

FRANK CHADWICK

SPACE CLOUD CAPTAINS OF

1889

MARS



Flying ships...
Dashing Red Captains...



Karkarham,
the Casablanca of Mars!

Science-Fiction Role Playing in a More Civilized Time.

FRANK CHADWICK



CLOUD CAPTAINS
OF
MARS



CLOUD CAPTAINS OF MARS

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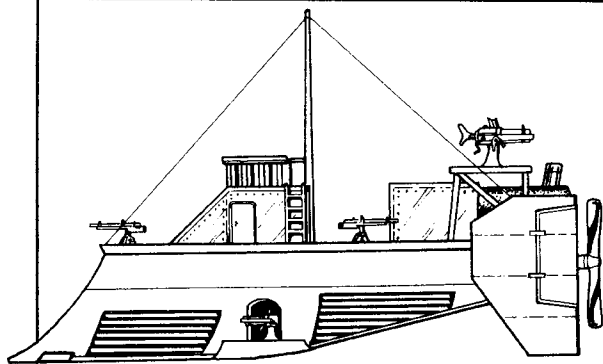
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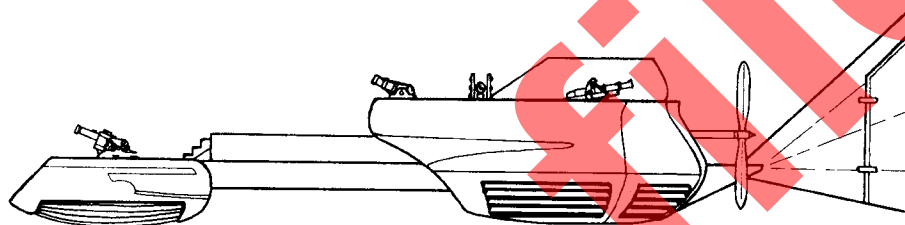


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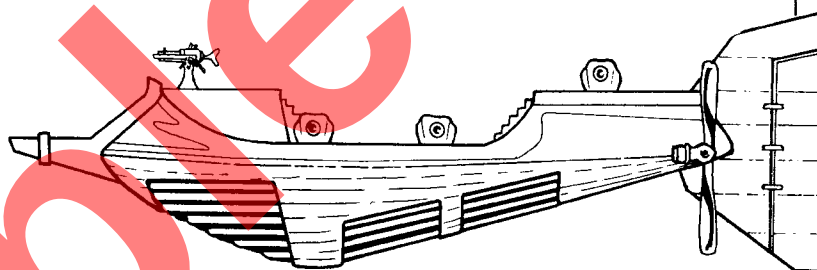


***Penelope* (at left)**
165-ton Steam Ram
Captain: Frederick Gustavus Burnaby

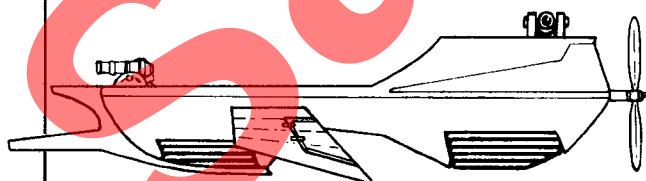
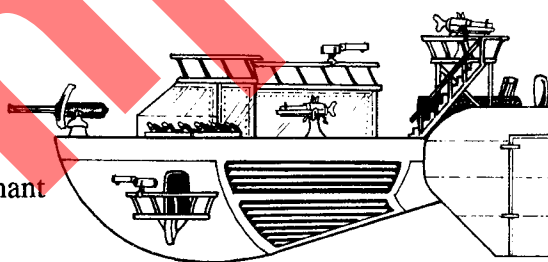
***Black Dagger* (at right)**
500-ton Screw Galley
Captain: Utumaan Quatlatlani



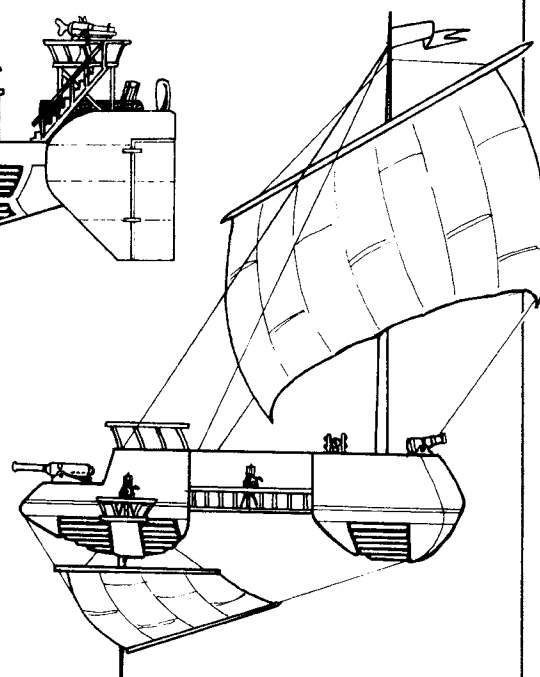
***Gloire* (at right)**
500-ton Screw Ram
Captain: Frederick Armand LeBegue



***Baron Lortmore* (at right)**
250-ton Steam Gunboat
Captain: Alonzo Quinton Freemerchant



***Gato* (above)**
333-ton Screw Ram
Captain: Arturo Diego della Mora



***Lismore* (above)**
250-ton Gun Kite
Captain: Sir Michael Paget-Smith

Introduction

HIGH IN THE Shistomik Mountains, east of the British crown colony of Syrtis Lapis, the city of Karkarham sits at the crossroads of a world. The lofty peaks and strong winds of the Shistomik range make cloudship travel impossible except at a few strategic passes, and Karkarham dominates the most important of these.

Its canal locks still allow ships from Hesperia and Trinacria to bring trade goods north from the great seabed city-states, while the trace of the old canal to Thoth in the Nepenthes-Thoth Steppe forms a rough highway for caravans coming south from the wild country above. With the war between Britain and Oenotria having severed all canal links to the east, merchant traffic has more than doubled. Almost anything can be found in the bustling marketplace of Karkarham.

But Karkarham is more than a simple commercial center; it is also the home port for that colorful and bloodthirsty company of pirates, brigands, and adventurers known as the cloud captains of the Shistomik. Like the pirates of the Caribbean, who, centuries earlier, plundered the ships of the Spanish Main and were allowed to dock at Port Royal by a corrupt governor, the cloud captains of the Shistomik Mountains plunder



the rich spice ships of the Boreosyrtis League, the fat oil luggers of Olonia, and eastern merchantmen carrying jewels from Amazonia or ancient relics from the blasted ruins of Zephyria. All are fair game for the cloud captains, who find safe haven in Karkarham in return for a split of the profits.

In a strange sort of way, piracy and

commerce have learned to live together in Karkarham. To ensure that it remains a commercial center, the price of the cloud captains' sanctuary is immunity from attack for merchant ships bound to or from Karkarham—in practice, all those within a 500-mile radius.

Karkarham has thus become the safest of ports for a merchant ship as well as a ready source of cheap trade goods plundered from ships seized further afield.

Cloud Captains of Mars is a sourcebook which details the pirates and privateers who gather at Karkarham. It gives referees an extensive listing of its captains, ships, habits, and haunts. Players who seek the cloud captains out will journey to Karkarham, so a large part of the book deals with that rich and deadly city perched atop the mountains.

How to get to Karkarham, how it is defended, what you will find there, how to contact the cloud captains or even the legendary Red Captains—all this and more is covered.

But in addition, this book provides rules for hiring crews, hunting down and seizing merchant ships, and selling prizes in Karkarham's markets for those players who long to feel the wind in their face, a deck beneath their feet, and no flag overhead but the Jolly Roger.



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Cloud Captains

THE BULK OF this module concentrates on two groups of cloud captains: the Red Captains and the cloud captains of the Shitomik Mountains. Both have reputations as privateers or pirates, depending on point of view. The term cloud captain actually refers to any captain of a cloudship—most are honest, hard-working men of commerce. Likewise Red Captain refers to any red man (Earthman) who is captain of his own ship. The term has such a romantic and prestigious meaning near the British colony that few human captains would use it to describe themselves unless they had been informally accepted into the ranks of those few already so called. To do otherwise would brand the fellow presumptuous at least, and probably a braggart to boot.

Whatever name is used, a mystique surrounds any man who commands a stately ship of the air. Something about the majesty of flight and the freedom of an independent command brings out the best or worst in a man, be he commander of the most powerful aerial cruiser or the lowliest dispatch boat. The silence of the open sky above him and the vast panorama of an entire world below him either humble a person or intoxicate him.

Some men find *themselves* in the sky. Some find God. Some forget there is a difference.

MARTIAN CLOUD CAPTAINS

THE SPACE: 1889 RULES describe generating Canal Martian characters but are not up to generating a dashing cloud captain. The following information expands on the Canal Martian character generation rules. When generating a Canal Martian character of any type, use the standard character generation rules with the following modifications.

Attributes: Determine attributes in any of the three accepted ways, but 4 is the maximum Strength, and 2 is the minimum Endurance possible.

Social Level: Noble Canal Martians (Social Level 6) are involved in government and generally lead unadventurous lives. Players may generate Canal Martians at any other desired Social Level, however.

Skills: Default skills are acquired normally. Canal Martians may purchase skills, but human skills will cost twice the normal points to represent human reluctance to teach these skills to Martians. Martian characters purchasing human languages pay double normal cost, except for merchants.

Careers: Canal Martians may select one or two careers in the same manner as in normal character generation. See the Careers Table.

CAREERS TABLE

Guide: Agl 4+, End 5+. Wilderness Travel 2, Fieldcraft 1, Tracking 2, Marksmanship 1, Linguistics 1.

Canal Bargeman: Soc 3–, Str 2+. Close Combat 1, Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Swimming 1, Linguistics 1, Piloting 1 (sailing vessel), Observation 1.

Canal Pirate: Soc 3–, Str 2+. Close Combat 1, Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Swimming 1, Stealth 1, Crime 1.

Canal Ship Captain: Second career only (after having been a canal bargeman or canal pirate). Int 4+. Piloting 2 (sailing vessel), Leadership 1, Linguistics 2, Bargaining 1, Observation 1, Close Combat 1.

Thief: Soc 3–, Agl 5+. Close Combat 1, Stealth 1, Crime 2, Theatrics 1, Wilderness Travel 1 (mountaineering), Eloquence 1.

Merchant: Soc 3–, Chr 4+. Bargaining 2, Riding 1, Wilderness Travel 1 (foraging), Eloquence 2, Linguistics 1.

Wealthy Merchant: Soc 4+, Chr 4+. Bargaining 2, Eloquence 1, Linguistics 2, Leadership 2.

Tradesman: Soc 3–, Agl 4+. Mechan-

ics 2, Engineering 1, Observation 1, Bargaining 1, Linguistics 1, Eloquence 1.

Doctor: Soc 3 or 4, Int 4+. Science 2 (biology), Medicine 3, Observation 1, Linguistics 1.

Soldier: Soc 3–. Close Combat 1, Wilderness Travel 1 (foraging), Riding 1, Marksmanship 1 (rifle), Fieldcraft 1, Gunnery 1 (MLC), Observation 1.

Army Officer: Soc 4+. Close Combat 1, Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping), Marksmanship 1, Fieldcraft 1, Observation 1, Leadership 1, Linguistics 1.

Mercenary: No prerequisites. Skills same as for soldier, but substitute Linguistics 1 for Gunnery.

Cloud Sailor: No prerequisites. Trimman 1 (cloudship), Piloting 1 (cloudship), Close Combat 1, Gunnery 1 (MLC), Observation 1, Marksmanship 1, Linguistics 1.

Cloud Captain: Int 4+. Second career only (after having been a cloud sailor). Trimman 1 (cloudship), Piloting 1 (cloudship), Close Combat 1, Linguistics 1, Leadership 2, Bargaining 1.