise, military skills, or other reason (to be determined by the referee).



REFEREE'S SYNOPSIS

IN THIS ADVENTURE the players will undertake a mission to discover the mysterious disappearance of the individuals who lived at Fort Dickerson. The scenario is essentially divided into sections, each one covering a portion of the adventure. The journey to the distant outpost covers one part of the adventure, and the investigation of what is found at Fort Dickerson comprises a great deal of play. Here the players will try to deduce what happened to the inhabitants.

The final portion of the adventure will focus on the players acting on the information they find at the fort. Will they make the right choice and take the proper course of action? Or will they make a fatal mistake?

As the leader of the expedition, the local director has chosen an ex-British officer, Lieutenant Frank Broadstone. Broadstone will be taking the characters, some Martian teamsters for the expedition's gashants, and the contingent of HBTC soldiers due to be rotated into Fort Dickerson. This group of soldiers will number no more than 10 and will be armed with nothing more

powerful than Lee-Metford rifles.

The characters can come from a wide variety of backgrounds and still take part in this adventure. Any scientists or explorers will be interested in going to meet with Dr. Phillip Whitehouse. Adventurer characters may be hired to come along because of their specific skills (knowledge of the area or Linguistics). Reporter player characters will feel right off the bat that this mysterious lack of communications has the ring of a good story. Anytime a frontier outpost falls out of communications, it makes good press. They may have a strong interest in the works of Dr. Whitehouse, as well.

Any player characters who are serving in the military may have been assigned to inspect the HBTC posts in the region and will naturally be interested in what is going on at Dickerson.

GETTING THERE

THE JOURNEY to the fort will take a total of 12 days. Some of this will be along the main canal, but the bulk of the trip is along a secondary canal, long since silted up and now classified as dead. Occasionally some

pooled water will be found, but most of the water flows under the surface. Green grass and trees will grow in abundance over the area where the water flows, while only a few hundred yards away desert winds howl. Such dead canals are described more fully in **Space: 1889**.

The route of the dead canal is often laden with dangers. In many places the canal cannot be seen for miles, as it runs underground. On the surface it can still be followed since this is the only source of life in the Martian sands. This long strip of plant life in the desert attracts some of the hostile animals. Also, this stretch serves as a navigational roadway for the Martians in the region. Many Martians have little love of the British or their outposts. Danger lurks behind every tree and brush, and the journey is destined to be one of high risks and dangerous dealings with both the known and the unknown.

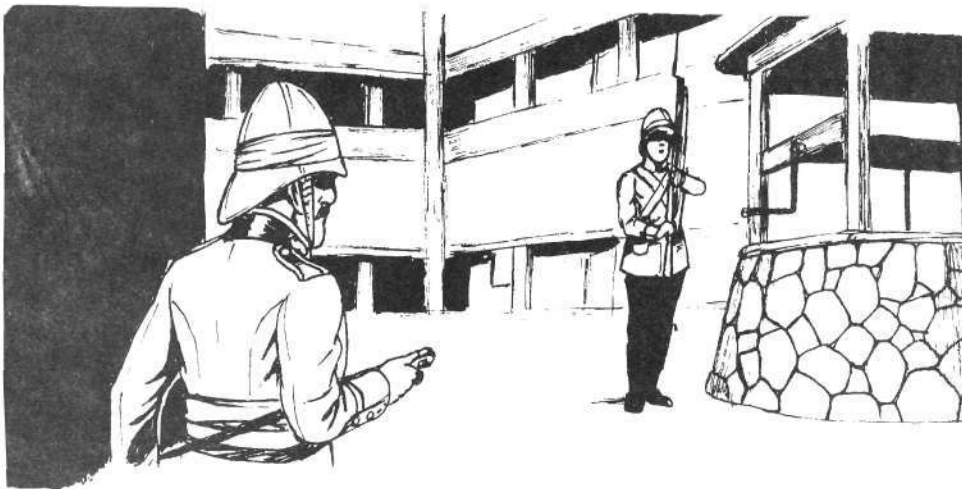
The players are assumed to be on gashants for the duration of the trip. Each day the dead canal is followed to the fort, use the following encounters to provide the players with action and activity.

DAYS ONE THROUGH THREE

FOR THE FIRST two days of the trip, the players are assumed to be travelling along the banks of the Syrtis Minor canal. The normal canal encounter table should be used for this journey. On the third day, they begin travelling down the old canal bed and have no encounters of importance until the next day.

DAY FOUR

THE PARTY meets a trading caravan at dusk, just as the caravan is



bedding down for the night. This group of Canal Martian traders has travelled across the sands of the Martian terrain and has only recently begun to follow the old canal that the players are on. A total of 21 different traders are all mounted upon massive ruumet breehr, and all of them are carrying their wares and their families with them. They will be happy to see the British soldiers and other personnel, in hope of selling more of their goods.

That night the caravan leader, Mortorek, will be happy to discuss what he knows of Fort Dickerson with Lieutenant Broadstone (as well as with the player characters). He will inform the players that his caravan did not pass Fort Dickerson, but he will tell tales of a tribe of Hill Martians known as the Seleti that has been raiding the trade routes (human and Martian) in the outpost area. Otherwise, the traders will only be interested in selling their goods.

The caravan will go on its way the next morning, and the expedition will proceed along the trail. Use the normal encounter tables until the eighth day.

DAY EIGHT

THE PARTY WILL encounter a pair of bandits. Two human bandits on gashants will shadow the players for several hours. If approached, they will always pull back, keeping their distance.

That night, they will attempt to sneak into the players' camp in an effort to steal anything of value. They will be interested mostly in weapons. Even if sentries are posted, as they most likely will be, the two bandits will make it into the camp before the alarm is sounded.

The two bandits, both trained NPCs, are each armed with a lever-action carbine and a pair of large-bore pistols. These cowardly bandits would rather flee than fight a straight-up battle and will attempt to do so the moment the odds turn against them. They have tied their mounts some 100 yards from the campsite, in case they have to make a fast getaway.

If captured, they will admit to having been at Fort Dickerson over a

month ago. They will also freely tell the players that a tribe of Hill Martians has been "bothering" the outpost. Indeed, two of the Hill Martians got into a confrontation with the local authorities that resulted in both of them being killed. Since that time, the relations between the Hill Martians and the outpost have been icy, at best.

If pressed for information concerning the tribe, they will only know its name—the Seleti.

Lieutenant Franklin Broadstone (Trained NPC)



FRANKLIN BROADSTONE was born in Kent and is the product of years of the finest training and military education his parents could buy. After his initial training and his successful graduation from RMA Sandhurst, he was posted to India (which he found to be incredibly dull) and retired from military service at the first opportunity. He was taken on by the HBTC very soon thereafter and has served with the company's military forces for several years.

Broadstone is a determined and chivalrous individual. His following of orders is on the edge of blindness, and he rarely questions superiors. No matter how bold and

daring he acts, Frank is often seen as a brash young upstart. Sometimes he comes off as overly friendly, and that attitude does not settle well with his superiors.

<i>Att.</i>	<i>Skills</i>
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (pole arm)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship (rifle 4, pistol 2)
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 5 (foraging)
Int: 4	Observation 3
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 3 (French, Hindi)
Soc: 5	Riding 5 (horse), Leadership 5

Motives: Adventuresome, Curious, Dutiful.

Appearance: Broadstone is tall and dashing, with sandy blond hair and a neat handlebar mustache. His eyesight is failing, and he wears glasses for reading and for detailed work. Lieutenant Broadstone always carries a large revolver and an infantry officer's sword.

DAY NINE

THE PCS encounter a group of Martian hunters at some point on the ninth day (timing of the encounter is left up to the referee). A small band of eight Canal Martians will meet the characters. They are all armed with spears and initially are apprehensive of the humans. It will take several tense moments of negotiations between Lieutenant Broadstone and the hunter leader, Miki, before they will relax their posture and talk. Until that time, they will hold their spears ready to throw, keeping all the characters edgy.

They will claim that two human trappers have been working their usual foraging areas and have killed most of their food sources. One of these men was seen only two days earlier heading northeast of the fort. Miki will seem to think that something is peculiar—the trapper has never been seen without his companion. The two have been camping two days' ride from the fort (at the south on the edge of the canal zone) and have been there for a short time.

If the players press for information on the Seleti tribe, Miki will state that the Seleti are only remotely known

to him. They are a band of nomads that are known for their violence and their dislike of the Earthmen on their world. The Seleti are no friends of Miki's tribe either, and have raided the Canal Martians in the region for several decades.

When pressed for information concerning the fort, Miki will act afraid. Three days earlier he and his hunters approached the fort—seeing no signs of life. The gun posts and watchtower were unmanned. Miki led his men away, saying an air of death hangs over the outpost, and they have avoided going near it. Use the normal encounter tables until day 11.

DAY ELEVEN

WHEN THE PLAYERS are one day's ride from the fort, they will come across the rotted remains of a Hill Martian body. The corpse is found leaning near a small tree, almost totally concealed by a clump of scrub grass. The air smells of decay, but the body must be investigated.

The body has been dead for several weeks and, if it is inspected carefully, bullet slugs will be found in the torso. Lieutenant Broadstone will examine the bullets closely and will announce that they are standard army

issue. This Martian was killed by a British soldier or someone using a British weapon.

THE FORT PROPER

ON MIDMORNING of the 12th day the players will spot Fort Dickerson. An uneasy calm hangs over the outpost. As the hunter, Miki, stated, none of the usual posts are staffed at the fort, and there are no signs of activity. As the characters approach, they will see Martian carrion birds circling above the fort—an unnerving sight. The tall watchtowers are unmanned and eerily silent. Above everything, a union jack and the company flag flap slightly in the light breeze.

The fort has a long ramped causeway leading up to its only gate. It is situated along what was, at one time, the canal. The water surfaces several hundred feet from the edge of the outpost, runs past it on opposite sides of the ramp leading into the fort, then pools 200 yards away, sinking underground again.

The fort is tall and is visible for some distance. Built on the foundations of an old Martian tower, the fort is covered with dry vines and a small quantity of the gray-green Martian moss found wherever there is sufficient moisture. Along the side of the fort that faces the remains of the canal is evidence of clearing; the piles of stones here are a strong indication that this is the area where Dr. Whitehouse was conducting his dig.

As the player characters approach, they will see that the main gate to the fort (the only way in) is cracked open slightly. Any yells to the fort will only scare off the carrion birds from the courtyard.





THE TESTIMONY OF CORPORAL OWEN

SERGEANT MASTERS and Private Sternson pushed at the massive doorway with all their might. Despite its appearance, the door did not seem to want to move at first. Then it slowly creaked open enough for one of them to look in. Sternson stuck his head in for a moment, his pistol at the ready. Then we saw his body begin to shake. His face was blank, white as sailcloth. He looked me in the eyes, and I saw his knees begin to give way. Sternson pulled back; Sergeant Masters held him as he began to vomit. Whatever it was that he had seen, it was something quite horrible, I was assured of that much. I didn't know what it was, but I was sure that I didn't want the same fate to befall me and those near me.

The massive front gate requires the strength of two men to open enough for a person to pass. As

soon as it is opened, the players will be nearly overpowered by the stench of death in the air. Looking into the courtyard, the players will see the remains of the personnel of the fort. The corpses are almost unrecognizable after the carrion birds have feasted. They obviously have been dead for some time, and it appears that they were killed and then stacked in the courtyard—perhaps as a warning.

In several areas around the courtyard and near the bodies are shattered remains of Hill Martian spears. Indeed it appears that a raid of some sort has taken place here, and these are the victims of that attack.

At the corner of the courtyard, at the base of the watchtower, is a crudely nailed piece of wood. In dried blood is the word "Seleti" written in English. No bodies are found near the place where the word

is written, no evidence of who left this vital clue.

"Horrible, that's what it was, sir, horrible. I joined the army 10 years ago. I've served in some pretty remote places and seen some things that would turn a man's hair white as snow, but nothin' like the slaughter we found there. Bloody spears layin' about, some still stickin' in the bodies of the dead. And that word hangin' over us all, Seleti. If they was responsible for a doin' this, then they would pay, and pay dearly, that much you can be sure of."

We secured the fort and then closed the gate. Walters and Torrence manned the lookout, and we began to dig through what was left of it all. There had to be some sort of answer, something that would justify or explain the slaughter that we found.

A SEARCH FOR ANSWERS

ONCE THE characters have gotten over the shock of finding the corpses, they will begin trying to discover exactly what became of the occupants of the outpost. In order to do this, they will have to conduct a search of the fort and the surrounding area. The referee has the task of presenting the information to them and allowing them to piece together the clues needed to solve the mystery. To search for clues and other vital information, use the map provided on page 54 and the descriptions as written below. The referee should feel free to add to the descriptions as he feels necessary.

1. The Courtyard: A total of 32 corpses are in the courtyard of Fort Dickerson. Most of these have been stacked like logs. They are all in advanced stages of decay, with little left to examine in most cases.

Characters inspecting the few bodies that are intact will find no evidence of any wounds or cuts. In fact, other than superficial damage done by the carrion birds, there is no visible cause of death on the corpses. Furthermore, none of the bodies have been looted, and all seem to have been dragged from within the compound to their location in the courtyard.

It is important to note that all of the bodies found are those of the British garrison soldiers—none are those of the civilians who lived in the fort.

The crude sign seems to have been painted with blood. Nearby is a towel that is stained with what appears to be blood and must have been used to draw the letters. No bodies are near the sign.

2. Atillison's Mercantile: This store was the general store that supplied residents and visitors of the outpost. A thin layer of dust covers everything, signifying that the store has not been looted since the day of the massacre.

If a check is made of the receipts, the characters will find that the last sales made were to two trappers named Wilson and Hobbes, almost four weeks ago. They purchased ammunition for rifles, as well as typical foodstuffs and supplies. Both men traded furs and skins for their goods.

An inventory of the store will take almost a full day for one person to complete. It will show that all money in the building has been removed. Also taken was a large amount of bacon, lard, flour, and oats, as if someone were planning a long journey or knew that they could not come back to the fort for some time.

3. Livery: The stablemaster's notes show that a total of 26 gashants were quartered at the livery. As the players inspect the fort, they find that all the gashants are gone. Whoever raided the outpost and killed the defenders took all the gashants, as well as the riding tack, with them. Four large wagons listed on the inventory are missing as well.

4. Barracks: This two-story building was built out of massive stone blocks were once part of the tower where the outpost now stands. As the barracks for the Fort Dickerson garrison, it is well defended even if the interior of the fort is under attack. This structure appears totally undisturbed.

All the beds are made in perfect British military style. Four of the beds even have gear laid out for inspection.

5. Officers' Quarters/Command Post: The officers' quarters doubled as a command post and a battle infirmary at Fort Dickerson. In this single-story building the players will find more of the garrison forces, especially in the area of the infirmary. None of the bodies show any sign of combat injuries. Indeed, despite their decay, they appear to have been in perfect condition. As the characters move through the building, they will find the remains of the post physician in the aisle. In his hands is a shattered jar of malt powder commonly used to treat stomach ailments and cramps.

The command post itself reveals the body of the garrison commander, Lionel Perry, seated at his desk. Next to him is an empty water glass with the dried remains of malt powder.

In the outpost's log, Perry notes the arrival of two traders by the name of John Wilson and Peter Hobbes, who arrived at the fort on the morning of April 13 to purchase supplies. According to the log, the men left two days later, on April 15, at midday, after taking on supplies. This is the last entry in the log, apparently made on or near the day of the massacre.

If the previous two months of the log are carefully scanned, several entries stand out that might lead to clues as to motives or reasons for the massacre at the fort. One dated March 2 points to three men punished for stealing and sentenced to 30 days extra duty.

Another entry, dated March 5, indicates that several nomads of the Seleti clan arrived at the outpost. They had an altercation with two soldiers and, in a brief fist fight,

drew their weapons. A gunner on the Nordenfelt saw the action in the courtyard and discharged his weapon, killing the Seleti. Several others of the clan left, vowing revenge for the loss of their fellow tribesmen in dishonorable combat. The Seleti weapons were confiscated from the dead.

The only other entry of any importance was on April 3 and concerns Dr. Whitehouse and his work. According to the sketchy notes by Perry, Dr. Whitehouse made some sort of discovery of "great value," and the commander was sworn to secrecy on the matter. On the side of the page is a small doodling of a diamond-shaped gem with a £ symbol next to it.

Another find that might be of interest is a recent inventory of the garrison armory and magazine.

A more detailed search of the command post will show no signs of a struggle, but one door to a closet has been forced open. Usually this closet was used for holding confiscated items and contraband. Missing, according to the roster sheet, are several Seleti spears.

6. Phillips' Boarding House: This structure stands two stories tall and is the residence of the majority of the civilians living at the fort. An inspection of the rooms reveals little more than personal objects and effects. Most of the rooms seem to show evidence of a hurried packing and departure.

The only item of interest is in Mrs. Phillips' registration book in the lobby of the building. Listed as the last two guests to stay are John Wilson and Peter Hobbes.

7. Various Civilian Quarters: The company soldiers lived in the

barracks, but several other families also lived in the outpost. Like the boarding house, most of these have been left rather messy, as if someone hastily packed his belongings and departed. There are no signs of struggle, however, adding to the air of mystery.

8. Mess Hall: The mess hall appears abandoned and left in disarray. Dirty dishes are piled, awaiting a washing they never received.

In the back of the hall (in the pantry) are the bodies of the garrison's cook and his assistant. Like with the other corpses, there is no sign of a struggle here—only death.

The only significant clue can be found near the back door of the building. It is a broken jar of some sort, shattered against the massive blocks that make up the structure. Inside the broken glass bottom is a small amount of some powdery, dried, green substance. On the broken remains of the jar is a label with the Martian word *termuaa* scrawled on the slightly torn paper.

9. Dr. Whitehouse's Laboratory/Residence: At first this building appears to be a normal house for a civilian in the fort. However, it is laid out like a museum workroom. There are several stone artifacts, such as jars and tools, each with a piece of paper under it describing where it was found and what it may be. Two five-foot, stone, grinding wheels with intricate carvings are propped up against the wall. The only evidence that this building was used as a residence is a small cot in the corner and a handful of personal effects identifying this as Dr. Phillip Whitehouse's laboratory.

Like those of many doctors, Dr. Whitehouse's notes are difficult to

read, and the referee should make this as difficult as possible for the characters. There are scant references that Dr. Whitehouse had found something significant in his diggings at the base of the outpost. He makes reference to the Lens of Torbash and the Lens of Fibash. Other than that, nothing else of significance can be gained from his scrawled notes.

10. Armory and Magazine: This small structure is underground, built into the foundation of the outpost. The door to the armory has been forced open, and the crowbar used to do it still lies nearby. Many of the rifles used by the garrison are still in place on the racks, but nearly a dozen are missing.

A close check of the inventory found in the command post will reveal that eight cases of rifle ammunition have been taken, along with a large quantity of ammunition for the Nordenfelt five-barrel gun. All ammunition for the fort's Hotchkiss cannon is still in place.

11. Gun Position One: This elevated platform mounts a Hotchkiss six-pounder rotating cannon. The gun is bolted into the massive stonework foundation of the outpost. The bolts show signs of having been tampered with recently, and several tools are found nearby, supporting that theory.

Apparently thieves or the murderers attempted to take the weapon but did not because of the effort involved.

12. Gun Position Two: This position at one time mounted a Nordenfelt five-barrel gun, but now it is gone.

Scar marks in the stone indicate that it was lowered into the courtyard after it was removed.

FORT DICKERSON

KEY



Rubble



British Buildings



Martian Buildings



Dr. Whitehouse's Trenches

1. The Courtyard
 2. Attilison's Mercantile
 3. Livery
 4. Barracks
 5. Officer's Quarters/Command Post
 6. Phillip's Boarding House
 7. Various Civilian Quarters
 8. Mess Hall
 9. Doctor Whitehouse's Laboratory/Residence
 10. Armory and Magazine
 11. Gun Position One
 12. Gun Position Two
- Scale is 6' Tactical Squares.

Curtain Wall



DR. WHITEHOUSE'S DIG

FAR DOWN AT the base of the fort is the area where Dr. Whitehouse had been conducting his diggings. The exterior is marked with tall mounds of dirt, and numerous trenches and trial excavations. One of the massive stone blocks used in the foundation has been pulled out enough to allow a person passage inside the unofficial basement of the fort.

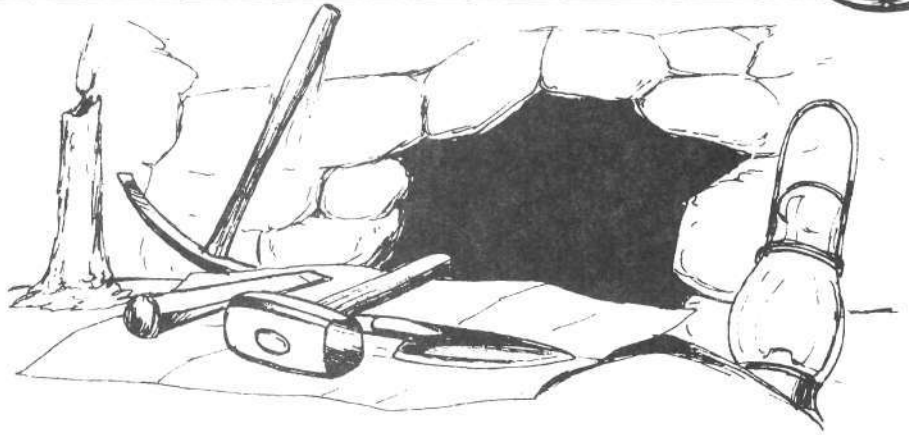
Several lanterns and lights will be required (even in broad daylight) to make out the interior of the diggings. The removed block apparently concealed an antechamber left by the original Martian builders. Odd writings and runes cover one of the walls, and in the dim light they seem to stand as some sort of warning.

Further investigation will show another very small, narrow passage into yet another antechamber. Here stone mosaics (in terrible condition) show Canal Martians holding staffs up to the Sun. Mounted on top of these staffs are large gems, almost the size of a human hand.

In the center of the room is a small, intricately carved, black, wooden box. Nothing is left inside but the tattered remains of a once-ornate cloth. The contents are apparently missing.

A further investigation of the outside of the dig will turn up only a series of excavation holes, evidently dug in accordance to some pattern, since they are regular spaced apart.

At the edge of the water canal the characters will find the body of Dr. Whitehouse. Unlike any of the others, his body has been shot, and the bullet fired was from a British military rifle.



GATHERING THE CLUES TOGETHER

BROADSTONE IS more than willing to take his time in the investigation. He will have the majority of his soldiers manning the battlements of the outpost while the others sift through the remains and try to determine what has happened to the men and women who once lived in the fort.

After several days of research, the lieutenant will call in the players to discuss the clues that have been found. It will be up to the whole group to try to determine what has taken place.

The clues are as follows.

- All of the garrison soldiers' bodies have been accounted for, with the exception of three men. None of the civilians, nearly 20 in number, have been found, with the exception of Dr. Whitehouse. It is entirely possible that the fort's civilians fled the outpost or were taken as prisoners, especially since it appears that many of them packed before they departed.

- The name of the Hill Martian tribe, Seleti, was found in the courtyard. Several days before the massacre, Seleti tribesmen were killed in an altercation with the British. Also, Seleti spears were found in the debris of the courtyard.

- Scant evidence points to the fact that Dr. Whitehouse made some sort of a significant discovery in his work, yet nothing of value has been found either at the site or in the fort. The items could have been stolen by the individuals responsible for the massacre.

- Whoever or whatever performed this heinous act apparently took plenty of supplies, ammunition, and the outpost's five-barrel Nordenfelt gun with them.

- With the exception of Dr. Whitehouse, all of the victims apparently show no signs of a struggle. The infirmary was filled, and there is a possibility of a sudden infection or sickness of some sort.

- The only other individuals in the outpost were two fur trappers, named John Wilson and Peter Hobbes, who lived nearby.

- A strange substance named *termuaa* was discovered at the back of the mess hall. This name is Martian, and the qualities of the substance are unknown.

Given the set of clues, the lieutenant feels that the only course of action left is to take a portion of his force and set out to find the fur trappers, Wilson and Hobbes, and interrogate them. If no answer is found with them, then he will attempt to find out what he can from the nomadic Seleti.

SPLITTING FORCES

THE GARRISON FORCE will be under the command of Sergeant Masters, while Lieutenant Broadstone leads the expedition. He will only take six troops with him. Despite the fact he feels civilians are difficult to handle and risky to have along, he welcomes any who are armed and willing to fight, if the need arises.

Using the information provided by Miki, he will lead the group on horseback to the south, searching for the dwellings of the fur trappers, Wilson and Hobbes. The ride will take two days, and eventually the players will find a small hut built on a hillside. Like at the fort, there is initially no sign of life.

A DANGEROUS ENCOUNTER

AS THE characters approach the small hut, they will notice movement in the shade trees nearby. Lieutenant Broadstone will hold his forces back, ordering two of his men to flank to the far right to try to find out who is hiding there. Just as he gives his order, a tall Hill Martian will step out of hiding. He is dressed in a fur tunic and is very old. In his hand is a large spear, and he is holding it in a menacing manner—apparently unafraid of the British officer and his men.

Eight Hill Martians step out of hiding at a wave of their leader's arm. Like their leader, they are armed with spears and show little fear at the sight of the more heavily armed British.



The Martian will make no effort to communicate first, since customarily this is a sign of weakness among his tribe. Eventually, he will take several long strides forward until he is only 30 feet from the British party. He will be followed closely by his party, each appearing as menacing as possible.

It is important to note that any violent or threatening action on the part of any player character will result in a similar stance by one of the Hill Martians. Thus, if the player characters hold their weapons pointed at the Martians, the Seleti will hold their spears up, ready to throw at the humans. Any attack will be met with a counterattack.

If such a situation arises, all the Seleti have Strength 5 and Endurance 4. Each is armed with a spear.

If a fight does break out, the lieutenant will do what he can to get both sides to halt and talk. Finally, Lieutenant Broadstone will step forward and address the Seleti leader directly.

THE SELETI SIDE OF THE STORY

THE HILL MARTIAN will identify himself as Celet, leader of the Seleti clan. He will blatantly demand to know why the British party has come here—to murder more of his people in cold blood? Was not the blood of his brother enough for their tastes? (His use of the English language is fair but often difficult to understand.)

Once through with his initial demands, he will openly listen to the story told by Lieutenant Broadstone. The lieutenant will go into all the details of the findings, even mentioning the blood-written word "Seleti" in the courtyard. Celet will listen and

appear unshaken by the account.

After several long seconds of silence, he will sneer at the lieutenant. Yes, there was an altercation with the garrison, and several of the Seleti were killed, but massacre is not the way of his people. They only have a blood feud with the man who actually killed his people, and from the sound of it, that feud is ended now that he is among the dead.

As for the sign that implicated him, Celet will claim that he, and he alone, knows how to write in English. His people would never have wasted the time to leave a clue as to who committed the crime. Neither would they have abandoned the fort without stripping it of everything useful to them.

When pressed as to why he was near the hut used by Wilson and Hobbes, Celet will state that he has a working agreement with the two men and has not heard from them in some time. The Seleti found no evidence of wrongdoing or any sign of either trapper. Celet and his men do not find this bothersome, since both humans also have a cave in a nearby hill where they live from time to time.

If one of the characters accompanying the party asks about the word *termuaa*, they will see Celet's eyes narrow. He will state that it is a poison made from weeds found along the canal. His people sold some to several of the British soldiers during their last fateful visit to the fort. The officers in the outpost found that when combined with a light oil, it was an effective leather cleaner and preservative.

Celet will claim that he does not know what happened to the civilians who lived at Fort Dickerson. He will

imply strongly, however, that some Martian tribes to the far south will pay handsomely for human slaves.

Celet will depart with his men when he is done speaking. He will make no effort to follow or badger the expedition at all.

Any investigation of the hut will find that, apparently, it is abandoned, with no weapons or signs of food there. Most of the personal effects, with the exception of some clothing, are gone.

From the look of everything, the hut has been abandoned for some time, at least three weeks.

ANOTHER BODY

ACCORDING TO Celet, Hobbes and Wilson's cave is two days' march to the southeast. Lieutenant Broadstone will lead the players in setting off to find the trappers, feeling that they offer the greatest amount of information about what happened at the fort.

After a day's ride, one of the scouts will come across the fallen form of John Wilson. Wilson has been shot and is near death. The wound is very old and badly infected, and there is little hope that he can be saved. As he lays near death, he will finally fill the player characters in on what has happened to the outpost and its occupants, at least as far as he knows.

From his deathbed Wilson will state that three of the soldiers of the fort found out that Dr. Whitehouse had discovered two gems of great value. These men, privates named Shaugnessy, Wicks, and Holt, struck a deal with Wilson and his partner Peter Hobbes to help them steal the gems. But the theft was foiled, and both Wilson and Hobbes backed out



of the deal. Peter Hobbes, though, turned on his partner and sold out to the soldiers. Hobbes then went back to the fort.

John Wilson knows that the four men were going to poison the garrison's food. Then they would take the gems. Using whatever means possible, they would capture the civilians and sell them off to the slave traders to the south, which was where Peter Hobbes' skills were to come into use. After that they would lay low for several months, then sell the gems for a tidy sum.

Wilson believes that once the plan was underway, the three soldiers killed his partner. Wilson fled to their cave retreat only to find it now in the hands of the soldiers. He was shot and left for dead, but he managed to crawl back this far.

Before he can give any details of the layout of the cave, he will warn them of the Nordenfelt at the entrance. Furthermore, the soldiers still have the women from the outpost as hostages and are willing to kill them if they have to.

Wilson obviously knows more, but in his weakened state slips into a coma. Within a matter of hours he dies, taking with him any hope of the PCs finding out the cave's secrets.

KIDNAPPER ATTRIBUTES

Attribute	Shaugnessy	Wicks	Holt
Strength	4	4	2
Agility	3	2	4
Endurance	3	2	2
Intelligence	2	3	3
Charisma	3	3	3
Social Status	1	2	2

SKILLS

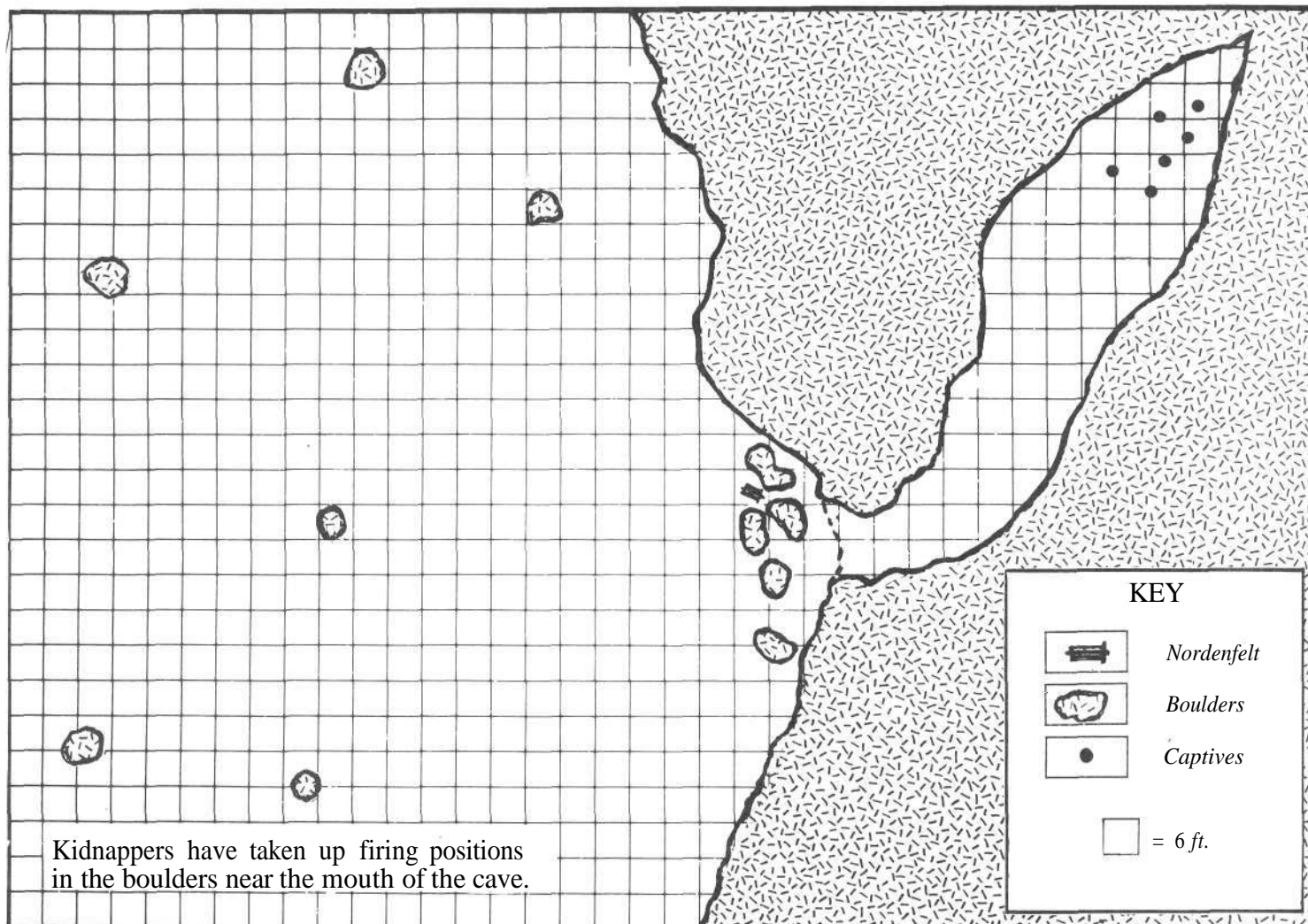
Skill	Shaugnessy	Wicks	Holt
Fisticuffs	3	3	4
Marksmanship:			
Rifle	3	3	2
Pistol	2	2	3

CLIMAX

IT WILL TAKE another full day to reach the cave. A rather large rock outcropping rises out of the sandy and rocky wastes. The cave is situated at the base of the massive rock and is fortified by a number of boulders forming a defensive ring around it. In the opening of the cave, glittering in the light of day, are the five steely fingers of the Nordenfelt's barrels.

Lieutenant Broadstone realizes that a direct assault would almost assuredly take the lives of all his men. From a distance the expedition sees activity—mostly the women milling about under the ever-present guns of their captors.

THE CAVE



Broadstone proposes that a small group attempt to sneak up on the cave at night and free the prisoners. Then the matter of the treasonous soldiers can be dealt with. Any player characters who volunteer will be accepted.

The cave itself is very shallow, only going back some 40 feet into the rock outcropping. All the gashants stolen from the fort are tied to the east in a small area of grass and weeds. A small well is located at the western edge of the rocks, barely enough to supply the humans living there.

The Nordenfelt gun is manned at all times by one of the renegade soldiers. Any person attempting to sneak into the cave in the middle of the night must roll a die. On a roll of 1 or 2, the sentry at the gun is asleep and does not notice. On any other roll, he will spot the characters and attempt to turn the gun on them. If the rescuers move fast enough (Agility greater than 4), they can overpower the gunner and do so without raising an alarm.

The women from the outpost are tied up at night and are kept along the eastern edge of the cave wall. Six trip wires, rigged to cowbells, are strung randomly in the area so anyone coming in or attempting to flee will set them off. Each time one is encountered, the player crossing it must roll a die. A roll of 4, 5, or 6 indicates that the wire has been found and can be avoided. Otherwise it is tripped, warning the kidnappers.

If an alarm is raised, the two remaining kidnappers will draw rifles and attempt to threaten one of the women if the players do not withdraw.

They will hold the hostage in front

of them, warning the characters off.

If the PCs leave, they will find the Nordenfelt turned on them the moment that they are clear of the cave. If they opt to rush the kidnappers, they will find that the killers will toss aside the women and fire at them directly.

Shaugnessy, Wicks, and Holt are all Trained NPCs.

The soldiers' last-ditch attempt to hold what they have will take place only when two of the three have been killed or knocked unconscious. The remaining kidnapper will grab a torch and threaten to apply it to a keg of black powder, slightly open in the rear of the cave. He will pick up the keg and try to make his way out of the cave, if allowed to do so.

If threatened, he will drop the torch and bolt for the exit, regardless of where the player characters are. If the kidnapper is shot, roll a die. On a roll of 1 or 2 he will have fallen down and dropped the burning torch on the powder. The player characters will have to roll their Agility ratings or less to escape the cave before the powder explodes. Treat the women prisoner NPCs as if they have a rating of 3 for Agility. Any explosion will seal the cave and all of its contents forever.

If the adventure ends with both survivors and cave intact, the players will find a total of 12 women who are still alive. They will state that the remainder of the civilians, five men, were taken south five days ago by a trading caravan that purchased the men from the kidnappers. Apparently there was a squabble over the price for the women, and they were not sold.

The story they tell will match John Wilson's. All of them are suffering

FURTHER ADVENTURES

FIVE OF the men taken from the fort have been sold into slavery somewhere to the south. The PCs can follow the canal in an effort to find and free them.

There will likely be a company inquiry into the incident at Fort Dickerson as well. The characters are destined to be called back at a later date as witnesses, especially if any of the kidnappers/killers are taken alive.

The referee should remember that the men who conducted the massacre at Fort Dickerson know they are facing the death sentence for their crimes. They may successfully escape, hoping to kill any potential witnesses or to flee back to Earth (or another world altogether). The characters may be called back into service to try to track them down.

from the early signs of malnutrition, and several are ill.

In the cave (considered lost if the cavern is blown up) is a small leather bag with the broken remains of the two large gems that were stolen from Dr. Whitehouse's find. The victims will say that the gems were broken during a fight between two of the kidnappers. The contents of the bag, even though the gems were shattered, are worth nearly £26,000. The company will turn 10 percent of this over to the characters.

If any of the kidnappers are taken alive, they will be shackled heavily and guarded around-the-clock. They will be taken back to Fort Dickerson to await trial.

Ship Combat

FROM TIME TO time there may be fights between aquatic vessels, particularly ones travelling down the canals of Mars or through the swamps of Venus. These brief rules

are intended to provide a framework within which the referee can resolve such battles. A modified form of the aerial combat rules is used, with the obvious difference that altitude is ig-



nored. In addition, the following modifications are made.

Damage: All boats have their speed halved (round down) once they have taken half their total allowed hull hits, and they sink once they have taken all their allowed hull hits. Irrelevant critical hits (such as magazine or boiler hits) are rerolled.

A loss of trim critical hit becomes "uncontrolled flooding," a new type of damage result. Ships suffering an uncontrolled flooding result immediately take hull hits equal to the damage value of the round which caused the hit. In each subsequent movement phase the crewmembers may attempt to stop the flooding by conducting a normal damage repair attempt. If they succeed, the hit has no further effect. If they fail, the ship takes additional hull hits equal to the original damage value. This continues every turn until either the flooding is stopped or the ship sinks.

Ramming: Normal rules for ramming and collisions are used, except that any ship damaged by a successful ram (by a ram-equipped ship) automatically suffers an uncontrolled flooding critical hit.

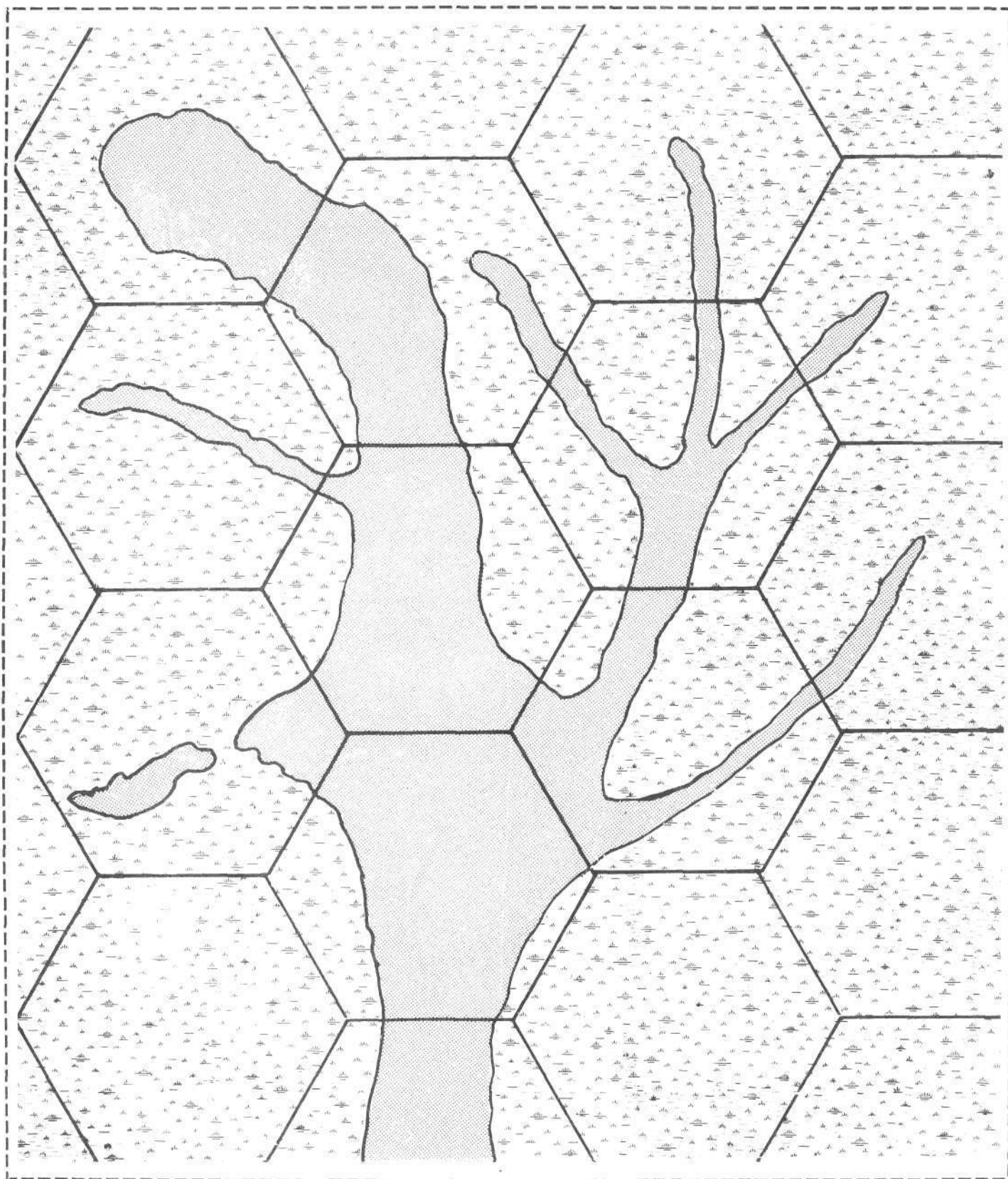
Submarines: Submarines must declare whether they are surfaced or submerged during the initiative phase of each turn. They may not be fired at while submerged, but they may not ram while submerged either. As submarines are completely enclosed and are difficult targets, all gun and crew hits count as misses. Once a submarine has taken half its hull hits, it may no longer dive. Lifter critical hits against submarines are not rerolled, but instead prevent them from diving until repaired.

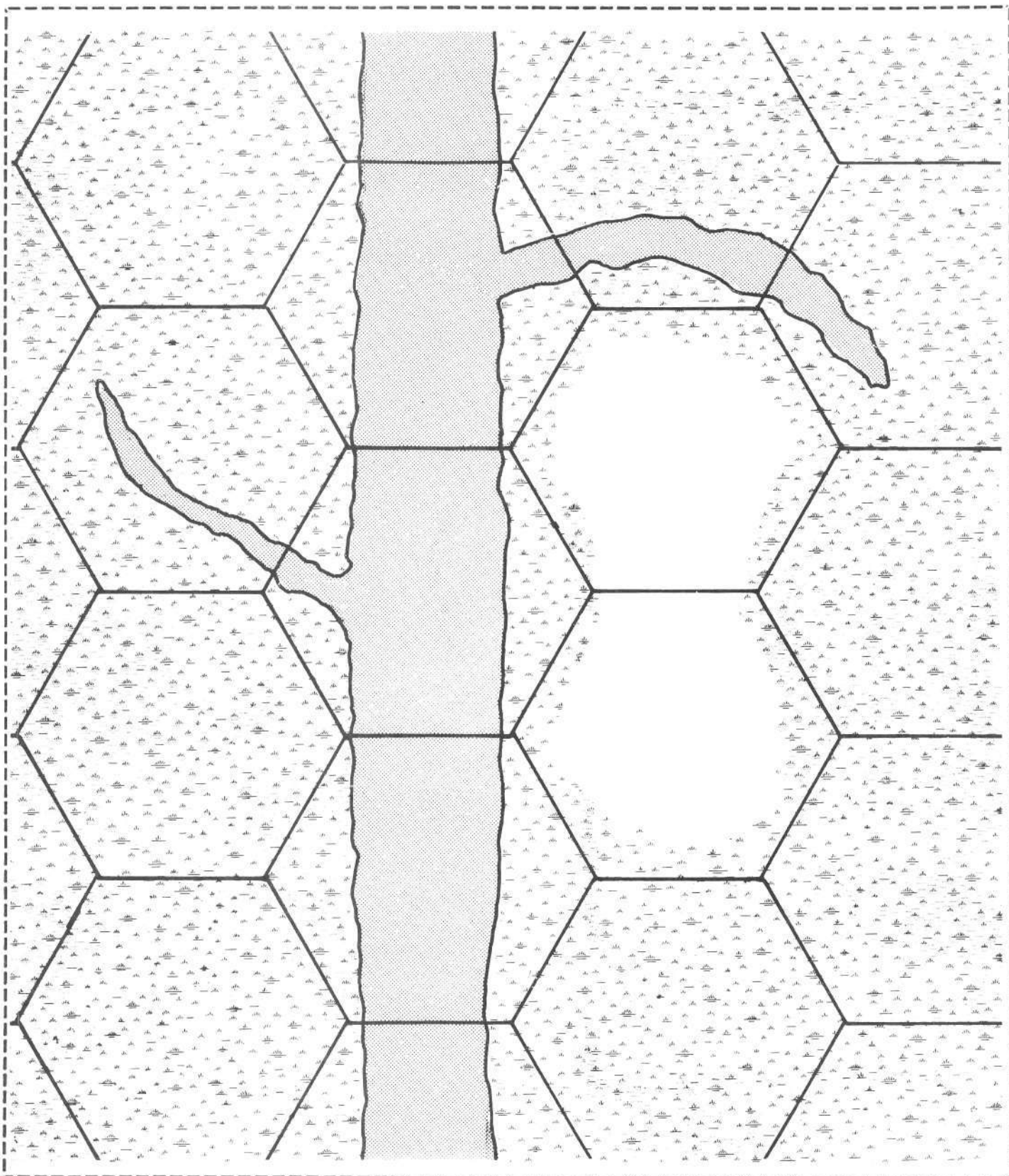
The statistics for several aquatic vessels are presented to the left.

AQUATIC VESSELS

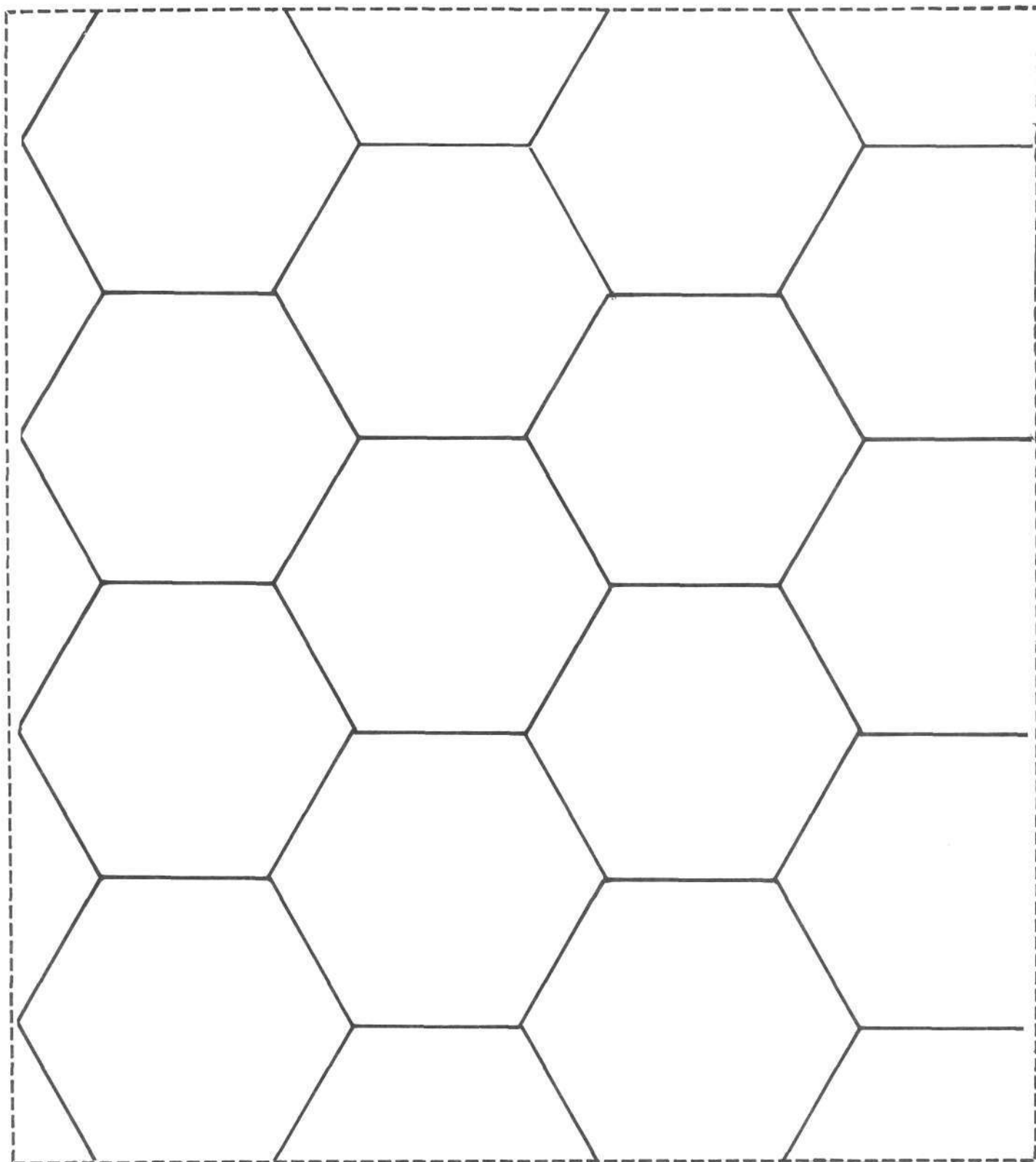
<i>Vessel</i>	<i>Speed</i>	<i>Ram</i>	<i>Hull</i>	<i>Crew</i>	<i>Armament</i>
War Galley	2	Yes	20	20	1 heavy gun, 10 passengers
Merchant	1	No	30	10	None, 10 passengers
Barge	1	No	40	10	None, 20 passengers
Skiff	2	No	4	1	None, 5 passengers
Submarine	1	Yes	10	6	2 torpedoes
Steam Launch	3	No	10	3	None, 10 passengers
Hydrofoil	R x 2	No	10	3	1 machinegun, 2 passengers

Note: R x 2 means the speed of the vessel is twice its reliability number.





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Players and referees may photocopy this blank grid map for the creation of their own terrain maps.

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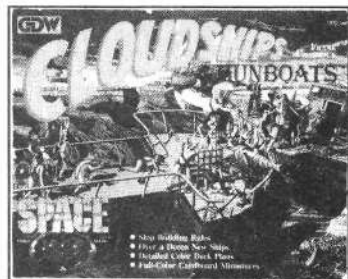
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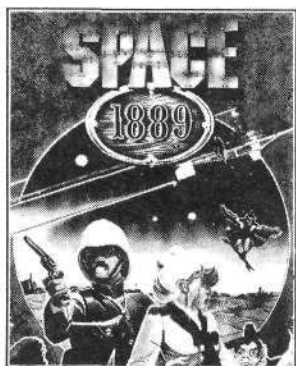


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THE STORY OF SPACE: 1889

It was as a result of intense intellectual conversations between Professor B. Etienne Moreau of the Sorbonne and American, inventor Thomas A. Edison



that the latter devised a practical use for the luminiferous ether. Its nature suggested to Edison a device which could "sail at speeds heretofore undreamed of through the luminiferous ether." It was, in fact, a quirk of fate which forced his first such invention to fail—

his prototype could not overcome the atmosphere—forcing Edison to set his sights toward the airless heavens. The space age had begun.

Edison himself made the first manned voyage in an ether flyer of his own invention, accompanied by Jack Armstrong, a Scottish soldier of fortune. The two managed to pilot their craft via hydrogen balloon high enough to allow their ether propeller to take hold. Unfortunately, their landing on Mars was not as smooth, and the balloon was damaged. The expedition would have been stranded forever were it not for the fact that the planet was inhabited.

Edison and Armstrong were taken prisoner by a local Martian potentate, Amraamtaba IX. Armstrong learned the language, and Edison impressed the ruler with his tremendous knowledge. The pair were soon freed, and Edison was provided with the materials necessary to repair



his balloon. Within months the repaired flyer was ready to carry Edison, Armstrong, and a curious Martian back to Earth. The expedition landed safely outside Cincinnati on the 7th of August, 1870.

Earth was electrified. Edison and Armstrong received fame and fortune. Within a year, dozens of companies were manufacturing Edison Flyers, and flyers of several nationalities were soon making regular trips to Mars. The British established a permanent quarter in the Martian city of Parhoon. Belgians and French quickly followed suit, establishing themselves as colonial powers. The Germans turned their attentions to Venus, a world covered with harsh swamps and inhabited by ferocious dinosaurs. Edison had opened a cornucopia of worlds and markets for the colonial powers of the Earth, the backdrop for the adventures of a lifetime—**Space: 1889!**

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