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# THE WAR OF THE WORLDS

By H. G. WELLS

No. 124 25c



# THE WAR OF THE WORLDS

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**T**OWARD THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS IN ENGLAND CARRIED A SMALL ACCOUNT OF THE DISCOVERY OF A MASS OF FLAMING GAS, CHIEFLY HYDROGEN, ORIGINATING ON THE PLANET MARS AND MOVING WITH ENORMOUS SPEED TOWARD THE EARTH

THE NEWS ITEM, HOWEVER, WAS SO INSIGNIFICANT, THAT I, AS WELL AS THE REST OF THE WORLD, IGNORED WHAT PROVED TO BE ONE OF THE GRAVEST DANGERS THAT EVER THREATENED THE HUMAN RACE.

**I MIGHT NOT HAVE HEARD OF THE GAS ERUPTION AT ALL, HAD I NOT KNOWN OGILVY, AN ASTRONOMER.**

I'M GLAD YOU CAME UP TONIGHT. I'D LIKE YOU TO HAVE A LOOK AT MARS.



**AS I LOOKED THROUGH THE TELESCOPE, I SAW THE LITTLE ROUND PLANET SWIMMING IN A CIRCLE OF DEEP BLUE. THEN I SAW A BRILLIANT FLASH OF GAS SHOOTING FROM MARS TOWARD THE EARTH.**



**I TOLD OGILVY WHAT I HAD SEEN.**

IT IS EXACTLY LIKE THE MASS OF GAS DESCRIBED IN THE NEWSPAPERS SOME DAYS AGO.



WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT?

I SUSPECT THEY BOTH ARE METEORITES OF SOME SORT. THE CHANCES AGAINST THERE BEING ANYTHING MAN-LIKE ON MARS FIRING SOMETHING AT US ARE A MILLION TO ONE.



**T**HEN CAME THE NIGHT OF THE FIRST FALLING STAR IT WAS SEEN RUSHING EASTWARD, A LINE OF FLAME HIGH IN THE ATMOSPHERE



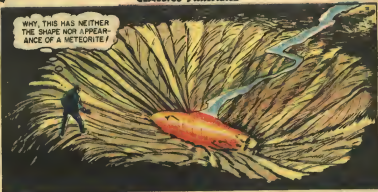
THE NEXT MORNING, OGILVY, WHO HAD SEEN THE SHOOTING STAR, ROSE EARLY WITH THE IDEA OF FINDING IT.



HE HAD NOT WALKED FAR FROM HIS HOME WHICH, LIKE MINE, WAS NEAR LONDON, WHEN...



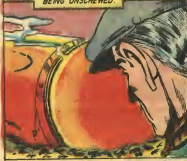
WHY, THIS HAS NEITHER THE SHAPE NOR APPEARANCE OF A METEORITE!



DESPITE THE EXCESSIVE HEAT, HE CLIMBED DOWN INTO THE PIT TO SEE THE THING MORE CLEARLY



THEN HE PERCEIVED THAT, VERY SLOWLY, THE CIRCULAR TOP OF THE CYLINDER WAS BEING UNSCREWED.



GREAT SCOTT! THERE'S A MAN IN IT! HALF ROASTED TO DEATH! TRYING TO ESCAPE!



THEN, WITH A QUICK MENTAL LEAP, HE LINKED THE CYLINDER WITH THE FLASH FROM MARS

I MUST RUN TO TOWN FOR SOME HELP!



THE FIRST PERSON HE SAW WAS HENDERSON,  
A LONDON JOURNALIST.

YOU SAW THAT  
SHOOTING STAR  
LAST NIGHT,  
DIDN'T YOU?

YES,  
WHY?

IT'S OUT NEAR THE  
SAND PIT NOW.

FALLEN METEOR-  
ITE! THAT'S GOOD.

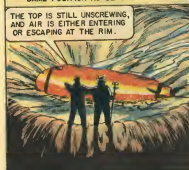
BUT IT'S SOMETHING MORE  
THAN A METEORITE. IT'S  
A CYLINDER--AN ARTI-  
FICIAL CYLINDER. AND  
THERE'S SOMETHING  
INSIDE!

THERE'S NOTHING WE  
CAN DO RIGHT NOW.  
I'LL GO TO TOWN FOR  
MORE HELP.

AND I'LL TELE-  
GRAPH THE NEWS  
TO LONDON.

THEY FOUND THE CYLINDER LYING IN THE  
SAME POSITION AS BEFORE.

THE TOP IS STILL UNSCREWING,  
AND AIR IS EITHER ENTERING  
OR ESCAPING AT THE RIM.



THE NEWS ABOUT THE FALLEN CYLINDER SPREAD RAPIDLY. WHEN I ARRIVED AT THE SAND PIT THAT EVENING, I FOUND TWO OR THREE HUNDRED PEOPLE FIGHTING FOR THE BEST VIEW.



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

THERE MUST BE LIFE INSIDE THE END OF THE CYLINDER IS BEING SCREWED OUT FROM WITHIN



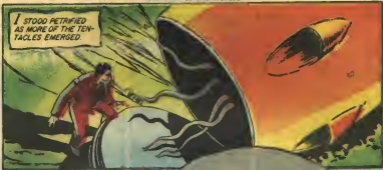
LOOK! IT'S OUT!



I WATCHED AS SOMETHING STIRRED WITHIN THE SHADOW OF THE OPENING THEN SOMETHING RESEMBLING A GRAY SNAKE COILED UP AND WRIGGLED IN THE AIR TOWARD ME



I STOOD PETRIFIED AS MORE OF THE TENTACLES EMERGED.



A BIG, GRAYISH, ROUNDED BULK WAS RISING SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY OUT OF THE CYLINDER.



IN A MOMENT, THE MONSTER TOPPLED OVER THE BRIM AND FELL INTO THE PIT WITH A THUD LIKE THE FALL OF A GREAT MASS OF LEATHER THEN ANOTHER MONSTER APPEARED AT THE OPENING.



I RAN MADLY FOR THE FIRST GROUP OF TREES I SAW. THEN I TURNED AND WATCHED.





**A** LEASH OF THIN BLACK WHIPS, LIKE THE ARMS OF AN OCTOPUS, FLASHED ACROSS THE SUNSET, AND WAS IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAWN.



**T**HEN A THIN ROD ROSE UP, JOINT BY JOINT, BEARING AT ITS TOP A CIRCULAR U.S.C.



**T**HERE BEING NO FURTHER MOVEMENTS FROM THE PIT, HORROR GAVE WAY TO AN UNCONTROLLABLE CURIOSITY, AND I BEGAN MOVING CLOSER.



**S**UDDENLY, FROM ANOTHER DIRECTION, I SAW A SMALL GROUP OF MEN ADVANCING, THE FOREMOST OF WHOM WAS WAVING A WHITE FLAG.



THERE HAD BEEN A HASTY CONSULTATION AND IT HAD BEEN RESOLVED TO TRY SOME FORM OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE MARTIANS



THERE WAS A SUDDEN FLASH OF LIGHT FROM THE PIT, ACCOMPANIED BY A FAINT HISsing SOUND, THEN A HUMPED SHAPE ROSE OUT OF THE PIT, AND THE GHOST OF A BEAM OF LIGHT SEEMED TO FLICKER OUT FROM IT.



BLINDING FLASHES OF LIGHT STRUCK AT THE PEOPLE AND THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE.



**A**LL ALONG A CURVING LINE BEYOND THE SAND PIT, THE DARK GROUND SMOKED AND CRACKLED.



THE HEAT RAY PASSED AND SPARED ME, AND LEFT THE NIGHT ABOUT ME SUDDENLY DARK AND UNFAMILIAR.



**W**ITH AN EFFORT, I TURNED AND RAN THROUGH THE HEATHER.



**I** LEFT BEHIND NEARLY FORTY BODIES UNDER THE STARLIGHT ABOUT THE PIT. AMONG THEM WERE OGILVY, THE ASTRONOMER AND HENDERSON, THE JOURNALIST.



EXHAUSTED BY THE VIOLENCE OF MY EMOTION AND OF MY FLIGHT, I STAGGERED AND FELL BY THE WAYSIDE



AFTER A WHILE, I ROSE AND STUMBLED TOWARD HOME.

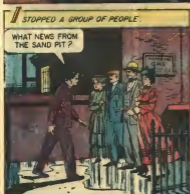


IN THE DISTANCE, A TRAIN WENT FLYING SOUTH. IT WAS SO REAL AND SO FAMILIAR BUT WHAT OF THE SWIFT DEATH NOT TWO MILES AWAY!



STOPPED A GROUP OF PEOPLE.

WHAT NEWS FROM THE SAND PIT?



WEREN'T YOU THERE?

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?



HAVEN'T YOU HEARD OF THE MEN FROM MARS? THE CREATURES FROM MARS?



QUITE ENOUGH, THANKS.



FELT FOOLISH AND ANGRY. I TRIED AND FOUND I COULD NOT TELL THEM WHAT I HAD SEEN. THEY ALL LAUGHED AT MY BROKEN SENTENCES.



ARRIVING HOME, I TOLD MY WIFE WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

THERE IS ONE THING. THEY MAY KEEP THE PIT AND KILL THE PEOPLE WHO COME NEAR THEM, BUT THEY CANNOT GET OUT OF IT



ARE YOU SURE?

ON THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH, THE FORCE OF GRAVITY IS THREE TIMES WHAT IT IS ON THE SURFACE OF MARS



A MARTIAN, THEREFORE, WEIGHS THREE TIMES MORE HERE THAN HE DOES ON MARS, ALTHOUGH HIS MUSCULAR STRENGTH STAYS THE SAME WHY, THEY CAN HARDLY MOVE!



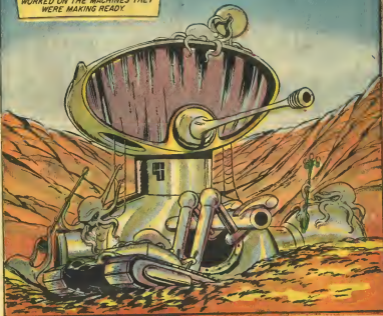
THEY HAVE DONE A FOOLISH THING. THEY ARE DANGEROUS, BECAUSE, NO DOUBT, THEY ARE MAD WITH TERROR. A SHELL FIRED INTO THE PIT, IF WORST COMES TO WORST, WILL KILL THEM ALL.



BUT, GROWING WITH WINE AND GOOD FOOD, I OVERLOOKED ONE THING.



THE MARTIANS POSSESSED SUCH MECHANICAL INTELLIGENCE THAT THEY WERE ABLE TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEM OF GRAVITY. BACK AT THE SAND PIT, THEY WORKED ON THE MACHINES THEY WERE MAKING READY.



AT ABOUT ELEVEN THAT NIGHT, TWO COMPANIES OF SOLDIERS ARRIVED AND FORMED A CORDON AROUND THE PIT.



A FEW SECONDS AFTER MIDNIGHT, A SECOND CYLINDER FELL.



THE FOLLOWING MORNING, THE MILKMAN TOLD ME THE LATEST NEWS.

OUR TROOPS SURROUNDED THEM DURING THE NIGHT, BUT THEY AREN'T TO BE KILLED IF THAT CAN BE AVOIDED.



IT WOULD BE GOOD IF WE COULD TAKE THEM ALIVE. WE COULD FIND OUT HOW THEY LIVE ON ANOTHER PLANET. WE MIGHT EVEN LEARN A THING OR TWO.



IS ANYTHING ELSE KNOWN?

WELL, THEY SAY THERE'S ANOTHER OF THOSE BLESSED THINGS FALLEN THERE, BUT ONE'S ENOUGH, SURELY.



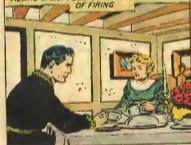
**A**FTER BREAKFAST, I STROLLED TOWARD THE PIT. ON THE WAY, I MET A GROUP OF SOLDIERS AND TOLD THEM WHAT I KNEW ABOUT THE HEAT RAY.

WE OUGHT TO CRAWL UP UNDER COVER AND RUSH 'EM.

GET OUT! WHAT'S COVER AGAINST THIS HERE HEAT? WHY NOT SHELL THE DARN THINGS STRAIGHT OFF AND FINISH 'EM? YOU CAN'T TELL WHAT THEY MIGHT DO.



**U**NABLE TO GET NEAR THE PIT BECAUSE OF THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES, I RETURNED HOME. AT ABOUT SIX THAT EVENING, WE HEARD A MUFFLED DETONATION AND A GUST OF FIRING.



**A** VIOLENT, RATTLING CRASH, QUITE CLOSE TO US, SHOOK THE GROUND.



**W**E RUSHED OUT TO THE LAWN AND SAW THE TOPS OF THE TREES NEAR US BURST INTO SMOKY RED FLAMES, AND THE TOWER OF THE LITTLE VILLAGE CHURCH SLIDE DOWN TO RUIN.





OUR CHIMNEY CRACKED AS IF A SHOT HAD HIT IT.



WHAT IS IT?

THE WAR WITH THE MARTIANS HAS BEGUN. COME, WE MUST GET OUT OF HERE!



BUT WHERE ARE WE TO GO?

TO YOUR COUSINS IN LEATHER-HEAD!



DOWN THE HILL, A GROUP OF SOLDIERS CAME GALLOPING ONE DISMOUNTED AND BEGAN RUNNING FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE.



YOU MUST GET OUT OF HERE! GET OUT! GET OUT!

I BORROWED A HORSE AND A CART AND, WITH SOME OF OUR BELONGINGS TIED ON THE BACK, WE WENT SPANKING DOWN THE ROAD TO LEATHERHEAD.



AHEAD OF US WAS A QUIET LANDSCAPE



I TURNED MY HEAD TO LOOK AT THE RUINS WE WERE LEAVING.



THE MARTIANS WERE SETTING FIRE TO EVERYTHING WITHIN RANGE OF THEIR HEAT RAY.



WE ARRIVED AT LEATHERHEAD WITHOUT FURTHER INCIDENT.



I HAD PROMISED TO RETURN THE CART, THEREFORE, AFTER SOME REST, I COMMENDED MY WIFE TO HER COUSINS' CARE AND MADE READY TO RETURN.



THE NIGHT WAS DARK AND A STORM THREATENED.



AN HOUR LATER, I HEARD MIDNIGHT PEALING FROM A CHURCH BEHIND ME.



SUDDENLY, THE CLOUDS WERE PIERCED BY A THREAD OF GREEN FIRE WHICH FELL INTO THE FIELD ON MY LEFT. IT WAS A THIRD CYLINDER.



**T**HEN CAME A  
CRASH OF  
THUNDER, AND  
THE HORSE TOOK  
THE BIT  
BETWEEN HIS  
TEETH AND  
BOLTED



**I** KEPT CONTROL OF  
THE REINS, AND  
WE WENT CLATTERING  
ALONG WHILE  
LIGHTNING  
CRACKLED  
AROUND US



**A** THICK RAIN SMOTE GUSTILY AT MY FACE  
AS I DROVE



**S**OON, MY ATTENTION  
WAS ARRESTED BY SOMETHING THAT  
WAS MOVING RAPIDLY DOWN THE OPPOSITE  
SLOPE



**I**T WAS A MONSTROUS TRIPOD, A WALKING ENGINE OF GLITTERING METAL, STRIDING TOWARD THE HEATHER, SMASHING ASIDE THE PINE TREES IN ITS PATH



THEN THE TREES AHEAD OF ME WERE SNAPPED OFF, AND ANOTHER MONSTROUS MACHINE APPEARED, RUSHING, AS IT SEEMED, HEADLONG TOWARD ME.



I WRENCHED THE HORSE'S HEAD TO THE RIGHT, AND IN ANOTHER MOMENT, THE CART HAD HEELED OVER.



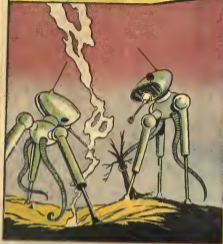
I WAS FLUNG SIDWAYS AND FELL HEAVILY INTO A SHALLOW POOL OF WATER.



I CRAWLED OUT AND CROUCHED UNDER SOME TALL GRASS. IN ANOTHER MOMENT, THE COLOSSAL MECHANISM WENT STRIDING BY ME, AND PASSED UPHILL.



**T**HE MONSTER JOINED ITS COMPANION HALF A MILE AWAY. THEY BOTH STOOPED OVER SOMETHING IN THE FIELD, WHICH I SUSPECTED WAS THE THIRD CYLINDER I HAD JUST SEEN FALL.



**I** MANAGED TO ELUDE THE MONSTERS, AND ARRIVED EXHAUSTED AT MY HOME.



**I** ATE SOME FOOD AND CHANGED MY CLOTHES. THEN I WENT TO MY STUDY AND STARED OUT OF THE WINDOW.



I WAS NOW ABLE TO THINK CLEARLY. I CONCLUDED THAT THE MONSTROUS MECHANISMS WERE FIGHTING MACHINES, CONTROLLED BY MARTIANS IN THE HEADS



I COMPARED THE THINGS TO HUMAN MACHINES. THEN I ASKED MYSELF HOW A STEAM ENGINE MUST SEEM TO AN INTELLIGENT LOWER ANIMAL.



SUDDENLY, I HEARD A SOUND BELOW THE WINDOW.

IF YOU'RE TRYING TO HIDE, YOU CAN COME INTO THE HOUSE.



YOU'RE A SOLDIER, AREN'T YOU? WHAT HAPPENED?

THEY WIPED US OUT -- SIMPLY WIPED US OUT.



I CAME INTO ACTION ABOUT SEVEN WHEN I GOT THERE, THE MARTIANS HAD ALREADY MADE A FIGHTING MACHINE.



AS OUR GUNNERS GOT READY FOR ACTION, THE FIGHTING MACHINE RAISED ITS HEAT RAY.





THE NEXT MOMENT, OUR BIG GUN EXPLODED, THE AMMUNITION BLEW UP, AND THERE WAS FIRE AND DEATH ALL AROUND ME.





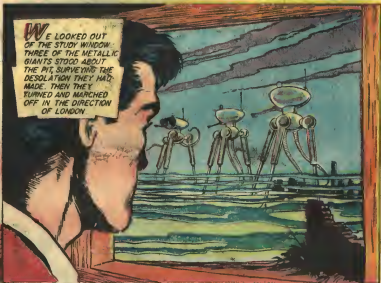
"I LAY STILL, SCARED OUT OF MY WITS, MOST OF THE COMPANY HAD BEEN WIPED OUT AROUND ME."



I LAY THERE FOR A LONG TIME. HOW I MANAGED TO EVADE THE MARTIANS, I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER HOW I GOT HERE.



WE LOOKED OUT OF THE STUDY WINDOW. THREE OF THE METALLIC GIANTS STOOD ABOUT THE PIT, SURVEYING THE DESOLATION THEY HAD MADE. THEN THEY TURNED AND MARCHED OFF IN THE DIRECTION OF LONDON.



**M**Y YOUNGER BROTHER WAS IN LONDON WHEN THE CYLINDERS LANDED ON THE EARTH. HE LATER TOLD ME WHAT HAPPENED IN THAT GREAT CITY WHEN THE MARTIANS CAME.



EVERYONE WAS INTENSELY INTERESTED IN NEWS OF THE MARTIANS, BUT THERE WERE NO SIGNS OF ANY UNUSUAL EXCITEMENT



**M**Y BROTHER WENT TO BED A LITTLE AFTER MIDNIGHT. THEN, IN THE SMALL HOURS OF THE MORNING, HE WAS AWAKENED BY THE SOUND OF



DOORKNOCKERS

FEET RUNNING IN THE STREET

DISTANT DRUMMING

THE CLAMOR OF BELLS

AND THE CRY.

**THE MARTIANS ARE COMING!**

IN A FEW MINUTES, LONDON BECAME  
A CITY OF DESPAIR AND CONFUSION.  
THERE WAS A STAMPEDE--A  
STAMPEDE GIGANTIC AND TERRIBLE--  
WITHOUT ORDER AND WITHOUT A GOAL  
IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE ROUT  
OF CIVILIZATION, OF THE MASSACRE  
OF MANKIND



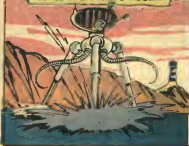
MY BROTHER HEADED FOR THE COAST. THERE HE BOARDED A STEAMBOAT WITH THE IDEA OF ESCAPING TO FRANCE.



AS THE BOAT LEFT THE SHORE, A MARTIAN SUDDENLY APPEARED, SMALL AND FAINT IN THE DISTANCE



IT WAS THE FIRST MARTIAN MY BROTHER HAD SEEN, AND HE STOOD MORE AMAZED THAN TERRIFIED, WATCHING THE MONSTER ADVANCE DELIBERATELY TOWARD THE BOAT



THE CAPTAIN FRANTICALLY CALLED FOR MORE SPEED.



IN SPITE OF THE THROBBING EXERTIONS OF THE ENGINES, THE BOAT MADE SCANT PROGRESS AGAINST THE OMNINOUS ADVANCE



THEN A VAST IRON BULK,  
 LIKE THE BLADE OF A  
 PLOUGH, CAME TEARING  
 THROUGH THE WATER

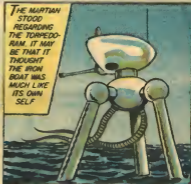


IT WAS A TORPEDO-RAM\* STEAMING TO THE  
 RESCUE OF THE THREATENED STEAMBOAT



\*An old type of boat, which carried a torpedo in its bow.

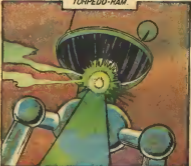
THE MARTIAN  
 STOOD  
 REGARDING  
 THE TORPEDO-  
 RAM. IT MAY  
 BE THAT IT  
 THOUGHT  
 THE IRON  
 BOAT WAS  
 MUCH LIKE  
 ITS OWN  
 SELF



AS IT CLOSED IN, THE TORPEDO-RAM FIRED  
 AT THE MARTIAN



AT THE SAME MOMENT, THE MARTIAN RAISED  
 ITS HEAT RAY AND AIMED IT DIRECTLY AT THE  
 TORPEDO-RAM.



WITH A VIOLENT THUD  
AND A BLINDING FLASH,  
ITS DECKS AND FUNNELS  
LEAPED UPWARD

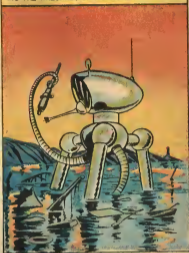




WHILE THE BRIEF BATTLE LASTED, THE STEAMBOAT BEAT ITS WAY SEAWARD



THE LAST THING MY BROTHER SAW IN THE DISTANCE WAS THE FIGHTING MACHINE EXAMINING THE WRECKAGE OF ITS VICTIM.



THEN THE CAPTAIN POINTED TO THE HEAVENS



IT WAS A FOURTH CYLINDER.



WHEN THE FOURTH CYLINDER FELL, I WAS IN THE KITCHEN OF A DESERTED HOUSE. THE SOLDIER AND I HAD ALREADY PARTED. HE HAD GONE OFF TO TRY TO FIND THE REMAINS OF HIS COMPANY, AND I WAS HEADING TOWARD LEATHERHEAD TO FIND MY WIFE.



WHILE MAKING MY WAY THROUGH THE RUINS, I HAD MET A CURATE.

THESE HORRIBLE CREATURES ARE EVERYWHERE. THE EARTH HAS BEEN GIVEN OVER TO THEM

YOU MUST KEEP YOUR HEAD. THERE IS STILL HOPE

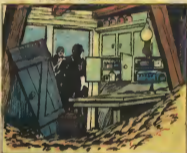


I HAVE HAD NOTHING TO DRINK SINCE YESTERDAY I AM TERRIBLY THIRSTY.

PERHAPS WE CAN FIND SOMETHING IN ONE OF THESE DESERTED HOUSES.



THE FIRST HOUSE WE ENTERED HAD A WELL-STOCKED PANTRY



AS WE ATE AND DRANK, THERE CAME A BLINDING GLARE OF VIVID GREEN LIGHT. THEN FOLLOWED SUCH A CONCUSSION AS I HAVE NEVER HEARD BEFORE OR SINCE.



**T**RAPPED IN THE DARKENED ROOM, WE WAITED IN SILENCE UNTIL DAWN. THEN, THROUGH A BREAK IN THE WALL, I SAW A MARTIAN STANDING SENTINEL OVER A NEWLY FALLEN CYLINDER



IT'S A CYLINDER! A FOURTH CYLINDER FROM MARS HAS STRUCK THIS HOUSE AND BURIED US UNDER THE RUINS!

GOD HAVE MERCY UPON US!



**W**E REMAINED IN THE WRECKED KITCHEN, LIVING ON OUR STORE OF FOOD AND DREADING EACH MOMENT AS IT CAME



**O**N THE NINTH DAY OF OUR IMPRISONMENT, I WAS AWAKENED OUT OF AN UNEASY SLEEP BY A PIERCING SHRIEK AND A HEAVY THUD.



**T**HE BODY OF THE DEAD CURATE LAY ACROSS THE ROOM AND A METAL TENTACLE WAS FEELING ITS WAY ABOUT THE FALLEN BEAMS



SOMEHOW, I MADE MY WAY ACROSS THE KITCHEN AND INTO THE COAL CELLAR. I CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND ME. THEN, SLOWLY, THE KNOB STARTED TURNING.



THE DOOR OPENED AND THE THING FELT ITS WAY AROUND. IT TOUCHED THE HEEL OF MY SHOE.



I WAS ON THE VERGE OF SCREAMING. I BIT MY HAND.



THEN IT GRIPPED A LUMP OF COAL AND MOVED OUT OF THE ROOM, PROBABLY TO EXAMINE IT MORE CLOSELY.



I LAY THE WHOLE DAY AMONG THE COAL AND FIRE WOOD, NOT DARING TO MOVE. THEN THIRST OVERCAME ME AND I CRAWLED OUT TO THE KITCHEN.



IT WAS SOME TIME BEFORE I DARED LOOK OUT THROUGH THE BREAK IN THE WALL.



I COULD SCARCELY BELIEVE MY EYES  
THERE WAS NOT A LIVING THING IN  
THE PIT.



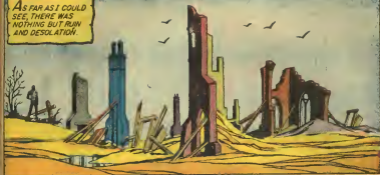
I TORE OPEN THE WALL AND SCRAMBLED TO THE  
TOP OF THE MOUND IN WHICH I HAD BEEN  
BURIED.



THE DAY SEEMED DAZZLINGLY  
BRIGHT, THE SKY A GLOWING BLUE  
AND OH! THE SWEETNESS OF THE AIR!



AS FAR AS I COULD SEE, THERE WAS NOTHING BUT RUIN AND DESOLATION.



AT THAT MOMENT, I FELT AN EMOTION BEYOND THE COMMON RANGE OF MEN, YET ONE THAT THE POOR BRUTES WE DOMINATE KNOW ONLY TOO WELL.



I FELT AS A RABBIT MIGHT, RETURNING TO ITS BURROW AND FINDING A DOZEN BUSY MEN DIGGING THE FOUNDATIONS OF A HOUSE.



I FELT THAT I WAS NO LONGER A MASTER, BUT AN ANIMAL AMONG ANIMALS, UNDER THE MARTIAN HEEL.



WITH US IT WOULD BE AS WITH THEM, TO LURK AND WATCH, TO RUN AND HIDE. THE EMPIRE OF MAN HAD PASSED AWAY.



I LEFT THE PIT AND STUMBLED ALONG THE ROAD UNTIL I FOUND A GROUP OF MUSH-ROOMS AND A THIN STREAM OF FRESH WATER.



I SLEPT THAT NIGHT IN AN ABANDONED INN.



AT DAWN, I CREPT OUT OF THE INN.



I WAS LIKE A RAT LEAVING ITS HIDING PLACE—AN INFERIOR ANIMAL, A THING THAT FOR ANY PASSING WHIM OF ITS MASTERS MIGHT BE HUNTED AND KILLED.



DOWN THE ROAD, I FOUND PITIFUL SIGNS OF THE PANIC THAT HAD GRIPPED THE COUNTRYSIDE WHEN THE MARTIANS CAME.



I WONDERED IF I WERE THE ONLY MAN LEFT ALIVE. THEN I SAW SOMETHING CROUCHING BEHIND SOME BUSHES

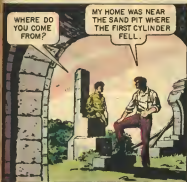


IT WAS A MAN AS DUSTY AND FILTHY AND MISERABLE AS I.

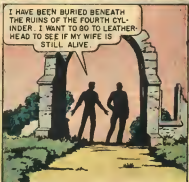


WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

MY HOME WAS NEAR THE SAND PIT WHERE THE FIRST CYLINDER FELL.



I HAVE BEEN BURIED BENEATH THE RUINS OF THE FOURTH CYLINDER. I WANT TO GO TO LEATHERHEAD TO SEE IF MY WIFE IS STILL ALIVE.



IT'S YOU AGAIN!



AND YOU ARE THE SOLDIER WHO CAME INTO MY GARDEN! TELL ME, WHAT HAS HAPPENED? WHERE ARE THE MARTIANS?





THEY'VE GONE AWAY ACROSS LONDON. I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY ABOUT FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS.



I WONDER WHAT THEY MEAN TO DO.

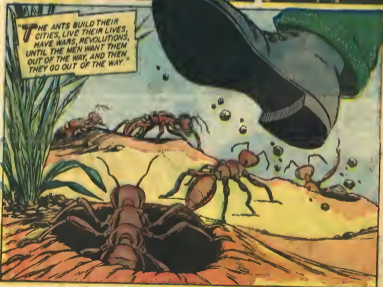


THEY'RE PROBABLY PLANNING SOME WAY OF GOING AROUND THE WORLD, AND THEN IT'S SURELY UP WITH HUMANITY WE'RE DOWN, I TELL YOU, WE'RE BEAT.

THIS ISN'T A WAR. IT NEVER WAS A WAR, ANY MORE THAN THERE'S WAR BETWEEN MEN AND ANTS.



THE ANTS BUILD THEIR CITIES, LIVE THEIR LIVES, HAVE WARS, REVOLUTIONS, UNTIL THE MEN WANT THEM OUT OF THE WAY, AND THEN THEY GO OUT OF THE WAY.



I WONDER  
WHAT THE  
MARTIANS  
WILL DO  
TO US.

FIRST, THEY'LL  
SETTLE ALL  
OUR GUNS AND  
SHIPS AND  
SMASH OUR  
RAILWAYS.



THEN THEY'LL BEGIN  
CATCHING US, PICKING  
THE BEST AND STORING US  
IN CAGES AND THINGS.



VERY LIKELY THESE  
MARTIANS WILL  
MAKE PETS OF  
SOME OF US  
TRAIN US  
TO DO  
TRICKS.



AND SOME, MAYBE, THEY'LL  
TRAIN TO HUNT US.



NO! THAT'S  
IMPOSSIBLE! NO  
HUMAN BEING...

WHAT'S THE GOOD  
OF GOING ON WITH  
SUCH LIES?  
THERE'RE MEN WHO'D  
DO IT CHEERFULLY



I WAS SHAKEN BY THIS  
TALK WITH THE SOLDIER  
NEVERTHELESS, THOUGH HE  
WAS CONTENT TO REMAIN  
WHERE HE WAS, I DECIDED  
TO MOVE ON TO LONDON  
THERE I PRAYED I MIGHT  
FIND SOME NEWS OF  
LEATHERHEAD AND OF MY  
WIFE.



AS I WALKED DOWN THE  
ROAD TO LONDON, ALL ABOUT  
ME WAS A TERRIBLE STILL-  
NESS.



I WAS ALREADY IN  
THE CITY WHEN  
I HEARD A WEIRD  
HOWLING SOUND.



I WONDERED AT THIS  
STRANGE, REMOTE  
WAILING



I HEADED NORTHWARD, HOPING TO LOCATE THESE WEIRD SOUNDS



TOO EXHAUSTED TO CONTINUE, I BROKE INTO A PUBLIC HOUSE AND FELL ASLEEP



WHEN I AWOKE, I ATE SOME MOLDY BISCUITS I FOUND, AND THEN RESUMED MY WANDERING



AS I WALKED ABOUT, THE HOWLING SUDDENLY CEASED. FAR AWAY, I SAW THE HOOD OF THE MARTIAN GIANT WHICH HAD BEEN THE SOURCE OF THIS STRANGE SOUND.



I RAN RECKLESSLY TOWARD THE MONSTER, THEN I CAME UPON A SCENE I WILL NEVER FORGET.



THE MARTIANS WERE DEAD EVENTUALLY, I REALIZED THEY HAD BEEN SLAIN BY THE HUMBLEST THINGS THAT GOD, IN HIS WISDOM, HAD PUT UPON THIS EARTH.



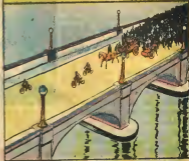
THE MARTIANS HAD BEEN SLAIN BY DISEASE BACTERIA AGAINST WHICH THEIR SYSTEMS WERE TOTALLY UNPREPARED. THERE ARE NO BACTERIA ON MARS, AND AS SOON AS THE INVADERS ARRIVED ON EARTH, OUR MICROSCOPIC ALLIES BEGAN TO WORK THEIR OVERTHROW. MAN HAS DEVELOPED AN IMMUNITY TO THESE GERMS. BY THE TOLL OF A BILLION DEATHS, HE HAS BOUGHT HIS BIRTHRIGHT TO THE EARTH. FOR MEN NEITHER LIVE NOR DIE IN VAIN.



I STOOD IN THE PIT, WEEPING AND PRAISING GOD



THE NEWS OF THE OVERTHROW OF THE MARTIANS WAS SOON TELEGRAPHED AROUND THE WORLD. THE PEOPLE, BEARING THEIR BELONGINGS, CAME TRUDGING BACK INTO THE SILENT STREETS



FOR HOURS I STOOD SCANNING THE ENDLESS NUMBER OF FACES THAT PASSED BY ME THEN I HEARD MY NAME CALLED



MY PRAYERS HAD BEEN ANSWERED I HAD FOUND MY WIFE



IT MAY BE THAT THE INVASION FROM MARS WAS NOT WITHOUT BENEFIT WE HAVE LEARNED NOW THAT WE CANNOT REGARD THIS PLANET AS BEING FENCED IN AND A SECURE ABIDING PLACE FOR MAN AND WE HAVE LEARNED THAT, FACED WITH A COMMON DANGER OR CAUSE, ALL MEN ARE BROTHERS.



THE END

NOW THAT YOU HAVE READ THE CLASSICS' Illustrated EDITION, DON'T MISS THE ADDED ENJOYMENT OF READING THE ORIGINAL, OBTAINABLE AT YOUR SCHOOL OR PUBLIC LIBRARY.

# H. G. WELLS

**H**ERBERT GEORGE WELLS was born on September 21, 1866, at Bromley, Kent, England. His father owned a small shop, but later became a professional cricket player. His mother was a lady's maid.

Wells' parents were too poor to help him to much of a formal education. However, between serving as an apprentice to a draper and a chemist, the boy managed to attend the Midhurst Grammar School. He was such a good student, the master wanted to make him his assistant. Wells refused the offer and instead went to London and worked in a dry goods house.

A scholarship to the Royal College of Science led him to resume his studies. Eventually, he received a Bachelor of Science degree, with honors, from the University of London.

Biology was Wells' major interest. He planned to teach this subject, but a siege of tuberculosis led him to turn to writing. He did not, however, leave his scientific knowledge completely behind. He carried over just enough to lend authenticity to his science fiction.

Wells wrote more than 100 books. They fall into three categories: the fantastic, the realistic and the textbook. *The Time Machine*, *The War of the Worlds*, *The First Men in the Moon* and *The Shape of Things to Come* are his most famous science fiction novels. Realistic treatments of his lower middle class background can be found in *Kipps*, *Tono-Bungay* and *History of Mr. Polly*.

His most important non-fiction works are *Outline of History* and *Science of Life*. He also wrote a number of books to illustrate his



social and political beliefs.

Wells considered it an insult to have his science fiction thought of as no more than just that. He insisted that the fantasy novels, too, were written chiefly to illustrate his beliefs. He said they were never intended to be taken for reality, any more than is a "good, gripping dream."

Wells' political beliefs were varied and variable. But, basically, although he sometimes had his doubts about them, he believed in human beings. He also believed in his "unlimited right to think, criticize, discuss and suggest" how man could be better.

He tried to get this into most of his works. But today, he is most widely read for his science fiction. If what Wells had to say about man is remembered, it is because of these pseudo-science thrillers.

Wells was married twice. His second wife, Amy Catherine Robbins, was also a writer. They had two sons. The elder, George, became a scientist and with his father and Julian Huxley, wrote *Science of Life*.

In 1936, Wells wrote a mock obituary, supposedly published after his death as a forgotten old man of ninety-seven. In it he said of himself, "He was one of the most prolific of the literary hacks of his time. . . . He was a copious, repetitive essayist upon public affairs and a still more copious writer of fiction."

The obituary was wrong on several counts. Wells died on August 13, 1946, at the age of eighty. He is considered far more than just a literary hack and a repetitive essayist. And he has certainly not been forgotten.



# NOSTRADAMUS

## Prophet or Impostor?

**M**OST men who study the heavens are astronomers, seeking to explain the actions of the stars and planets. But some men look at the stars to explain not scientific acts, but people. They seek to discover not what is, or was, but what will be.



One of the most famous of these star-gazers was a Frenchman, Michel de Notredame. He is better known by his Latin name, Nostradamus. Men who believe in him say he was the greatest prophet to appear on earth since Biblical times. Men who mock him say he was a 'double-talking, superstitious impostor.

Nostradamus was born in France in 1503. When an adult, he became famous first as a physician, and then as an astrologer. His fame was widespread in his own time, and the King and Queen of France kept him at court to prophesy their fates.

In 1555, eleven years before he died, Nostradamus published a book of rhymed, four-line prophecies running through the year 3797. The book was called *Centuries*. The title refers to each group of 100 prophecies, not to any length of time.

The prophecies were, to a great extent, vague and broad enough to be interpreted in almost any way. Men who scorn Nostradamus will point to one such as:

- From a simple soldier he will rise to the empire,
- From the short robe he will attain the long;
- Able in arms, in Church government he shows less skill;
- He raises or depresses the priests as water a sponge.

Most interpreters claim this is a prophecy of the coming of Napoleon. But others point out that it can describe Oliver Cromwell, Adolph Hitler or Benito Mussolini, as well.

But, in some of his prophecies, Nostradamus was specific. He foresaw:

The year 1727

The King of Persia will be taken by those of Egypt.

"Those of Egypt," it is said, is a reference to the Turks, because Egypt was once part of the Turkish Empire. And in 1727, almost 175 years after it was predicted, the Turks won a war with Persia.

In another one of his famous prophecies, Nostradamus wrote:

The government taken over will convict the King,

The Queen will be sent to death by jurors chosen by lot;

They will deny life to the Queen's son.

In 1792, the leaders of the French Revolution had King Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette beheaded. Their young son died in prison. The importance of this prophecy, it is claimed, is that Marie Antoinette is the only Queen ever to be condemned by jurors chosen by lot. And in Nostradamus' time, there were no juries.

In his writings, Nostradamus mentions America only once. Some say he foresaw the American Revolution. In any event, he does speak of government in America, although at his time, the country was still an unsettled and uncolonized wilderness.

Nostradamus' praisers insist the astrologer was able to foresee Napoleon, calling him by his right name; the Franco-Prussian War, Hitler, Mussolini, serial warfare, poison gas and tanks, among other happenings.

Nostradamus' enemies say he was just a fellow who spun a lot of double-talk in order to get to the French Court and establish a reputation as a prophet. His gloomy forecasts seem right, they say, only because they are broad enough to take in most of the world's disasters.

And, they point out, even in his own time, Nostradamus made a major error in prophecy. The Queen Mother of France once wrote happily that Nostradamus had said her son, Charles IX, would live to be ninety. Charles died at the age of thirty-four.



# The War That Never Was

**H** G. WELLS once said that his science fiction stories should not be taken for reality, and should only have the effect of a "good, gripping dream."

The "good, gripping dream" once turned into a nightmare for thousands of Americans

On Sunday, October 30, 1938, newspapers across the country carried the announcement that from 8 pm to 9 pm that evening, there would be a dramatization of *The War of the Worlds*.

When listeners from coast to coast tuned in, they heard the announcement, "The Columbia Broadcasting System and its affiliated stations present Orson Welles and the Mercury Theatre on the air in *The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells." Then the broadcast began.

The point of the radio version was to sound as if a regular broadcast were taking place, to be interrupted by reports of the landing of the Martians. This was done. A weather report was given. Dance music began to play.

Suddenly, there came the first interruption. In the manner of an announcer breaking into a program with a news bulletin, there was a flash: a report had been received about a series of mysterious explosions on the planet Mars.

Other reports followed. A meteor had fallen on the Earth. Only, in the radio version, it did not fall in England. To make the story more believable for an American audience, the program had the meteor land near Princeton, New Jersey.

Then came the announcement that the meteor had proven to be a hollow cylinder. Men from Mars had emerged from it. They were armed with a horrible death ray. Human beings were being slain. The Martians were marching on to New York.

As a result of this broadcast, America was convulsed by panic and hysteria. Many people turned on the radio after the opening announcement, and so heard only the "war" news. Many did not connect the opening with the body of the program. Some just heard

snatches of the meat of the broadcast as shouted at them by hysterical neighbors or relatives.

People in New Jersey and New York, supposedly the prime targets of the Martians, went almost mad with terror. Adults ran into the streets with children and household goods in their arms, ready to flee. Thousands called police, newspapers and radio stations. A few asked if the story were true. Many more asked how to get to safety.



The panic led to many imagined situations. One man told police he had heard the President's voice over the radio advising everyone to leave the city. Another rushed into a police station saying that enemy planes were crossing the Hudson River. One said he could see the smoke of the battle from his window.

Hundreds of doctors and nurses called hospitals and police to volunteer to aid the wounded. Men called the armed forces to enlist. City officials called their office to work out plans for evacuation.

The scare was nationwide. Some people worried because they had relatives in New Jersey and New York, but many more were just afraid. The "invaders" would not stop at the East coast. Meetings were held across the country and in Canada to make plans for defense.

In Indiana, a woman raced into church screaming, "New York is destroyed; it's the end of the world!"

A woman from Ohio called up a New York newspaper to ask, "What time will it be the end of the world?"

A man in Pennsylvania came home and found his wife with a bottle of poison in her hand. "I'd rather die this way than like that," she sobbed.

Eventually, police, newspapers and radio stations managed to restore calm and convince the country that the broadcast was only fiction. And surprised, hárried, twenty-three year old Orson Welles, the star of the broadcast, said, "I don't think we will choose anything like this again."