

I had just got back to old Syrtis after a few months poaching liftwood up in the highlands, and was feeling in need of a little rest. So it seemed like a stroke of good luck when I met Miss Clarendon strolling in the bazaar. She's a schoolteacher, and the sweetest thing under a bonnet on three planets. She mentioned a little trip she was planning. "Just an excursion to view the old Martian locks on the Moeris Canal. Would you like to come along, Doctor Blogsworth?"

"I'd be delighted to come, Miss Clarendon." I felt as though I was made of liftwood myself.

"I'm pleased that you will. And the children will be so happy."

"Er—children?"

"Yes. The schoolchildren from Rev. Lutwidge's School. We're taking a dozen of them along."

I'm usually a brave man, but suddenly I felt a pang of dread.

Rev. Louis Lutwidge, head of Rev. Lutwidge's School in Syrtis Major, is taking a group of students on a field trip. They will travel by steamer to the locks and pumping station on the Syrtis Major-Moeris Lacus Canal, where they can get a first-hand look at ancient Martian engineering.

There are two ways to handle this adventure. In an ongoing campaign, the adult PCs can be invited along by Miss Clarendon, a teacher at the school. (She can be assumed to be an old friend or distant relative of one of the PCs.) Or they may simply be passengers aboard the steamer.

If the gamemaster chooses to run this as a one-shot adventure, then the players can choose characters from the list of students.

MARTIAN QUEEN

The canal steamer *Martian Queen* is similar to the riverboats of the Mississippi. Normally, the ship carries mail, passengers and freight from Parhoon to Moeris Lacus via Syrtis Major, but Rev. Lutwidge has chartered it for the trip. There will be nobody aboard besides the school group (unless the adult PCs are passengers).

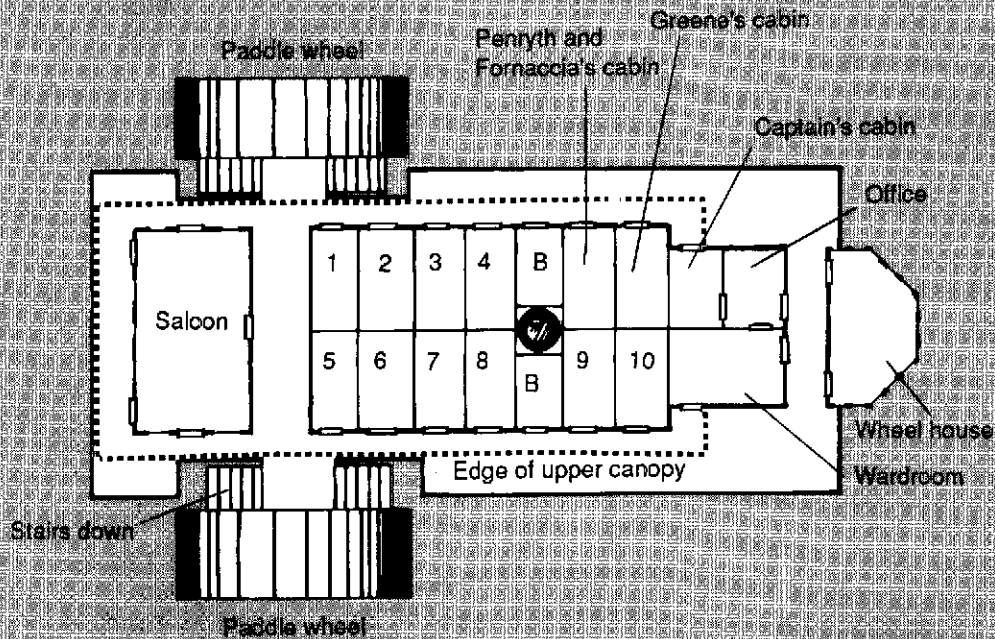
Ship: The deck plans show the layout of the *Martian Queen*. The rooms are labeled on the plan. The students will be housed two to a room in staterooms 2, 3, 6, and 7. Rev. Lutwidge will be in stateroom 1, and Miss Clarendon will be in stateroom 5. Any other adults will be in rooms 4, 8, 9 or 10.

Crew: The *Martian Queen* has a crew of 14. The master is Isaac McTavish; the first officer is Arthur Penryth; the pilot is Donald Greene (a former Mississippi riverboat pilot); and the engineer is Antonio Fornaccia. The ship's cook is a Martian named Vymoos. The deckhands, stokers and stewards are all Martians.

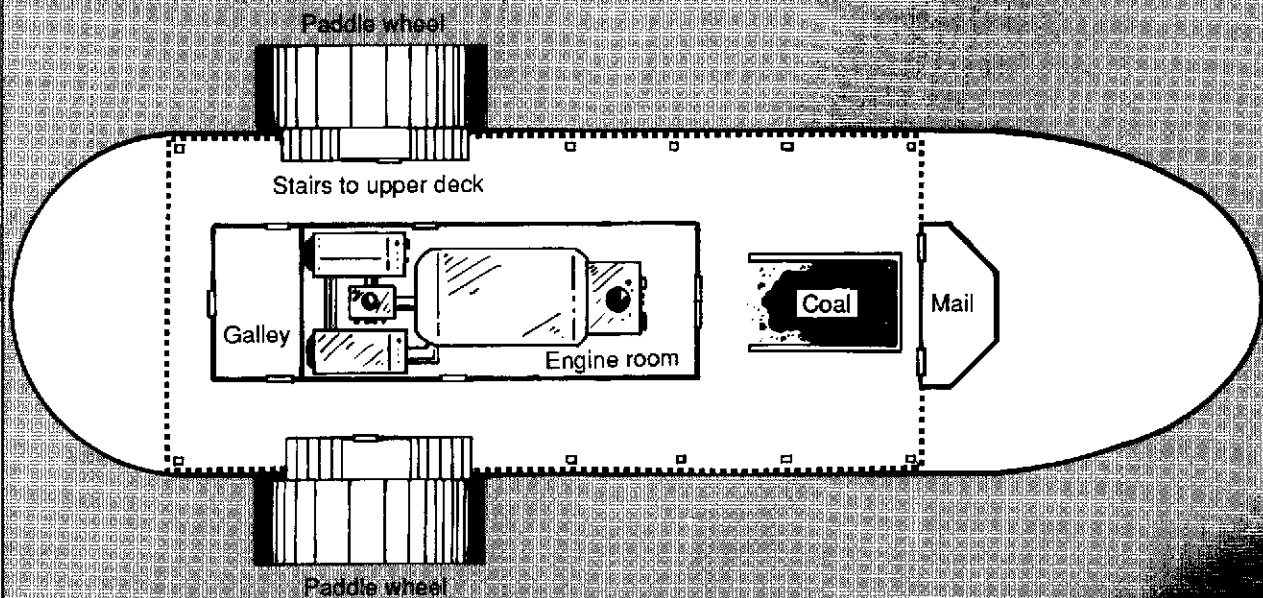
Playing Fields of Mars

**A Space: 1889 adventure for child characters
by James L. Cambias**

Upper Deck



Main Deck



VOYAGE

The *Martian Queen* sets out from Syrtis Major early in the morning. Rev. Lutwidge will excuse the children from their morning lessons so the youngsters can spend a few hours exploring the ship and getting into mischief. The galley and the engine room will be natural magnets for inquisitive children.

If the players are running adult PCs, they will have their hands full keeping order. Young Waffles will try to take the engines apart; little Lord Smallbridge will try to climb the mast; "Lizard" will go to the kitchen and make herself sick on Martian treats; and Smith Minor will try to talk the pilot into letting him steer. Clarissa Douglas and Smith Major will both develop massive crushes on the most attractive PCs of the opposite sex.

After luncheon, Rev. Lutwidge and Miss Clarendon will gather the children in the saloon for lessons. The adults can take the afternoon to study the ship themselves and meet the officers.

The ship will anchor at sunset. Although the *Martian Queen* is equipped with an electrical searchlight, Captain McTavish doesn't want to risk navigating in the dark. After a hearty English meal of boiled beef and pudding ("those Martian foods always disagree with me," says Rev. Lutwidge), the children will be put to bed.

The adults, including the ship's officers, gather in the saloon, and Rev. Lutwidge opens an old bottle of port which he has been saving. After an hour, everyone is sleepy, and all go to bed.

CAPTIVES!

At midnight, a gang of Fenians will invade the ship from an aerial flyer. There will be little chance of their being discovered, for both the port and the pudding were drugged. (If any character specified that he was not drinking the wine and did not eat the dinner, roll a Difficult task of Observation to be awakened.)

The Fenians will take each adult's cabin one by one, knocking out the characters and tying them up. When everyone at last wakes up, all the adult characters and the ship's officers are in the saloon, securely tied to chairs, guarded by a masked man with a Winchester rifle. (A Routine: Intellect task roll reveals that Rev. Lutwidge, Greene, and Signore Fornaccia are missing.)

The Martian crewmembers have been put ashore and bribed to keep quiet about the incident. They will try to alert the authorities, but will be unable to accomplish anything until it is far too late.

CHILDREN'S HOUR

Once the adults are helpless, the gamemaster should allow the players to choose characters from among the children on board. With the adults held prisoner and the ship in the hands of unknown enemies, can a group of British boys and girls save the day?

The children will wake up when the ship's engines are restarted and the *Martian Queen* begins to move again. If any of the students try to leave their cabins, they will find that there are masked men with guns posted at the stairways, who will roughly order anyone back to their rooms.

The children can communicate between adjacent rooms, as the walls are thin enough to allow limited conversation. They have whatever equipment is listed on the character descriptions. The rooms are all sparsely furnished, with a washbasin, bunk beds, a chair and a small writing desk.

FENIAN PLOT

The villains who have seized the ship are actually a gang of desperate Fenians. They are trying to disrupt the flow of supplies to the British Army fighting the rebels in Shastapsh. The Fenians have loaded the *Martian Queen* with dynamite and intend to set off the explosives as the ship enters the canal locks. This will close the canal to boat traffic. With the canal supply line cut, the British Army at Shastapsh will have to withdraw.

The bad guys are led by a heavily bearded man wearing a captain's uniform. He is really Rev. Lutwidge/Liam O'Connor in disguise. There are six other Fenians aboard, all armed with Winchester rifles, heavy revolvers and knives. They are all Veteran NPCs. One is guarding the adult characters in the saloon; one is in the pilothouse, where Donald Greene has been forced to steer the ship; two are in the engine room overseeing the Martian stokers and Signore Fornaccia; and two are on the upper deck, at the top of the stairways. Lutwidge/O'Connor will initially be on the lower deck, setting up the dynamite, but will move to wherever there is trouble.

The dynamite is in a dozen big crates, lined up along the sides of the ship on the lower deck, with a timer apparatus set atop the coal bunker. Lutwidge's plan is to set the timer while the ship is in the locks, then escape aboard the aerial steam launch secured atop the ship. The ship will reach the locks by noon the next day.

Child Characters

Since the game *Space: 1889* draws much of its inspiration from boys' adventure stories of the past century, it is surprising that all the characters in the game are assumed to be adults. But the rules can easily be adapted to allow child characters.

Age Limits: Obviously, children are less capable than adults. This is reflected by limits on skills and attributes at different stages of development.

At 5 years old or below, characters can have a maximum Strength and Endurance of 1. They get no skills at all, not even the basic skills derived from a character's attributes.

From age 6 to 10, the children can have a maximum Strength of 2 and a maximum Endurance of 3. They get all the basic attribute-derived skills (Fisticuffs, Observation, etc.), and get one of their two free skill points to spend on skills.

At ages 11 through 15, characters can have a maximum Strength of 4; there are no other attribute limits. Characters of this age get both of their two free skill points, but are still too young to take any careers.

Characters aged 16 to 20 can take one career plus their two free skill points. Individuals who are 21 or older can have two careers, and are normal adult characters.

Childhood Career: If the campaign is realistic, then children will be limited in their abilities as described above. But a campaign or an adventure which focuses on child characters must allow them to be more capable.

The solution is the Childhood career. This career can only be taken by characters between the ages of 5 and 16. There are no other requirements.

Persons taking the Childhood career can learn a total of 6 levels in skills from the following list:

- Stealth
- Marksmanship (slingshot)
- Marksmanship (spitball)
- Mechanics (disassembly)
- Theatrics
- Linguistics (Pig-Latin)

The skill levels gained from the Childhood career are immediately lost as soon as the character enters on his or her first adult career.

DEFEATING THE VILLAINS

The children must somehow overcome the Fenians and regain control of the *Martian Queen*. They can either try to fight the Fenians themselves, or release the adults and let them recover the ship. The primary advantage the children have is that the Fenians, while fanatics, are not completely inhuman. They will not shoot innocent children (though they have no qualms about blowing them up). If the children are armed, or if they have killed anyone, then the Fenians will no longer be so tolerant.

The gamemaster should let the players come up with their own plan and play it through. Initially, the children will not know about the dynamite or the aerial steam launch—the intentions of the Fenians should be a complete mystery. If at all possible, Lutwidge/O'Connor should survive the adventure, so that he can be unmasked at the end, snarling, "And I would have succeeded, if it hadn't been for you meddling kids!"

REV. LOUIS LUTWIDGE

Rev. Lutwidge is in fact the notorious Fenian Liam O'Connor. With dyed hair, thick spectacles, and a clergyman's clothing, it is very difficult to recognize that the stern, priggish schoolmaster is really a colorful revolutionary. Only after he has been defeated, and is no longer playing the part, will anyone be able to recognize his true identity.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Crime 4 (pick locks), Marksmanship 3 (pistol)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mapping)
Int: 6	Observation 4, Engineering 2 (explosives), Science 1 (chemistry)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Theatrics 3, Linguistics 2 (Gaelic, Parhooni)
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (horse), Leadership 2, Medicine 1

Motives: Hatred (of Englishmen), Adventurous, Leader.

Description: Liam O'Connor is a tall, handsome man with dark red hair and piercing eyes. He has great personal charm and is a superb natural leader. Disguised as Rev. Lutwidge, he wears a much-mended black suit and thick tinted spectacles. His hair is dyed gray, and his famous side-whiskers are shaved off. His Irish brogue will be covered by a Midlands accent. O'Connor always carries a pistol and knife hidden on his person.

CAPTAIN ISAAC MCTAVISH

Captain Isaac Edward McTavish is a full-blooded Scotsman who came to Mars with one of the earliest expeditions and never left. Despite the reputation for frugality which adheres to most Scots, McTavish is in fact quite generous. He certainly spares no expense where the *Martian Queen* is concerned. Though McTavish has no family of his own, he is fond of children.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 5	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 1 (bashing)
Agl: 6	Stealth 5, Mechanics 2 (steam), Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping), Swimming 1
Int: 4	Observation 4, Science 1 (physics), Engineering 1 (naval)
Chr: 1	Linguistics 3 (Parhooni, Koline, Hesperian)
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (gashant), Leadership 1, Piloting 2 (steamship)

Space: 1889

Motives: Generous, Friendly.

Description: McTavish is a stout, cheerful man who dresses in a merchant captain's uniform. He has a red face and enormous white sideburns. Despite his weight, he is amazingly nimble. His voice is deep and loud, with a Scots accent that becomes stronger when he is excited. McTavish is normally unarmed.

SMITH MAJOR

Cyril Smith (age 15) is the older of the two Smith brothers at Rev. Lutwidge's school. He is very athletic and excels on the cricket field or on horseback. But his real love is shooting, and he lives for the day when he can have his very own rifle. Until then, he will hone his skill with a slingshot. Smith Major is aware that his younger brother has all the brains, and is very protective of him. Anyone who harms Smith Minor will have Smith Major to answer to.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat (bashing) 1
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 3 (slingshot)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mountaineering)
Int: 2	Observation 1
Chr: 2	Eloquence 1, Linguistics 1 (Pig-Latin), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse)

Motives: Love (of brother), Adventurous.

Description: Cyril Smith is a tall, good-looking boy. He has unruly light-brown hair and an infectious grin. Smith Major wears the standard schoolboy uniform—flannel trousers and an Eton jacket. He usually carries his slingshot hidden in his boot.

SMITH MINOR

Jeremy Smith is Cyril's younger brother. Though he is only 12, he is already much more intelligent and knowledgeable than his brother. Smith Minor is a quiet boy, but when he does speak up he often startles adults with what he knows. He is particularly interested in the ancient Martians and their ruins. Smith Minor and Syukeem are best friends.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	
Agl: 5	Stealth 6, Crime 2 (pick locks)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mountaineering)
Int: 5	Observation 4, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Theatrics 3, Linguistics 1 (Pig-Latin)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (gashant)

Motives: Knowledge, Loyal (to brother).

Description: Smith Minor is a small, skinny little boy with the same tousled hair as his older brother. He usually looks very serious, and is much more calm and well-behaved than most 12 year olds. He still is in short pants and wears a cap.

SMALLS

Thomas Albert, Lord Smallbridge and Baron Twickenham, is only 9 years old. He gained the titles after the tragic death of his father in a gashant stampede two years ago. His mother, Lady Smallbridge, elected to remain on Mars, where she heads the Explorers' Club Ladies' Auxiliary. Young Lord Smallbridge is unfortunately all too aware of his exalted position, and seldom hesitates to remind others of his wealth and importance. He is very much a spoiled brat. Though Smalls is not a good student, he has won the grudging respect of the others through his astounding ability to sneak around the school at night, and his accuracy with the slingshot. His only real friend is Waffles, as they share an interest in random destruction.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Agl: 6	Stealth 6, Marksmanship 4 (slingshot)
End: 1	
Int: 1	
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 3 (Latin, Parhooni, Pig-Latin)
Soc: 6	Riding 5 (horse)

Motives: Arrogant, Greedy.

Appearance: Smalls is a small boy with a large, beaky nose and very pale blond hair. He has a wide range of speech impediments. Smalls wears the same short pants and cap uniform as the other young boys, but his are custom-made by the best tailors. His shirts and socks are silk. Smalls keeps a slingshot in his cap.

“WAFFLES”

Waffles's real name is George Whitford. Though only 8 years old, he has already learned a great deal about mechanics and chemistry. Waffles is motivated by an intense desire to know how things work. He can seldom resist the urge to dismantle something. And if he can't take something apart, he is equally fond of blowing things up. His parents sent him to Rev. Lutwidge's school after he destroyed one wing of their house in Meepsoor.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Agl: 4	Stealth 3, Mechanics 2 (disassembly), Marksmanship 2 (spitball)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 6	Observation 5, Science 1 (chemistry), Engineering 1 (explosives)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Linguistics 1 (Pig-Latin), Theatrics 1
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (gashant)

Motives: Knowledge, Eccentric.

Description: Waffles is a chubby little boy, unremarkable in appearance. Around adults, he is very shy, sometimes to the point of being unable to speak. He is usually very well-behaved, except when he is left alone with some interesting machinery, or anything that looks as if it might burn. He always carries a screwdriver, and starts the adventure with three firecrackers and a book of matches.

CLARISSA

Clarissa Douglas is 16 years old and is very much aware that she is not a child anymore. She resents any attempt to treat her as a one and always tries to be included in any “grown-up” activities. However, sometimes she forgets that she is an adult, and she has masterminded some awful mischief. Clarissa wants to see the world and have some fun. She is very romantic and falls in love often. Clarissa is beginning a career as an adventuress.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 1 (edged)
Agl: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 2 (pistol), Crime 1 (forgery)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 5	Observation 5, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Linguistics 2 (French, Parhooni), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 1

Motives: Adventurous, Stubborn.

Description: Clarissa is already a very striking-looking girl and is likely to be an utterly beautiful woman. With her long

black hair and big dark eyes, she has a slightly Latin appearance. She still wears dull schoolgirl frocks. She always has a hatpin at her disposal (treat as a stiletto).

“LIZARD”

Elizabeth “Lizard” Pinkwood is 11 years old and a determined tomboy. She routinely beats up Waffles, Smalls and Smith Minor, and once fought Smith Major to a draw. Lizard is most effective when armed with a croquet mallet or cricket bat, but can use an umbrella if necessary. She admires Clarissa enormously and wants to be like her when she gets older.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 1 (bashing)
Agl: 4	Stealth 5
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mountaineering)
Int: 4	Observation 3
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 2 (Pig-Latin), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse)

Motives: Aggressive, Fair.

Description: Lizard is a wiry, skinny little girl with torn stockings and mud on her skirt. She always loses her hat. Lizard has curly red hair and freckles. She is almost constantly in motion. Lizard has no equipment (she would only lose it).

SYUKEEM

Natuuz Syukeem is the only Martian student at Rev. Lutwidge's school. He is 6 Martian years old (about 12 Earth years). His family are merchants, who saw an advantage in having a son educated by the English. Syukeem is already a good merchant himself—he makes quite a bit of money smuggling goodies into the school, selling test answers and betting on Lizard's fights. But he has also become interested in the history of his people and would like to learn more about Mars than Rev. Lutwidge teaches.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	
Agl: 2	Stealth 4
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 4 (foraging)
Int: 4	Observation 3, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 2 (English, Koline), Theatrics 3
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (gashant)

Motives: Mercantile, Knowledge.

Description: Syukeem is average height for a 6-year-old Martian; he is over five feet tall and growing fast. He is very slender and is not as strong as the other students, but his Martian constitution already gives him better stamina than most human adults. He wears English-style school clothes, modified for his alien frame. It was agreed by all that he should wear long pants instead of shorts. Ω

