

1. The 1860s by Ucaimhu

French Canada has been important to science fiction since the beginning. In one Jules Verne book, a French Canadian harpooner is enlisted to deal with a mysterious entity that puts triangular holes in ocean vessels; correspondingly, the grid shows a vessel and holes, whose squares will contain appropriate letters when the grid is filled. In addition:

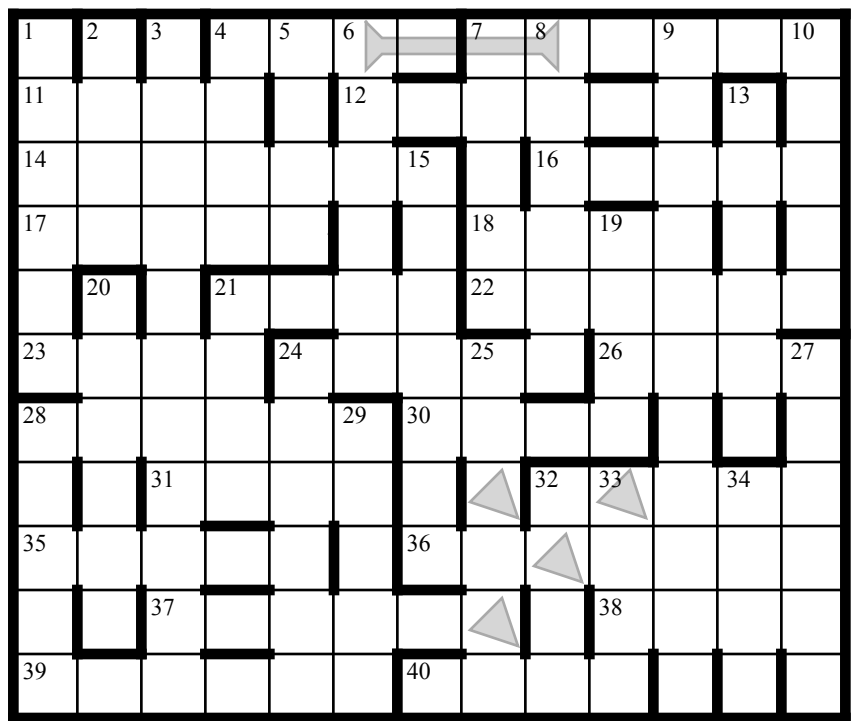
(1) Reflecting the wild initial speculation about the entity, the answers to thirteen clues, none of which have straight definitions, are entities (some real, some fantastical) that might have the power or ability to make holes like these.

(2) Thirteen clues (three of which are *also* (1) clues) each contain an extra word (to be ignored when solving), which is a straight definition for some (1) answer. For each, if the clue's *n*th word is the extra one, find the *n*th word of *that* (1) answer's clue and note (i) its length, (ii) the earliest instance of E, SE or S in it (taking SE in preference to S), and (iii) the letter *or space* after the E/SE/S from (ii); then draw a "harpoon" (see Examples) of length (i) in direction (ii) starting at the *n*th square of the (2) entry, and put the letter or space from (iii) beside the (2) clue. Once this is done, the harpoons, vessel, and holes (read as cuneiform), and then the letters and spaces, will together form the title of the book, in two languages; read only the letters corresponding to *real* (1) answers to get a word relevant to the first language.

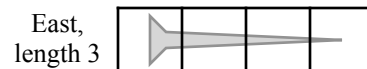
(3) Some of the twenty-three other clues have wordplay yielding a letter sequence with one extra letter. The answers to four such clues have one letter at a harpoon's *tip*; if this is the *n*th letter, the *n*th word of the clue will give the meaning of the cuneiform symbol that harpoon is part of. As it happens, the cuneiform part of the title (like the corresponding part of the English title of the book) has been imperfectly translated; specifically, a certain unit has been translated as a significantly longer unit. The harpoons in the northwest and southeast symbols (treated as arrows that map one term of one or more letters to another) indicate possible ways to replace each of those symbols to correct the translation (though only the northwest would really work).

ACROSS

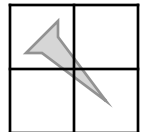
4. Cats somewhat dig bold African people (4)
7. Want ad miners changed early in the morning (2 4)
11. Laugh at numbers by a *King and I* character (4)
12. German sharpshooter covered with plant secretion quit (6)
14. For speakers in España certainly created spirit sounds (3-4)
16. General at the front is naked? Yes (5)
17. Boy following Bill's cat (5)
18. I owe myriad 0.01p amounts to the west Roman cleric (3 1)
21. The Big Easy Thracian is partly titanolatrous (4, *abbr.*)
22. Silver enchanter of a herald that's a real man (6)
23. Oxen that will be obscuring the front area (4)
24. Doubled vee internally festooned rooms (5)
26. Orcs running amuck (4)
28. Seeing red treefolk near free city in Spain (6)
30. 1006 AD's licentiousness (4)
31. Carpentry device in the center created confusion (4)
32. Eager revolutionary Molly'd reacted to a mouse (5)
35. *Giant Terminator's* Hamilton left Spot nothing (5)
36. They might be toothy as a comb and happy as a clam! (7)
37. All the pieces of crayon, after you rearrange 'em (6)
38. A Hawaiian goose is born (4)
39. Bananas sly Ed produces (6)
40. At last, see Men Without Hats (4)



Examples of harpoons:



Southeast,
length 1



(4) The rest of the clues each have wordplay yielding a letter sequence in which one letter is missing. In clue order, the extra letters from (3), and (separately) these missing letters, will give contexts in which the northwest and southeast changes from (3) (respectively) can apply to the harpooner's first and last name (respectively) to get another first and last name; the harpoons in the northeast and southwest symbols (again treated as mapping arrows) show these changes more directly, with the old names reading column by column in the grid and the new names (those of the French non-Canadian author who originally suggested the idea for this book to Jules Verne) reading row by row.

DOWN

1. Extra cost when fueling giga-amp instrument (3 3)
2. Yon vacuous echidna is eligible for the draft (3-1)
3. Birds jig or waltz with actress Claire and rolls galore? (2 9)
4. Piece of poetry misdescribed Mab (4)
5. Silver coating of grouper fork (4)
6. Brand of scouring pad bro has to destroy (6)
7. Refuges like empty YMCA (5)
8. Mass of clocks is converted to grams (6)
9. One leu Kay (in a stew) won't show duelist east of Sibiu (5 6)
10. Indicative form of *ser* in NT translation's intro (1-4)
13. Fancier endlessly embracing one! (6)
15. Dutch invertebrates sold things containing vanadium (7)
19. Esther gutted game the wrong way (4)
20. Queen perhaps dresses boomer in a climbing hat (6)
21. Two pieces of napping, unenergetic nerd's aromatic plant (4)
24. The el in "reptile" will be a three-angled zigzag (6)
25. Flash Gordon villain elevated No. 1 henchperson (6)
27. Made bubbles of long duration Sue'd put around SDS (6)
28. Austronesian mole one siren put down (5)
29. Edgar, who painted road purple, ultimately gabs (5)
32. Wall-annihilating beams it put out (4)
33. What Germans call one electron in cesium (4)
34. Finale of *Barbie & Ken's Shakespearean Nights* (1'3) [NI3+]