

The WAR of the WORLDS THE RPG

"No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's and yet as mortal as his own; that as men busied themselves about their various concerns they were scrutinised and studied, perhaps almost as narrowly as a man with a microscope might scrutinise the transient creatures that swarm and multiply in a drop of water... Yet across the gulf of space, minds that are to our minds as ours are to those of the beasts that perish, intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic, regarded this earth with envious eyes, and slowly and surely drew their plans against us."

- H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*

In 1902 invaders from Mars waged a war of conquest against the inhabitants of Earth. They strode across the countryside in glittering Fighting Machines, laying waste left and right with their terrible Heat-Rays, choking the defenders with poisonous Black Smoke. It was the first of the interplanetary conflicts - the first War of the Worlds.

This website contains notes for the purpose of running a series of roleplaying adventures based on the stories of H. G. Wells. Not only will these adventures cover the events of *The War of the Worlds*, they will also follow the alternative history resulting from the Martian Invasion.

Please Note: Some of the pages, especially those dealing with plot and storyline details, contain spoiler material, so should not be accessed by players. Please also bear in mind that the author's access to the internet is very limited over the summer, so updates may be few and far between.

[Aims and Intention](#) - The reasoning behind the creation of this site.

[Acknowledgements](#) - Credit where credit's due - people who have helped make this site what it is.

[Artist's Impressions](#) - Sketches of the inhabitants of the Solar System.

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The Wars of the Worlds

[Part I - The Martian Invasion of Earth](#) - The first War of the Worlds, the Martian Invasion of 1902.

[Part II - The Selenite War](#) - The fight for control of the Moon.

[Part III - The War on Mars](#) - The Earthlings strike back!

A Gazetteer of the Solar System

[The Humans](#) - inhabitants of the Blue Planet

[The Selenites](#) - denizens of the Moon

[The Martians](#) - rulers of the Red Planet

These pages are still very much under construction, and as such look rather plain and boring. Hopefully they will soon start looking much nicer, once I've found suitable graphics and suchlike. Incidentally, if you know where I can find some, [let me know](#).

[Read](#) the Visitors' Book.

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This [Victorian Adventure Gaming Ring](#) site owned by [Steve Dismukes](#).

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Why **The War of the Worlds**?

The eventual intention of this website is to draw together the assorted works of HG Wells into a coherent world in which roleplaying campaigns in the spirit of his writing can be set, incorporating as many of his stories as possible. I hope to build up a comprehensive background to this alternative world, a history that never was, *but could have been*.

This is a universe in which the Solar system is not inhabited solely by Man, but is shared with the advanced, emotionless Martians and the bustling, ant-like Selenites. Even on Earth man is not alone, but shares his planet with the cephalopod Sea Raiders, and the strange underwater civilisation that exists in the ocean's deepest reaches. Then there is the strange shadowy realm superimposed on our own, inhabited by unfriendly spirits.

There are gravity-defying Cavorite Spheres, Plattnerite-powered Time Machines, and lumbering Land Ironclads. Eccentric scientists create twisted beast-men on remote Pacific islands, develop invisibility treatments, or make fantastic journeys to the Moon or to the far future.

The history of this world is different too - following the Martian invasion at the end of the nineteenth century, humanity has taken a different path to our own. Major events have affected Humanity's outlook, from the War in the Air which convulsed the nations of the world in the early years of the twentieth century, to the devastating effects of the Star that entered our solar system and wreaked havoc in its close approach to Earth.

In drawing together these works, I hope to remain as true to the tone and spirit of Wells' works as possible, from his dark visions of the future in *The War in the Air* and *The Time Machine* to the hopeful epilogue to *The War of the Worlds*. Really, this is my tribute to the man whose writings have had such an enormous impact on our thoughts and dreams for a century and more.

Stephen Dismukes, May 1999

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Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those of you who have contributed your help, ideas and encouragement to the construction of the roleplaying setting detailed in these web pages, and those of you who continue to do so. This includes, but is by no means limited to, the following people and groups:

Simon Richardson, Mr. Eeeevil Midnight (and incidentally a top-notch GM), for first proposing that I write a roleplaying Marathon based on *The War of the Worlds*, and for recommending the *Call of Cthulhu* system. Now look what you've made me do. I hope you're pleased with yourself... :)

Marcus L. Rowland, creator of the [Forgotten Futures RPG](#) and veteran RPG designer, for providing this novice with some very sound advice.

Jordan S. Bassior, for his many helpful contributions, including the truly inspired [Flashman and the Martians](#), which had me in stitches. :)

The Reverend Doctor TOC, with whom many ideas were bounced back and forth via email. Also check out his Time War RPG resource on his [web site](#) - I have yet to see anything approaching his laws of temporal dynamics elsewhere on the Web.

My players, those marvellous people who were an enormous help and encouragement to a first-time GM:

Tom Hudson, whose gallant hussar, after surviving almost the entire marathon, heroically sacrificed himself for the good of Queen and Country in the final encounter. Hip, hip, HURRAH!

Neil Jasper, whose Texas Ranger showed those Brits how to kick Martian butt...

Lee Ravitz, whose diplomat-spy kept the British end up...

Jenny Gould, whose Utopian visitor provided a different point of view, and also lost the most sanity of the whole party...

Shayna Franklin, whose medium practically went hunting for SAN rolls...

James Hanley, whose fruitcake neurosurgeon had the most precarious grip on sanity to begin with.

Thank you all for making it run so smoothly. I can honestly say that I couldn't have done it without you.

All those helpful people on the [soc.history.what-if](#) newsgroup for their suggestions on the likely aftermath of the Martian Invasion. ^^^ ^^

To everyone else who has contributed in whatever way, be it email correspondence, signing my Visitors' Book, linking to my site, or offering feedback, suggestions, praise (especially that!) and encouragement. Even if I haven't mentioned you specifically here, I thank you very much.

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Artist's Impressions

Here are some quick sketches of a selection of subjects. More detailed versions of these and other pictures should be up soon.



A [Selenite Archer](#)

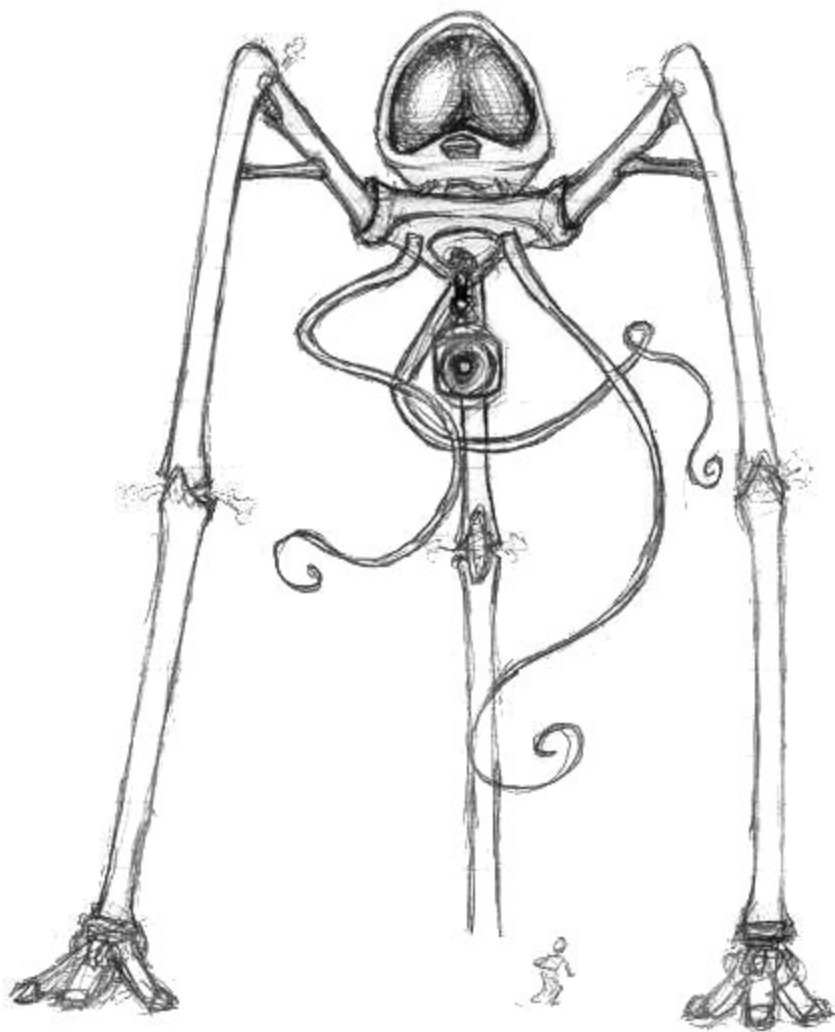


A fearsome [Selenite Warrior](#)



Another [Selenite Warrior](#), with a pike.

The terrible Martian [Fighting Machine](#)





An Old Martian

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Recent Alterations

Details of recent updates, additions and amendments to this site.

- July 17, 1999** Added the [Acknowledgements](#) page
- May 22, 1999** Added a better scan of the Selenite Archer, a colorised version of the Selenite Warrior, and another Selenite Warrior pictures to the [Artist's Impressions](#) page
- May 6, 1999** Added a page containing a collection of [sketches](#) of various inhabitants of the Solar System. Also added the Magnetic Acceleration Cannon to the [Martian Technology](#) page
- May 5, 1999** Added the Oxygen Shell to the [Recent Advances in Human Technology](#) page.
- May 4, 1999** Added the Airships, the Monorail and Butteridge's Flying Machine to the [Recent Advances in Human Technology](#) page.
- May 1, 1999** Wow! A huge site update, including information on the [Old Martians](#), details on more Martian [Weaponry](#), [History and Civilisation](#), stats for the [Selenites](#), a [Timeline of World Affairs](#), and more.

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The Martian Invasion of Earth

In the Summer of 1902, the inhabitants of Mars waged a war of conquest against Earth. This adventure takes a party through the War, from the initial landing of the first Cylinder, to Mankind's miraculous reprieve from the Martians. There is information on Martian technology, biology and tactics, as well as a timeline of events. Wherever possible the original novel has been used as source material, but other sources have also been utilised. It is strongly advised that referees read H. G. Wells' novel *[The War of the Worlds](#)* before running this adventure, to give a feel for the atmosphere and the characters involved.

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The Selenite War

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The War on Mars

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Timeline of Events of the Martian Invasion

The Events Preceding the Martian Invasion

The Martian Invasion

Book I: The Coming of the Martians

Book II: The Earth Under the Martians

The Events Preceding the Martian Invasion

Late July/Early August, 1894 - During the Opposition of Mars, a great light is seen on illuminated part of the Martian disk.

1896, 1898 - Strange marks seen on the Martian disk during Opposition.

Midnight, August 12 1900 - First jet of green gas seen erupting from the surface of Mars by Lavelle of Java.

Midnight, August 13-22 1900 - Jets of green gas spurt out from Mars at 24 hour intervals.

The Martian Invasion

Book I: The Coming of the Martians

June 1902

Day 1: Friday

Midnight - the first Martian cylinder lands in Surrey on the common between Horsell, Ottershaw and Woking.

6 a.m. - the cylinder is found by Ogilvy the astronomer.

8 a.m. - a number of boys and unemployed men start for the common.

9 a.m. - a crowd of approximately twenty people gather at the edge of the pit.

Afternoon - Ogilvy, Henderson (a London journalist), and Stent, the Astronomer Royal, direct workmen in the task of excavating the cylinder.

Shortly before sunset - approximately two to three hundred people are gathered at the pit when the cylinder opens. At the sight of the Martians the crowd retreats from the edge of the pit.

Sunset - Their confidence somewhat restored by the lack of visible activity in the Pit, the crowd begins to slowly advance upon the Pit once more.

8.30 p.m. - The Deputation, consisting of Ogilvy, Henderson, Stent and a number of others, advances upon the Pit, waving a white flag. There is a flash of light and three puffs of greenish smoke rise into the air. The hissing noise that accompanies this activity slowly turns into a humming, then into a loud, droning noise. The Martians target the crowd with their Heat-Ray, and an invisible ray of heat flashes from man to man, and each bursts into flame, as if suddenly and momentarily turned to fire. The crowd flees in panic and scatters.

11.00 p.m. - a company of soldiers form a cordon around the edge of the common. A squadron of Hussars, two Maxim guns and four hundred men of the Cardigan regiment depart for the common from Aldershot.

Day 2: Saturday

Midnight - the second cylinder falls in the woods at Byfleet Golf Links, to the north-west of Woking, .

Morning - Newspapers report:

"The Martians, alarmed by the approach of a crowd, have killed a number of people with a quick-firing gun. Formidable as they seem to be, the Martians have not moved from the pit into which they have fallen, and, indeed, seem incapable of doing so. Probably this is due to the relative strength of the earth's gravitational energy."

3 p.m. - the pine woods into which the second cylinder fell are shelled from Chertsey and Addlestone.

5 p.m. - a field gun reaches Chobham for use against the first group of Martians.

6 p.m. - a clash between the Martians and the soldiers around the first pit on Horsell Common occurs, as the Martians venture from their pit under cover of a large shield. The Oriental College is struck by the Heat-Ray. The evacuation of Woking begins.

7 p.m. - the artillery at Horsell Common is wiped out by the first of the Martian Fighting Machines.

7.15 p.m. - The first of the Fighting Machines attacks Woking.

8 p.m. - Newspapers report the loss of telegraphic communication with the area about Horsell Common, believed to be due to burning trees falling across the line. One of the Fighting Machines returns to Woking.

Day 3: Sunday

Midnight - the third cylinder falls in a field near Pyrford.

Morning - London newspapers report: *"About seven o'clock last night the Martians came out of the cylinder, and, moving about under an armour of metallic shields, have completely wrecked Woking station with the adjacent houses, and massacred an entire battalion of the Cardigan Regiment. No details are known. Maxims have been absolutely useless against their armour; the field guns have been disabled by them. Flying hussars have been galloping into Chertsey. The Martians appear to be moving slowly towards Chertsey or Windsor. Great anxiety prevails in West Surrey, and earthworks are being thrown up to check the advance Londonward."*

1 p.m. - Five Fighting Machines attack Weybridge and Shepperton. One of the Fighting Machines is destroyed by the guns concealed at Shepperton, and reels into the tower of Shepperton Church before collapsing into the river. Weybridge is levelled by the Martians' Heat-Rays. The Martians return to Horsell Common with the wreckage of the destroyed Fighting Machine.

Afternoon - The Martians transfer all of their equipment from Addlestone Golf Links and Pyrford to the original pit on Horsell Common. Meanwhile, artillery is assembled around Kingston and Richmond, and scouts with heliographs carefully approach the Pit on Horsell Common to warn of any Martian activity.

5 p.m. - carriage trucks bearing huge guns and carriages crammed with soldiers pass through Waterloo Station from Woolwich and Chatham on their way to Kingston.

Evening - London newspapers give the first inkling of the power of the Martians:

"Fighting at Weybridge! Full description! Repulse of the Martians! London in Danger!" Descriptions are given of *"vast spiderlike machines, nearly a hundred feet high, capable of the speed of an express train, and able to shoot out a beam of intense heat."*

Large numbers of guns, from Windsor, Portsmouth, Aldershot, Woolwich and also from the north are positioned in defence of London. Large quantities of high explosive are produced and distributed with the aim of destroying any further cylinders that land before they open.

8 p.m. - heavy firing is audible all over the south of London. Three Martians in Fighting Machines advance from the pit on Horsell Common, and move in a line through Byfleet and Pyrford towards Ripley and Weybridge. The guns at St. George's Hill cripple one Fighting Machine before the guns are destroyed.

9 p.m. - The Martian whose machine was damaged by the guns at St. George's Hill completes the repairs to his [Fighting Machine](#).

9.05 p.m. - the three Martians are joined by four more Fighting Machines, carrying launchers for the Black Smoke, and the first three are also given one such tube each. The Fighting Machines move to space themselves along a curved line between St. George's Hill, Weybridge and Send. Two more position themselves to face Sunbury and Staines.

9.30 p.m. - the Martians unleash their Black Smoke against the forces between themselves and London.

11 p.m. - the siege guns at Richmond Hill and Kingston Hill are fired towards Hampton and Ditton, but are destroyed within a quarter of an hour.

Day 4: Monday

Midnight - the fourth cylinder falls in Bushey Park.

Early morning, shortly before dawn - the news begins to travel through London of approaching Martians. Extra editions of the newspapers report:

"The Martians are able to discharge enormous clouds of a black and poisonous vapour by means of rockets. They have smothered our batteries, destroyed Richmond, Kingston, and Wimbledon, and are advancing slowly towards London, destroying everything on the way. It is impossible to stop them. There is no safety from the Black Smoke but in instant flight."

The Exodus from London begins. Approximately half of the members of the government gather at Birmingham. Large quantities of high explosive are prepared for use in automatic mines across the Midland Counties.

Morning - The Martians go to and fro over the North Downs between Guildford and Maidstone, using the Black Smoke to eliminate any artillery batteries located there.

10 a.m. - the police organisation breaks down

12 p.m. - the railway system collapses. A Martian Fighting Machine is sighted at Barnes, and the Black Smoke is used at Lambeth flats.

1 p.m. - the remnants of a cloud of the Black Smoke appears between the arches of Blackfriars Bridge. The ships which had until then been gathered in the Pool of London depart in a panic.

2 p.m. - A Fighting Machine appears beyond the Clock Tower and wades down the river.

Day 5: Tuesday

Midnight - the fifth cylinder falls at Sheen. The Narrator and the Parson are trapped beneath the Pit.

The Martians gain complete possession of London; Fighting Machines are sighted at Highgate and Neasden

Day 6: Wednesday

Midnight - the sixth cylinder falls at Wimbledon.

Morning - the Midland Railway Company replaces the desertions of the previous day, and resumes traffic, running northbound trains from St. Albans. Waltham Abbey Powder Mills are blown up in a vain attempt to destroy a Fighting Machine.

5 p.m. - Firing begins in the region of Shoeburyness.

5.30 p.m. - three Fighting Machines advance upon the fleet assembled in the English Channel. The torpedo ram *Thunder Child* attacks the three Martian Fighting Machines, destroying one with her guns before she is struck down by the Heat-Ray. Even so, in a valiant last act *Thunder Child* rams another of the Fighting Machines, taking it with her.

Sunset - the Battle of the Thames is fought by the Channel Fleet against a number of Fighting Machines. The battle is ended when the Martians' newly-constructed Flying Machine arrives from the pit on Horsell Common, and rains down canisters of the Black Smoke on the fleet. On the return flight to Horsell the Flying Machine, not designed for such prolonged flights in Earth's gravity, goes out of control and crashes in the Hammersmith area. The Martian pilots are killed in the crash, and the Flying Machine itself is largely buried by the rubble its impact created.

Day 7: Thursday

Midnight - the seventh cylinder lands on Primrose Hill.

Book II: The Earth Under the Martians

Day 12: Tuesday

Evening - The electricity supply in a small area of London is started up again, and Regent Street and Piccadilly Circus are ablaze with lights. They attract hundreds of survivors, ragged and drunken, who spend the night carousing.

Day 13: Wednesday

Dawn - the revellers in Regent Street and Piccadilly become aware of a Fighting Machine standing nearby the Langham. The Fighting Machine scoops up nearly a hundred people too drunk or paralysed with fear to move before leaving.

Day 16: Saturday

The Martians recover the wreckage of the Flying Machine, and carry it to their base on Primrose Hill. The Martians also transfer their main camp and most of their machines to the crater on Primrose Hill, abandoning many of the smaller pits.

Day 18: Monday

The Narrator escapes his prison at Sheen.

Day 19: Tuesday

The Martians at Primrose Hill manage to render the Flying Machine at least partly operational.

Day 23: Saturday

The last Martians die from the actions of terrestrial bacteria on their bodies. Soon thereafter the reconstruction begins, with ships from France, America and the rest of the world bringing food for the survivors of the invasion.

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Notice

This page contains material which is solely for the attention for the Referee, and so should not be read by anyone intending to play in the adventure.

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The Martian Invasion of Earth

This roleplaying adventure has been designed to follow a "marathon" format, and is intended to run over the course of a weekend, lasting from Friday evening until Sunday evening. With some work and referee padding it is perhaps possible to run it as a short campaign, although the adventure's short timescale (approximately three game weeks) makes it unsuitable for extended play.

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Part I: The Coming Of The Martians

The Eve of the War

In the prelude to the Martian Invasion the party meet up on their way to Woking.

For whatever reason each party member has for travelling to Woking in the early evening of Saturday, they end up sharing the same compartment on the train from Waterloo to Woking Station. This provides an

opportunity for the party to meet each other, make introductions, and so set the scene for the rest of the adventure. Let them talk amongst themselves for a little while, describe their characters, their reasons for coming to Woking - the landing of the cylinder has been fairly widely reported, as well as the slaying of the Deputation the previous evening. The day so far has been extremely hot and muggy across the south of England, with signs of an impending storm.

The Arrival at Woking

The party's journey to Woking is suddenly interrupted by the attack of a Martian Fighting Machine.

While the party are talking, the train approaches Woking Station. Outside, what appear to be heath-fires are burning in the distance, with the faint sounds of gunfire and artillery on the wind, which cease as the party listen. Abruptly, there is an explosion from the front end of the train, and the party are thrown around their carriage as the train grinds to a sudden juddering halt. Flames flicker outside amid gouts of thick black smoke, and the sounds of screaming and destruction fill the air. The houses outside Woking Station are smashed and ablaze, and panicked citizens run in disorder. The party has arrived in time to witness the Martians' attack on Woking.

Woking in Flames

The Martians attack Woking, while the party must somehow meet up with their contacts in the military.

The military forces around Woking have set up a field headquarters in the Oriental College at the foot of Maybury Hill. The houses of Woking are ablaze, and a few seem to have been flattened by something other than fire. There is a deafening howling, like a factory siren - "Aloo! Aloo!" loud enough to drown out the screams of the dying. They come across the Fighting Machine that is the source of this unearthly wailing as it goes about its grim business.

The party would be well advised to hide at this point, as they stand no chance against the glittering metallic titan towering a hundred feet tall above the town. On occasion the Heat-Ray will sweep dangerously close to the party (Dodge or Luck rolls to avoid the scorching backwash and fragments of flying masonry), forcing them to dive for cover. They can watch as people less fortunate are struck by the Heat-Ray, causing them to burst into flames and be torn apart by the infernal weapon.

The Heat-Ray itself is fired in a beam which spreads to a width of about six inches, its path only revealed as a hazy beam of shimmering heat as it sears the air it passes through, and a trail of objects bursting into flame. As the party begin to think themselves out of immediate danger, perhaps crouching behind a ruined section of wall, a patch of vegetation about twenty yards away from them smoulders and bursts into flame with a dull thud, then the trail of fire starts to creep towards them. Watch them run.

Eventually, having reduced most of Woking to glowing rubble, the Fighting Machine will stride off towards the woods where the second cylinder fell. However, there is little time to waste, as it will undoubtedly be back.

The party should, having crept furtively across the ruins of Woking, arrive at the Oriental College, where the military forces set up headquarters, at around nine. The College itself is now a heap of smoking ruins - it was one of the first buildings to be destroyed this evening. The remaining able-bodied soldiers (of whom there are pitiful few left) are busy evacuating the wounded and looking for other survivors among the rubble while the Fighting Machine is elsewhere. A number of wagons are being loaded with casualties, many of whom are horribly burned, or have been crushed beneath falling masonry.

On arrival the party will be curtly told that civilians are to leave town immediately. If party members associated with the government explain who they are and ask to see Major Eden, their liaison officer, they will be told that he was on Horsell Common when the fighting started, and is currently missing, presumed dead, along with about 400 men of the Cardigan regiment. Instead they will be directed to another officer, Lieutenant Phelps, who will inform them that the Army are evacuating Woking and withdrawing to Weybridge, where the next major concentration of military forces are located under the command of Brigadier-General Marvin. Once there they are to brief the Brigadier-General on the situation, and he will give them their next instructions.

In Weybridge

Following the party's evacuation to Weybridge, they will meet up with the military there to advise them on the Martians. They will be quizzed on the ability of the Martians, their tactics, potential methods of beating them, and so on. Of course the party didn't see too much of the invaders, but every available piece of information could help defend against this menace. The Brigadier-General will wire London to inform his superiors of the party's arrival, and to request further reinforcements. Shortly after the party will receive a reply telegram from the government. News of the Martians' destruction of Woking has reached London, and the party's mission profile has been adjusted accordingly. They are to gather as much information as possible about the Martians that might help in the defence of London against them. However, should the situation become such that their lives are in danger, they are to return to London with whatever information they can get on the invaders.

Meanwhile Weybridge itself is in a state of utter confusion - grenadiers are rushing hither and thither warning people to either evacuate, or to stay in their homes when the fighting starts. Some residents are strolling about in their Sunday best, and the military is having a hard time persuading many of them that they are in danger. The railway station is piled with boxes and packages belonging to the multitude of people hoping to catch a train away from the area.

In the morning the Brigadier-General will propose the party accompany a scout onto Horsell Common in order to glean as much information as possible on the enemy. They do not have to accept this assignment, as it may prove extremely dangerous. As it is, the Martians have not allowed any human closer than a mile from any of their pits, save at the cost of that person's life. If they decline, the party can do what they can to assist in the evacuation of the town, and give whatever advice they can. If they choose to scout out the Common, go to [On Horsell Common](#), otherwise skip on to [The Destruction of Weybridge and Shepperton](#).

On Horsell Common

The party scout out the Martians' pit on Horsell Common, and meet Ogilvy, the astronomer.

Early on Sunday morning Marvin is dispatching scouts to the areas around the cylinders, in order that they might warn the waiting artillery between Woking and London of the Martians' approach. Marvin believes that the party would be best deployed accompanying one of the scouts approaching the pit on Horsell Common, where their expert knowledge would be best applied. This is especially the case if the party contains military types. Those wearing clothes that might draw attention to them will be issued with drab military fatigues, and they can set off. They are accompanied by a veteran scout, Henry Phillips, who will carefully instruct them on how to move quietly and without being seen, and give a brief lesson on the functioning of the heliograph he is carrying.

Phillips will lead them through Addlestone and Ottershaw towards Chobham, skirting carefully around the Martians' pit in the pinewoods of the New Zealand golf links. The land around the cylinders is scorched and blackened by the Heat-Ray, not a house is standing, not a tree in sight that has not been reduced to a charred trunk. Closer to the pits the effects of the cylinders' impact becomes apparent, with trees flattened and heaps of earth scattered about. Through it all crawls the party, their guide cautiously leading the way.

The Martians seem to be extremely busy, transferring material from the pits at Addlestone and Pyrford into the one on Horsell Common, so the party must make extremely slow progress, moving from cover to cover, skulking along hedgerows and crawling through ditches. Ever and again they will have to duck into the shadows as one of the monstrous Fighting Machines strides past them. After passing through Ottershaw Park, Phillips leads them along the banks of the Bourne, a small river that brings them close to the Martians' pit. Phillips will press forward to a wooded hillock, its trees now nothing more than blackened stumps, from which a spyglass affords a view of the interior of the pit. Peering through the smouldering vegetation they can see a single Martian Fighting Machine standing guard over the pit, its hood turning to and fro as it surveys the surrounding landscape.

The party can spend a while observing the Martians moving about the pit. The place is a veritable hive of activity, and the party can count about a dozen individual Martians, including the occupants of the Fighting Machines. The bodies of several thin, pale creatures lie in a corner of the pit as if discarded, suggestive of apes in form, and partially translucent. A peculiar red growth appears to be creeping up the sides of the pit around the open cylinder. The party can stay like this for some time; as they watch, they can observe a Fighting Machine making the trips to and from the other cylinders carrying large, unidentifiable pieces of equipment, and various plates and bars of a shining metal. The Martians seem to be engaged in intense activity, their incessant hammering and a dense pillar of green smoke rising into the still air.

Party members can watch the Martians' going about their business, engaged in a number of seemingly incomprehensible activities. One of the Martian Handling Machines, a glittering vehicle in which a Martian sits, comparable in form to a large, five-legged crab or beetle, is busy sorting various plates and bars of metal into piles. It then transfers them to where a couple of other Martians in similar machines appear to be engaged in the construction of a large, flat object, what will become the Martians' Flying Machine. Over a frame of shining metal are attached large metal sheets. These are welded onto the frame with a device held in one of the Handling Machine's many tentacles which produces a blinding glare and a wisp of green

smoke. On the other side of the pit to this strange construction is another Handling Machine, which is involved in the operation of a peculiar device resembling a milk-can, above which oscillates a pear-shaped receptacle. The Handling Machine imparts the oscillatory motion with one tentacle, while two shovel-like hands fling great masses of clay into the receptacle. Occasionally the Handling Machine removes a quantity of blackened and rusty clinkers from a hatch in the machine. From the Refining Machine there flows a trickle of white dust into a basin, and from there it is guided along a ribbed channel into another device similar to the first which produces a wisp of green smoke. However, instead of white powder, the product of this machine is blue-green dust, which is piled in a heap against the side of the pit. From a hatch in this machine the Handling Machine regularly removes a shining bar of aluminium, which is stacked on top of a pile of identical bars.

After a while observant party members will notice that the Fighting Machine's hood has stopped scanning the landscape, and is instead facing towards Byfleet. A Spot Hidden with the aid of the spyglass will allow the recipient to notice a couple of soldiers in fatigues about a mile away, operating a heliograph, and on seeing this Phillips will curse under his breath. They seem to be unaware that the Martian sentinel has spotted them, and are more concerned with the heliograph. He will spring into swift action with his own heliograph, urgently signalling a warning to the other scouts, but too late. As the party watch, the Fighting Machine will stride away towards the oblivious scouts, swinging loose the generator of the Heat-Ray. The scouts have finally noticed the approaching Martian, and are trying to crawl away as fast as possible. In a matter of minutes the Martian is upon them, and the bushes and grass around them flash into fire. One scout breaks and runs, and is swiftly cut down, the Heat-Ray turning him into a mass of flames before he has gone a dozen paces. The other scout, perhaps possessing more common sense, drops to the ground and lies motionless when a bush nearby ignites. However, playing dead does not save him, as the Martian plays the Heat-Ray over him, setting light to all the vegetation around the unfortunate soldier as if trying to flush out any other humans in the area. When satisfied that no more intruders are nearby, the Martian once more returns to his position over the pit, and resumes his scanning of the countryside.

After this observation, Phillips will suggest returning to Weybridge, as he has seen quite enough, and is sure that the party has as well. By now it is approaching noon. The scout will lead the party back towards the Bourne, keeping to the lengthening shadows of hedges and ditches. Then, on the riverbank where a small tributary stream runs off the common into the Bourne, they come across the prostrate body of a man, lying in the mud next to the stream. At first it appears that he is dead, but a closer examination will reveal that he is alive, but only just. He is dressed in the filthy remains of a respectable suit, stained with blood and dirt, blackened with ash. His hair is scorched, his lips are parched and blackened, he appears to have suffered burns to the left side of his body, and what is left is sunburned. He has a fever and a wound on his forehead is caked with dried blood. All in all, he is a mess.

On a successful First Aid or Medicine roll, the man will regain consciousness, although he is very weak. This man is Ogilvy the astronomer. He will relate to the party in a hoarse whisper that he was a member of the Deputation sent out to greet the Martians on Friday night. The other members of this group, including Stent, the Astronomer Royal, and Henderson, a London journalist, were slain by the Martians' Heat-Ray. Ogilvy escaped because he was on the rightmost end of the little group of men. As the three puffs of green smoke had driven up into the air, he had been briefly dazzled, and tripped on some unseen obstacle on the ground. He had fallen forward just as the Heat-Ray struck his companions, and hit his head on a rock. All

through the subsequent day he had lain unconscious on the common, scant yards from the Martians' cylinder. Of the destruction of Woking he knew nothing, and he only came to late last night during a violent thunderstorm. He found that the proximity of the Heat-Ray had burnt his left side, and movement was extremely painful. He had managed to drag himself into the shelter of a blackened clump of gorse, where he spent the night, shivering and terrified. As the light of dawn came he had made his way as quickly as his injuries would allow to the north, having some inclination to skirt round the Martians' pit and thence to his home at Ottershaw. However, he had made little progress as the Martians' route between their pits directly crossed his path, so once more he had been forced to hide, and since then he had been unable to move from his position under the gaze of the guardian Fighting Machine. Finally, a short while ago, the sentinel had briefly moved away to the east, no doubt to inflict some other act of destruction, and he had summoned his last strength to make a dash for the river. He had managed to reach the river, but had collapsed from stress and exhaustion. The next thing he knew he was surrounded by the party.

Once Ogilvy has told his story, Phillips will anxiously suggest moving on, as it is only a matter of time before the Martians look in this direction, and the Brigadier-General will have his hide if the party are not back safely. He will propose following the Bourne as far as Addlestone and then heading across the fields towards Weybridge. Not only are there hedgerows along the riverbank, but the water might afford some protection if the Martians were to spot them.

Ogilvy is well enough to walk, but it is likely that the party will have to take frequent breaks or travel slowly to avoid exhausting him. Some way down the river, south of Ottershaw, the party passes a small boathouse that seems to have mostly escaped the devastation of the last few days. Within is a rowboat large enough to fit the party (fairly tightly packed, admittedly), and various other pieces of bric-a-brac of the sort normally consigned to outhouses, such as a tarpaulin, some rope, tin buckets, a ladder, that kind of thing. If the party don't think of it, an Idea roll will suggest that drifting down the river in this boat might get them to Weybridge faster and less tired than trudging along the riverbank. In addition, it provides a handy way of getting past the pit housing the second Martian cylinder, which is located in pine woods right next to the river, without having to make a lengthy and time-consuming detour. From where they are they can see a Fighting Machine standing over the pit in a similar manner to the Martian on Horsell Common.

Whatever method they choose to avoid the Martians, call for appropriate rolls and let them get on with it. The Martian guarding the second cylinder is not paying particular attention to the river, and is more concerned with eliminating the scouts who are creeping up on the pit. Unless the party is particularly unlucky, or you want to be sadistic, the Martian won't notice them. The party won't know this, so roll dice for the Martian anyway, just to keep the party on their toes.

Just as the party have started to breath again after making it past the second pit, five Fighting Machines come striding across the landscape from the direction of the pit on Horsell Common. Strangely they seem to take no notice of the party cowering in their shadows, but continue swiftly towards Weybridge, their ringings footsteps shaking the ground, their glittering bodies emitting spurts of green smoke from the joints. Soon after heavy gunfire sounds from the direction of Weybridge, punctuated by heavy explosions, and the exultant howling of the Fighting Machines. This tumult lasts perhaps ten minutes, and four of the Fighting Machines return, bearing the shattered body of the fifth between them. Pillars of dense smoke shot with flame rise into the air above Weybridge and Shepperton.

After they have passed the second cylinder, the journey is pretty uneventful. The party can abandon the boat at Addlestone, and make their way to Weybridge, where they report back to Brigadier-General Marvin. By now it should be around half past seven in the evening. Ogilvy will be seen to by medics, and sent to Shepperton Station in one of the black government wagons, along with other casualties of the Martian attack, to catch a special train evacuating the area between the Martians and the London defences. Shortly after the casualty train departs, the party receives a telegram from London instructing them to make their way back to London immediately. It is believed to be highly likely that the Martians will attempt another attack this evening, with the aim of reaching London, and defences are frantically being laid across their path. It is of utmost urgency that the party return to make their report, as the information they have could prove vital. With that they bid farewell to the Brigadier-General and go on their way.

The Destruction of Weybridge and Shepperton

The party find themselves standing in the path of the Martians' Londonward advance.

If the party decline the request for them to accompany a scout onto Horsell Common, they will be in Weybridge when the Martians begin their advance upon London. At around noon, five Fighting Machines attack from Horsell Common.

The first indication of the approaching Martians is the sound of the guns at Chertsey being fired at the invaders. Instantly the guns on the north side of the river at Weybridge open up. The guns at Chertsey are silenced almost immediately, the Martians' Heat-Ray destroying the ammunition wagons in a deafening explosion that shakes the ground and shatters windows in Weybridge. Four Fighting Machines advance in a line towards Weybridge, while another approaches Chertsey to finish off the guns placed there. As the Martian destroys Chertsey, panic grips the crowd on the riverbank, and they flee. A Martian crosses the river a couple of hundred yards from the point where the Wey joins the Thames, and is about to destroy the village of Shepperton when the guns concealed among the houses of that village open fire. The first three shells miss the Fighting Machine, but the fourth explodes directly in the face of its hood. The Fighting Machine is decapitated, and the mechanism reels, uncontrolled, into the tower of Shepperton Church, flattening it, before collapsing into the river in an explosion of superheated mud, steam and shattered metal. A wave of boiling water sweeps upstream, scalding many of the people who dived into the river to escape the Heat-Ray. Two of the remaining four Martians attend to the wreckage of their fallen comrade, while the others unleash the Heat-Ray upon Weybridge, reducing the town to rubble. The Martians then return to their pit on Horsell Common bearing the debris of the destroyed Fighting Machine. The whole battle has taken less than fifteen minutes from the Martians first being sighted to their retreat to Horsell Common. Weybridge, Chertsey and Shepperton are smoking ruins, hundreds of people are dead, and many more are injured. The guns from Chertsey to Weybridge have been destroyed. It is technically a victory for the human defenders, but at an enormous cost.

Whether the party were present during the attack, or only returned from the scouting mission to witness the aftermath of the Weybridge and Shepperton, the party can spend some time doing what they can to help the survivors of the attack. There are dozens if not hundreds of casualties, ranging from those burned and scalded by the Heat-Ray to the unfortunates caught up in the overthrow of the Fighting Machine. Brigadier-

General Marvin, his arm in a sling from a shrapnel wound sustained as the ammunition wagons exploded, is organising the search for survivors and the removal of casualties from the field of battle. Any assistance the party can render either looking for survivors amid the rubble or administering first aid to the injured is greatly appreciated. Party members injured during the attack can receive medical attention from the army physicians tending to the wounded, but their resources are stretched to the limit with the number of injured soldiers and civilians.

The Brigadier-General will hold a council with the party to see if they can come up with any way of defending against these metallic titans. He knows that the destruction of one of the Fighting Machines proves they are not invulnerable, but he also understands that it was pure luck that they managed to bring the thing down. He will listen carefully to any suggestions made, as he is at a loss as to how the Martians might be defeated. The best he can think of is to position artillery batteries between the Martians and London, and hope that they sustain sufficiently high losses as to be dissuaded from attack.

Meanwhile, casualties will be loaded onto special trains bound for London, while the rest of the population of Weybridge, Shepperton and Chertsey will strike out by foot away from the Martian advance. The last casualty train will depart at around six in the evening. The Brigadier-General will suggest that the party get some rest, as the Martians are bound to make another assault, and it would be best if everyone was rested and alert.

The Flight from Surrey

Following a Pyrrhic victory by the human military at Weybridge, the party make their way to London to report on their discoveries.

At around half past seven in the evening, those party members affiliated with the Government will receive a telegram from the War Office. They are to return to London immediately, repeat, immediately. Railway transport is unavailable, so they must travel in a spare wagon supplied by the military. However, no one can be spared to drive the vehicle, so they must make their own way back. The quickest route is to follow the Thames through Walton and Hampton Court to Kingston, and thence through Putney and Wandsworth to the War Office. Their route is shared with the residents of Surrey who are evacuating their homes, burdened with boxes and bundles containing their valuables, which will slow their progress. There are dogcarts, farm wagons, bicycles, pony chaises, a grocer's cart, even a motorcar or two, as well as a wide range of people on foot.

At the same time, the Martians are resuming the offensive. Around 8 p.m. Three Fighting Machines venture forth from the pit on Horsell Common, and advance cautiously in a line, with perhaps a mile and a half between each walker and the next. They move slowly through Byfleet and Pyrford towards Ripley and Weybridge, emitting their unearthly howls all the while. At around 8.30 p.m. a Fighting Machine is crippled by artillery fire from concealed batteries on St. George's Hill. About an hour later it is repaired, and the Martians resume the advance, firing canisters of Black Smoke at any obstacle that might provide cover for artillery.

The party will hear the Martians' wailing and artillery fire to the southwest around that hour. The party,

looking back through the gathering darkness, will see a number of large cone-shaped mounds rising above the surrounding landscape. These black kopjes will sink and broaden even as they watch. From the direction of the nearest, several miles behind the party in the direction of Sunbury, can be heard a distant tumult of voices and horses, which quickly stops.

The Martians advance slowly, implacably, systematically spreading the Black Smoke in their path. The party might occasionally catch glimpses of the Fighting Machines as they go about their grim business, small and remote against the stars. When the Black Smoke has served its purpose, the Martians wade into it and direct a jet of superheated steam upon the banks of cloud, causing it to settle into a clinging black powder, similar in texture to coal dust.

All through this the party make their careful way towards London, the distant concussions of artillery fire sounding intermittently throughout the evening. Such is the traffic on the Londonward roads that the party have only just passed through Kingston shortly after eleven, where they can observe the mighty siege guns on Kingston Hill and the more distant ones in Richmond Park firing against the Martians, aided by large electric search lights. These cannon are firing chance shots towards Hampton and Ditton in the hope of hitting the Martians in that area. However, as the party is passing through Kingston, a Martian approaches the guns positioned on the hill. With a deafening howling it strides towards the artillery and unleashes the terrible Heat-Ray upon the forces arrayed against it. Munitions wagons detonate, the cannons explode in white-hot fragments, and men and horses collapse in flames. The trees burst into flame with dull thuds, and houses crumble in ruin. If the party have any kind of common sense at all they will whip the horse into a gallop and flee this devastation. Behind them the hills are crowned with a bright red glow.

By midnight the party are flanked on both sides by the Black Smoke, the countryside towards Richmond on the left and Wimbledon on the right blotted out by towering clouds of poisonous vapour which rapidly sink and spread, flowing along streets and roads, smothering all it touches. The mood of the traffic will become more frantic as it hurries to escape these menacing mounds of darkness.

A few seconds after midnight the party can see the sky pierced by a thread of green fire, a falling star that passes overhead with a fluttering sound like tearing silk. It lights up the countryside for miles around, and lands to the southwest with a flash like summer lightning, and a distant concussion that can be felt through the ground. This is the fourth cylinder, which lands in Bushey Park.

The deeper they get into London, the heavier the traffic becomes - it seems that the news of the advancing Martians is filtering through the population in their path. In support of this the party can watch as soldiers and policemen bearing lanterns knock on people's doors to wake them and warn them of the approaching danger. Doors are opened by occupants wearing nightshirts or in various states of undress, all wondering what the fuss is about. The atmosphere seems to be one of confused anxiety, verging on panic, and some members of the public are not helping matters. One cart is carrying a clergyman who harangues the crowd with a sermon of blood and thunder, of the coming apocalypse, of God's final judgement of Mankind's sins, that sort of thing. As the party passes they can listen to his cries fading into the distance.

The party cross the Thames at Putney at around two o'clock on Monday morning to discover that the government is rousing the city's six million inhabitants, warning them of the choking death approaching

from the west. The Exodus from London has begun.

The Exodus from London

The party are caught up in the mad stampede of the population out of London.

The party arrives in London on the crest of the wave of fear that is sweeping through the capital. Church bells are pealing out across the great city, rousing the slumbering population of London to flight. Here too there are policemen and soldiers hammering on doors in the street to wake the slumbering occupants within. Every train station in the capital from which northbound trains are running is surrounded by mobs of people desperate to get a place. Revolvers are fired, there are fistfights, stabbings, and people are trampled underfoot by the panicked crowds. Incredibly early extra editions of the newspapers are being sold on the streets, so fresh that the ink is still wet. The vendors are selling these papers for up to a shilling a copy, yet they are being snapped up. If the party purchase one of these papers, show them handout #3. There is a terse dispatch from the Commander-in-Chief warning of the Black Smoke, ending with the words: "There is no safety from the Black Smoke but in instant flight." It goes on to mention that the Government is moving out of the capital, although it neglects to mention where. The trickle of refugees from Surrey, joined by the populace of London, soon becomes a raging torrent, packing the northeast roads.

As the first light of Monday dawns the party have made it as far as Hyde Park. All about them are fellow refugees fleeing the encroaching Black Smoke on foot, on horse, on bicycle. As the day progresses, the populace becomes increasingly desperate. By ten o'clock the police organisation has broken down and by noon the railways cease to operate - drivers and crews refuse to return to the metropolis, leaving thousands waiting at city train stations for trains that will not arrive. Soon, frustrated at the impossibility of catching a train out of London, the crowds that had surrounded the railway stations across the city start streaming along the roads leading away to the northeast. The Thames is a chaotic mass of shipping, their crews lured by the extravagant sums of money offered by refugees for passage out of the country, and people are actually swimming out to the vessels in the river, only to be thrust off with boathooks.

About one in the afternoon a thinning cloud of Black Smoke drifts down the river past Blackfriars Bridge, and at this the river erupts into a frenzy of frantic activity as the shipping gathered there rushes to escape this ominous wall of smoke. A number of vessels become jammed for a time in the northern arch of Tower Bridge, and their crews have to fight off the fugitives climbing down the piers of the bridge above.

At two o'clock, when a Martian appears above the Clock Tower laying the clouds of Black Smoke with its steam jet, the river is deserted apart from a few pieces of floating wreckage. The shipping removes itself to the Essex and Kent coastlines, where it resumes picking up passengers for extortionate fees.

There is no feasible way the party can secure transport out of the capital, and will have to make their own way out. Over the next two days the party should make their way northeast towards the sea, surrounded on all sides by the weary inhabitants of London. On the way, you might like to add a couple of optional encounters, given below.

A Fighting Machine Attacks

A Martian Fighting Machine appears over some trees in the distance, emitting its siren-like howl. At this the traffic, already tense and on the verge of panic, breaks into a wild stampede away from the invader. Pedestrians who cannot jump out of the way in time are trampled underfoot, carts lock wheels with a splintering of wood, and the frantic cries of the fleeing crowds are drowned out by the Martian's deafening wail. Advancing swiftly upon the heavy crowd, the Fighting Machine's snatches up a cart, horse and all, with its metallic tentacles and flings it back into the flow of traffic, where it smashes to splinters, crushing people beneath. The Martian strides over the road, wreaking random destruction upon the fugitives who flee in terror. People whose paths are cut off try to turn around and run back the way they came, but only succeed in causing collisions and confusion that causes the flow of traffic to grind to a halt. Its metallic tentacles writhe, and their tips crack like whips as they smash vehicles and flatten buildings lining the road. Strangely, the Martian does not unleash its Heat-Ray, as it might be expected if it intended to destroy the terrified humans. Rather, it seems to be acting to sow panic and confusion, to crush and overawe its opposition and disrupt the stream of fugitives leaving the capital. It will uproot one of the nearby pine trees, and use it as a club, sweeping aside the carts and wagons which are now galloping away from it in blind panic. With a good Drive Carriage roll to avoid wrecking the wagon in the desperate crush, the party manages to find its way onto a quiet side road which most of the crowd, rushing headlong, seem to have missed. This hollow track is edged on both sides by high banks and hedgerows. The road is quite winding, but still allows the party to get up a reasonable degree of speed. A couple more vehicles spot the party's wagon and follow them into this opportunity to escape. Meanwhile the Martian, from his vantagepoint in the cupola of the Fighting Machine, has spotted the humans trying to escape, and gives pursuit. There are a handful of other vehicles bolting down this road, their horses galloping as fast as they can under the frenzied whips of their drivers.

The driver of the party's vehicle will have to receive a Drive Carriage roll every round due to the winding nature of the road and the breakneck speed of the wagon. Failure of a roll, unless a fumble, simply means that the party lose their lead on the Fighting Machine. However, this also applies to the Fighting Machine's operator, as the wagon, veering as it is down the twisting lane, is hard to follow. The essential challenge here is one of manoeuvrability: the Fighting Machine can travel very fast, but at such high speeds its momentum is such that it cannot change direction suddenly; the wagon is not quite as fast, but can take sharper corners than the Fighting Machine, and so elude it.

The party whips their horse into a wild gallop, the Fighting Machine charging after them with ringing metallic footsteps and a siren-like howl. Buildings in its path are smashed to smithereens, trees uprooted and flung headlong. Non-driving party members with firearms might want to take pot shots at the metallic monster; their chance to hit halved due to the movement of the wagon, in addition to penalties for range. Others might want to simply cling for dear life to the wildly bouncing vehicle.

The Martian is steadily gaining on them, and those watching its pursuit can look on as it seizes the buggy scarcely a hundred yards behind them in its tentacles and throws it at the fleeing wagon. The buggy will land with a splintering crash ahead of the party, forcing them to veer wildly to avoid a collision.

As the Fighting Machine closes the distance, the party can see with relief the edge of Epping Forest ahead

of them. If they can just make it under the trees, the leaf canopy might allow them to evade the Martian altogether. But they need to get there first. Happily, luck lends a hand to even the odds. The vehicle they are driving, the wagon supplied by the military in Weybridge, was being used to transport munitions to the battle line, and the soldiers who unloaded the wagon missed a box pushed under one of the seats. A particularly violent bump knocks loose the box, and it clatters across the floor of the cart. A DEX or Luck roll might be called for to catch it before it slides off the edge of the wagon. Inside this box are about a dozen sticks of dynamite with fuses.

This fortuitous discovery slightly evens the chances of survival. The sticks of explosive can be lit and thrown off the back of the wagon into the path of the Fighting Machine. The length of fuse is such that the sticks explode approximately ten seconds, or three rounds, after the fuses are lit. Thus it takes four rounds in total for a stick to explode - in the first round it is lit, for the next two rounds the fuse is burning, and on the following round it explodes. Lighting the fuse is no mean feat - a DEXx4 roll is required to ignite the thing. It might be possible to shorten the fuse so that the stick explodes sooner - an INTx4 or Demolitions roll might be called for to successfully gauge the length of fuse required, failure meaning that the stick explodes too soon or too late - a fumble might indicate that a lit stick has been dropped in the back of the wagon, or that the fuse is so short that the party are caught on the edge of the explosion.

Once the party has entered Epping Forest, the driver needs to make a Hide roll to evade the attention of the Fighting Machine - perhaps ducking down a small side-track, or suddenly halting the wagon and allowing the Martian to pass them by. It must be said that the horse is not particularly inclined to stop when a hundred-foot-high Fighting Machine is pursuing. A Ride Horse or Drive Carriage roll might be needed to calm the horse enough for it to stand its ground. Alternatively the party might simply jump from the moving wagon, meaning that the Martian passes them by as it pursues the vehicle. Jump rolls are called for to minimise the 1D6 hit points of damage taken due to leaping from a moving vehicle.

Eventually, after thrashing around the forest for a while, the Martian will lose interest and move off to the south, leaving the party shaken and exhausted after the headlong chase. After a break to recover their wits, they can continue on their way.

The Cart-Thieves

Travelling down a small side-road the party come across a distraught-looking man in dishevelled clothing, who pleads with them to help his friend, who has been run down by a cart and broken his leg. Further down the lane can be seen the body of a man lying by the side of the road, his legs swathed in bloodstained cloth. In fact, this is a ruse, as these men are after the party's transport. If the party stop to help the injured man, then as soon as one of them has descended from the wagon both men will draw revolvers, and order the party to raise their hands and get off the wagon. The party now has two options: they can go along with it and lose their transport, or they can put up a fight. The party outnumber the robbers, and should be able to overpower them, but there is the risk of being shot.

If the party decide to go along with the robbers' demands, they will be ordered to lie down in the ditch by the side of the road while the two thieves clatter off down the road, laughing at having tricked the party out of their transport.

On the other hand, if the party decide to put up a fight, run it as a normal combat. The robbers have their guns drawn and aimed, and the party (unless some of them stated otherwise) doesn't. They might try to distract the bandits, or bluff their way out of the situation, or just shout and leap at the robbers. It isn't necessary to kill them - if they are obviously outclassed they will run away, leaving the party to continue on their way.

As the party travel north, the vast mass of humanity fleeing London will realise the necessity of acquiring food. The normal rules of ownership will cease to be obeyed, and farmers will take up arms to protect their crops from hungry refugees. In one village the party reaches their horse will be confiscated from them as food, and they will be turned away at gunpoint. Eventually it should occur to the party that it would make sense for them to return to the capital, where plentiful provisions are going to waste.

Part II: The Earth Under The Martians

The Flying Machine

The party discover the wrecked remains of the Martian Flying Machine - shortly before the Martians.

From Richmond or Putney Hill, the party can see a large swathe of destroyed houses away to the northwest, in the direction of Hammersmith or Shepherds Bush. On investigating, they stumble across the crashed wreckage of the Martians' mighty Flying Machine, along with the bodies of the craft's two Martian pilots. This is an opportunity for them to closely examine the Martian physiology, and witness the complexity of Martian technology. It is also an opportunity for them to relieve some of the feeling of utter impotence which should have been building up until now, that is, if they manage to get the Heat-Ray working again. The craft is almost buried under the piles of rubble it ploughed up on its crash landing, and the Red Weed has spread to conceal the craft very well. There is an acrid smell in the air, caused by the evaporation of spilt viridigen fuel. The Flying Machine still has power, and limited functionality. The party might notice that a steady breeze blows towards the craft from every direction, most noticeable close to the craft.

On entering through an access hatch, they will notice that they feel somewhat lighter than normal in certain areas of the craft, and that the air is slightly thinner than usual. This is a result of the gravity-blocking substance used to help the machine to fly - various areas of the gravity shield array are jammed open (meaning almost normal gravity) or closed (leading to much lower gravity over these areas). Party members are likely to be rather surprised as they step on one section of the floor only to drift upwards and hit their heads on the ceiling. The two Martian pilots are enclosed in a tube of transparent material, thin and flexible, yet very hard to cut. Doctors or biologists might wish to perform an examination of the Martian bodies, leading to various revelations about the Martian anatomy. In front of the Martians is a wide console from which emanate a number of beams of different coloured light. Some of the shafts flicker erratically, others pulse slowly, while others are steady beams. Around the sources of these beams are sinuous inscriptions in a language totally alien to the party, but faintly reminiscent of ancient script.

There are a number of flat panels on the walls of the cabin, similar to windows. There is a main panel mounted in the centre on the front wall, surrounded by a number of smaller panels. Some are blank and featureless; others flicker intermittently, while a few show a view of the outside of the craft, or different areas inside the craft. Waving a hand through any of the beams will have a variety of results. Depending on how lucky they are, these may range from the hatch sealing, to different beams changing colour, or messages in the strange script appearing on the panels. There may be a grinding noise from the hull of the craft as it reconfigures its shape, or some sections of the gravity shield array may open or close. Characters may notice (on an Idea or Spot Hidden roll) that the result is not only dependent on which beams of light you block, but also on how far from the console you block it. It is not possible to fly the craft, as the main engine has been damaged, a large quantity of the viridigen fuel has evaporated, and the gravity shields are damaged. Some beams of light on the console may cause the images on the panels to zoom in or out, or show different views. Let the party play with these controls for a while, experimenting and learning how to use them. The controls are fairly intuitive - moving your hand down one of the beams that control the picture panels will cause it to zoom in, and moving your hand up will cause it to zoom out.

It should be noted that the dorsal-mounted Heat-Ray is still partly functional, if only the party could work out how to use it. How the party learns this is up to you. Perhaps one of the controls causes a hydraulic whine from the back of the craft, and observers outside the machine will notice the Heat-Ray armature unfolding from the hull. Small visual schematics of the Flying Machine might appear on one of the panels showing the armature extending. These schematics will also show some sections of the craft lit up steadily in red, while other [damaged] parts flash green. Incidentally, it is worth mentioning that this is generally the rule for Martian displays - the colours of green for functional or undamaged and red for danger are interchanged. This means that if, for example, they try to fiddle with the controls and the schematic shows the whole craft flashing green, they would be advised to get away from the Flying Machine very quickly. If the party press their luck, they may get the Heat-Ray to fire, igniting some of the Red Weed outside.

Party members receiving a successful Spot Hidden roll will notice that one of the panels seems to show the view from the hood of a Fighting Machine as it travels through the ruins of London, and another is displaying the inside of a Fighting Machine. It should be noted that if the panel allows the party to view the inside of an occupied Fighting Machine, the occupant is able to see them in return, by means of a camera located on the console. This is a Bad Thing, as the presence of humans in a Martian construct is not to be tolerated. The Martian will be seen to spring into activity, tentacles flying across its control console, and the external view from the Fighting Machine will show it striding across the landscape. Observant party members will note that the scenery the Fighting Machine is passing is rather familiar. Eventually it should dawn on them that the Martian is heading towards them. What the party does now is open to question. If they have discovered how to use the Heat-Ray, they may decide to make a stand - this is brave, but foolish. Alternatively, they might take the wiser measure of running far, far away. It should be made apparent that this machine would allow the Martians to dominate the entire world.

What actions the party take is entirely up to them, but any explosives obtained earlier would be most useful. Failing that, wrecking the complex and temptingly fragile-looking crystalline matrices might suffice. Whatever they do, they have approximately ten minutes before the Fighting Machine arrives on the scene.

The Man from Mars

The party meet an escaped member of the Martian slave race.

Near one of the Martians' pits the party come across a strange figure, crawling painfully away from the Martian pit. This creature is a member of the Martians' slave race who has somehow managed to escape his masters, and is attempting to flee from them. He is well over six feet tall, but ridiculously thin and spindly compared to humans. His skin is extremely pale, almost translucent, and his large eyes have red irises. He wears rags streaked with dust and mud, and appears to be injured, as he is having trouble breathing. What the party do with him is up to them. He is extremely weak, and looks unlikely to last much longer. He will babble in a lilting language that none of the party will understand. He has the Telepathy spell, but its use obviously drains him. Even so, the party will be able to get some information out of him, but it is incoherent at best. It will consist of the information that his name is Galnir, he was on the Martian cylinder, but escaped a couple of days ago. They also learn that the Martians intend to signal Mars for reinforcements in several nights' time, but have not yet completed the assembly of their apparatus. He will die a couple of hours after the party find him.

The Revellers in Picadilly Circus

The party encounter a group of revellers bidding farewell to the Empire of Man.

On Day 12, the party may notice a blaze of electric lights illuminating the night sky over Regent Street and Picadilly Circus. Someone has got the electric generators working, and the streets are crowded with the ragged survivors who have been lurking in the shadows. Now, attracted by the lights and the raucous sound of revelry, they have crept from their hiding places for one last wild night of excess in the face of despair. The atmosphere is one of hopeless debauchery and excess - the sentiment being "It's the End of the World, so you might as well get drunk and enjoy yourself while you can". Shops have been ransacked for food and alcohol, which is piled around in barrows and heaps. Drunken merrymakers weave their way along the street, or dance to the tinny sound of a phonograph someone has dug out. At one end a member of the Salvation Army is berating the crowds for their decadence, making comparisons with Sodom and Gomorrah and the Babylon of the book of Revelations, but with little result. Painted ladies of the night offer their services for food or alcohol, while the occasional fight breaks out over the piles of supplies.

As the night wears on, the festivities continue. More and more people are drawn out into this strange and pathetic party. As dawn breaks, someone notices a terrifying sight - lurking next to the Langham Court Hotel a Martian Fighting Machine is watching the proceedings. No one knows how long it has been standing there, but as the crowd starts to stumble away it strides into action, plucking up those too drunk or frightened to run and depositing them in the metal basket on its back. People are trampled in the panicked stampede, carriages overturned, windows broken.

The Puppetmen

The party find evidence of the sinister method of Martian mind control, and learn of the Martians' plan to signal Mars.

The party comes across the prostrate form of a man lying in the road. He is alive, but unconscious, and bleeding from a scalp wound. He is dressed in clothes that were once respectable, but are now in a sad state. A First Aid roll will restore him to consciousness, and he will awake frightened and confused. When he calms down he will introduce himself as Marcus Pearce, a stockbroker prior to the Martian invasion. He will ask to join the party, as there is a better chance of survival as part of a group.

If asked why he was lying in the road, he will become quite confused. He was creeping down a street perhaps a mile away from where he was found by the party when he spotted one of the Martians' Handling Machines. He ran, and thought he had escaped. The next thing he remembers is being woken by the party. If he tries to think too hard about it, he will get a sharp headache. He won't make this too obvious to the party - a good Spot Hidden or Psychology roll will allow a character to notice him wince slightly, and perhaps put a hand to his head, but nothing more. Psychology or Psychoanalysis rolls will allow a party member to notice that he is not terribly well balanced, but this is hardly surprising considering the destruction and terror of the Martian invasion. Over time, however, he will deteriorate. If Marcus is allowed to join the party, he will follow them around while they do whatever it is they do. However, if they perform actions inimical to the Martians' plans, he will suffer a debilitating headache, perhaps even pass out. He will attribute this to a blow he took to the head shortly before the party met him. After a while he will recover. He will not, however, help them directly to fight the Martians.

A few days after they meet him, a Martian will attempt to gain control of Marcus via the implant. If the Martian fails at first, Marcus will clutch his head and begin screaming about how they are coming for him, how much it hurts, and similar hysterical ravings. The Martian will continue to attempt to gain control of Marcus until it succeeds. At that point Marcus will abruptly become quiet. If questioned by the party about the nature of this episode, he will claim not to have any memory of what happened, but that he is "feeling well now".

If the Martian succeeds first time, the only outward sign might be a slight tic or suchlike. His behaviour and demeanour, however, will noticeably change. His speech is calm, almost unnaturally so, while a Psychology roll will let a character notice the curious blankness of his eyes and face. He will carry on as if nothing had happened. Other such minions have been released to infiltrate the various small groups of human survivors to allow their masters to keep track of resistance and capture them at their leisure.

Eventually Marcus will simply snap under the repeated control attempts of his Martian master and attack the party or kill himself. He will rant about "them", controlling him, talking to him, in his dreams, inside his head, yes, voices, whispering, ordering, commanding, but no one else can hear them, so they talk to him, and so on, you get the idea. If he is not killed by the party, and is restrained such that he cannot kill himself he will eventually swallow his own tongue during a particularly violent seizure. The party may wish to examine his body for signs as to why this happened. If so, they will discover a small mass of crystal, perhaps the size of a half-pea, imbedded in his scalp on the crown of his head. Further examination (Medicine, Pathology or suchlike) will reveal is to be attached to a thin wire, no thicker than a human hair, that runs into his brain - specifically the pineal gland. Nothing further of note is present. It is a reasonable deduction that the Martians were controlling this unfortunate man, and the strain proved too much for him.

Indeed, over the next few days the party can encounter the bodies of men, usually fairly strong-looking, who have apparently killed themselves, usually by beating their brains out on a wall or pavement. All will have similar implants in their heads.

The Party's Capture by the Martians

The party are captured by the Martians, and must escape before their blood is drained to feed the invaders.

While roaming the streets of London, the party is caught unawares by a Martian Fighting Machine. The Fighting Machine will appear suddenly, rearing over some nearby buildings, having previously had its legs folded to render itself less visible. It moves towards them, evidently not intent on killing them, as it uses neither the Heat-Ray nor the Black Smoke. Its enormous strides mean that it is soon upon them, and attacks with its metallic tentacles, grabbing whoever it can and depositing them in the basket of wire mesh on its back. Dodge rolls might allow party members to evade the tentacles for a while, but the Martian is very persistent, and unless they can find a secure hiding place, they will be caught eventually. The tentacles are able to jolt victims with an electric shock if they struggle too much, rendering them unconscious. Thick clothing may provide some protection against this, at the GM's discretion. If the electric jolt does not manage to render a victim unconscious, the Martian may knock their head against a nearby object such as a tree or building to subdue them. The Martian will capture 1D4+2 victims before it is satisfied and leaves - try to ensure that at least one of the party members is not captured, although if the whole party is caught it simply serves to add to the threat of this encounter.

There are already 1D6 prisoners in the basket at the point that the party is captured. Once it has captured a sufficient number of prisoners, the Fighting Machine will take the party to the Martians' camp at Wimbledon. There the Fighting Machine will take up a position near the edge of the Pit, and contract its legs to allow its operator to dismount. Individuals rendered unconscious during capture will come to in 30 minus CON minutes. The party, and any other people captured, is left in the basket for several hours while the Martians go about their business. Try to characterise the other captives. Get the party to identify with them. They represent a wide cross-section of society, ranging from a solicitor to a housemaid. For the most part they have been lurking in the deserted buildings of London, trying to eke out a living and avoid the Martians. Several of the NPCs will be weeping or hysterical, others will fume impotently, and the others might just sit dejectedly in the corner, having given up all hope. The situation provides an opportunity for the party to observe the Martians up close and personal, and to get to know the enemy.

The Pit itself measures perhaps one hundred and fifty yards across, and fifty feet deep at its lowest point. The Cylinder, a wide shape thirty yards across, lies open in the centre of the Pit. Martians are working around it in their Handling Machines, or sluggishly dragging themselves about the pit. Another Fighting Machine stands at full height on the other side of the Pit, its hood moving to and fro as it scans the surrounding countryside. Various machines and engines are scattered around the floor of the Pit. There is a Refining Machine being operated by one of the Martians, turning clay into bars of sparkling aluminium, a Digging Machine, apparently operating without the supervision of a controlling Martian, and assorted other engines and constructs. As well as gathering information on the Martians, they should be planning some sort of escape. At this stage in the Invasion the Martians are fairly complacent about their prisoners - they have yet to suffer the effects of determined guerrilla warfare by human resistance fighters, and as far as the

humans can tell, they are treated rather like cattle. The prisoners are typically left in the Fighting Machine's basket until needed. The basket itself is of a similar shape to a lobster pot, meaning that it is easy to put victims into the basket, and they have a hard time of escaping. The prisoners are mostly unguarded, the shape of the basket and the fact that it is about thirty feet off the ground being believed to be discouragement enough. How the party engineers their escape is up to them. Party members who remain free have little trouble sneaking into the pit, although it might be a good idea to wait until after dark, as the shifting shadows and the dense cover of Red Weed provide ample concealment from the Martians. If the free characters try to approach the pit before nightfall, the Martian in the Fighting Machine has a reasonable chance of spotting them as they creep through the Red Weed. If it spots them, however, it will have better things to do than go chasing after a couple of stray humans, and will satisfy itself with incinerating the Red Weed on the edge of the pit nearest the characters with its Heat-Ray in the hope that they get the hint. The Martians' sense of hearing is not particularly acute, although there is no need to tell the party that, and besides, the clangour of the various Martian machines is sufficient to mask all but the loudest noise. In any case, the prisoners are perfectly capable of holding a hushed conversation with those on the ground.

If you want to make things interesting, have one of the NPCs, preferably one who was hysterically ranting earlier, shout loudly to the free characters, imploring them to release him. He will beg and wail, and become dangerously loud and desperate if the free characters look like they are leaving without freeing him. The party will need to subdue this irrational and inconsiderate individual before he attracts the attention of the Martians. Make periodic Listen rolls for the Martians at half base chance due to the noise of the machines operating in the pit. While the party tries to work out a plan, have them interrupted by one of the Martians returning to the hood of the Fighting Machine. If the party are engaged in conversation with their free colleagues, a Spot Hidden roll, with appropriate modifiers for darkness and suchlike, will warn of the Martian's return. The free characters have plenty of time to secrete themselves, as the Martian tediously crawls to the tripod and is lifted into the hood by one of the metallic tentacles. After a short while, a glittering tentacle will reach into the basket. Have all of the party make Luck or Dodge rolls. Also make rolls for the NPCs in the basket. Have the party member with the worst Luck roll brushed by the tentacle and stunned by the electric charge, and let the NPC with the worst Luck roll grabbed by the tentacle and lifted out of the basket. This poor unfortunate will be the Martians' first victim.

The party watch as the selected person is deposited amid a group of Martians gathered below the Fighting Machine, who quickly secure their victim with their tentacles. The victim will struggle and cry out, but a chorus of hooting from the Martians, who will then proceed to feed on the hapless person, will drown their shouts out. They extend thin, needle-like pipettes from their mouths, about two to three feet long, and plunge them into the victim's neck, draining the living blood from his veins in front of the party's eyes. The victim will give a blood-curdling shriek, and implore the other captives for help. The victim's cries and struggles will grow weaker as they are drained of every last drop of blood, and his body will be carelessly cast onto a pile of similarly drained corpses. Once they have finished feeding the Martians will blow through the pipettes to clear them of blood, creating the characteristic hooting noise before going about their business.

The Martian in the Fighting Machine will laboriously clamber down from the vehicle and go off to perform some activity in another part of the pit. This incident should prove sufficient to galvanise the party into action. Numerous possibilities are available for escape. As it stands the basket is almost on a level with the

edge of the pit, although there is a gap of approximately ten feet to cross. Party members on the outside might throw a rope across to the basket, or they might orchestrate a distraction in another part of the pit while the rest of the party climb down and make their escape. They might even attempt to sabotage the Martians' machine before they make their getaway, although unless done subtly, or intentionally as a distraction, this sort of behaviour would draw attention to them, and cause the Martians to try to stop them escaping. Pyrotechnics are not the way to go in this situation.

Do remember though, that the aim of this encounter is not to wipe out the party, but to scare them and to give them an opportunity to observe the Martians in detail, and to try to uncover some weakness that might be exploited. If they come up with an escape plan that the GM judges to be practicable, call for appropriate rolls and let them try it.

The Man on Putney Hill

The party meets up with the Artilleryman on Putney Hill.

The first they will see of the Artilleryman is a filthy and dishevelled figure, wild of appearance and gaunt of face, wielding a cutlass and a revolver, lurking amongst the bushes on Putney Hill. A Spot Hidden might reveal that the ragged and filthy clothing he wears were at one point a military uniform. At first he will be hostile and challenge the party, thinking them a group of raiders searching for food, especially if they are openly carrying weapons. If the party respond to the Artilleryman's bluster with hostility, or even violence, he will be quite capable of holding them off to start with, but if the odds look too bad he will flee into the fields of Red Weed, and hide until the party go away. He might be more amenable if a military party member could convince him of their bona fides. If they make known their peaceful intentions (if they are peaceful, that is), then he will change his manner dramatically, becoming friendly and invite them into the house he has made his den, a large, luxurious residence with a good view over the surrounding countryside. He will engage them in conversation, on subjects such as the fact of Martian victory, how there is no way Humanity can hope to defeat the invaders, and so on. Eventually he will talk to the party about his plan for Humanity to start living underground, and enthuse about his planned Brave New World. He has even gone so far as to acquire some plans of the London sewer and drain system. However, closer inspection will reveal them to be for a different area of London entirely, and useless for this particular region. The Artilleryman is quite happy to let the party have these plans, as he found a load of them while foraging in the civic offices. He recommends that the party also search the civic offices for plans if they intend to navigate London's labyrinthine system of underground tunnels.

He is extremely charismatic and persuasive, but beneath the surface of his planned Utopia can be detected a deep resentment of the class system, and specifically those people he regards as being of higher class than he. He evidently has something of an inferiority complex. He speaks with particular vehemence about how there won't be any more of those decadent activities like visiting the opera, or meals at fancy restaurants and suchlike. No, his perfect society won't have any of those outmoded and unfair class distinctions. Only those who can contribute to the functioning of the society may be a part of it, with the scientists and engineers deciding the actions of the community for the greater good, himself among them. Of course the architects of this subterranean paradise would qualify for certain privileges. But that would be only natural, considering the extra value of their input.

He may ask the party for help in digging the tunnel he has started in the cellar of the house he is living in. He will join in eagerly at first, but after about an hour of work he will propose that they stop for a break while he and some of the party goes off to check for Martians. On their return to the house he will then challenge the party to games of cards and other such activities, plying them with cigars, champagne and other scavenged luxuries. If the party look like they are going to stay with this man for a prolonged period, gently remind them of the importance of their mission; if they stay here, they are wasting their time, indulging themselves in petty and meaningless luxuries while the human race teeters on the edge of extinction. If they bring up the subject of leaving, he will be disappointed, but will not hinder their departure - it was nice to share their company while it lasted.

Beneath London

The party venture into the labyrinthine tunnels beneath London, and make some disturbing discoveries.

Following on from the prompting of the Artilleryman, the party may choose to take his advice and avoid the Martians in London by navigating the city via the vast network of tunnels and sewers underground. Maps of the London sewer and underground rail system might be found by searching what remains of assorted civic offices and libraries (Library Use). Without an adequate map and a compass or other navigational aid then the party stands a very good chance of getting lost in the labyrinthine tunnels beneath London. Navigation rolls may help, but not much in the Stygian darkness beneath the capital. They will need various items of equipment such as lanterns or electric lamps, food, and so on.

Alternatively, if you want to steer them into the tunnels, an attacking Martian could drive them to seek shelter in a nearby tube station or suchlike. In any case their exploration and navigation of the tunnels provides ample opportunity for "filler" encounters, ranging from packs of rats to other subterranean wanderers like themselves.

The Scuttling Hordes

The party stumble upon a huge swarm of sewer rats, a writhing carpet of filthy fur and glittering eyes. These vermin have grown fat on the death of London, and are bolder than ever, even going so far as to attack humans. 2D3 rat packs attack the party, swarming from the grates and pipes.

The Dwellers in the Darkness

While exploring the network of tunnels beneath London, the party will make a shocking discovery.

As they venture through an underground train station, they notice that the place is thick with the dusty residue of the Black Smoke, which must have drifted in during the Martians' initial attack on London. It covers every surface in a layer of clinging sooty powder. Rather than was the case above ground, where the Martians laid the Black Smoke with superheated steam, the dust down here has settled gradually. However, an Idea roll will lead them to realise that there are not as many bodies as one might expect. In fact, there are

no bodies at all visible. This is in marked contrast to the state of affairs above ground, where one can scarcely turn a corner without encountering the unfortunate victims of either the Black Smoke or the Martians' deadly Heat-Ray. However, down here, where one would expect to find the corpses of those travelling on the Underground and fleeing the Martian menace above, not a single body is to be found. A Spot Hidden will reveal evidence that the dust has been disturbed since it settled here, implying that the party is not the only ones beneath London. The scuffed tracks lead into the train tunnels, from which an evil odour emanates. A Tracking roll indicates that humans, perhaps barefoot (the marks are so scuffed as to make it hard to tell), dragging something behind them probably caused the marks. The party might wish to investigate this strange matter. Then again they might not. If they decline to investigate, yet remain in the tunnels, they are likely to be ambushed by the mysterious subterranean denizens. If they leave the tunnels, they might still be attacked, during the hours of darkness.

Investigation will reveal that the marks lead down the railway tunnel to a small room off to the side. The foul smell of rotting meat mixed with that of human waste emanates from a manhole in the middle of the room which connects to the sewer network. Entering the manhole, they can splash through the shallow streams of rainwater in narrow tunnels until they come to heavy iron door, which is propped open, revealing another small room which was probably a maintenance area. The floor is strewn with bones and scraps of clothing. A Medicine or Knowledge roll will show that the bones are human, a Spot Hidden will show that they have been gnawed clean, and a subsequent Idea or Medicine roll will tell the character who makes it that they were gnawed by a human. Characters coming to this conclusion lose 1/1D4 Sanity points. Listen rolls will allow characters to notice shuffling, scurrying sounds in the nearby tunnels.

It appears that the Martian Invasion has brought the dark side of some members of humanity to the fore. A section of the population became totally unhinged by the Martians and the scenes of carnage and devastation that have ensued, and descended below ground to seek refuge in the city's sewer network. They have taken to eating whatever they can find, no matter how abhorrent. It is shocking to discover how a few short weeks can reduce man to a savage animal. These pathetic creatures will eat anything from rats and dogs to the decaying corpses of those slain by the Black Smoke, and even live victims if they present themselves. They roam the tunnels beneath London in search of food, and occasionally venture onto the surface after nightfall, to attack the various lone wanderers and hopeless drunkards that now populate the metropolis. They are sad, ragged creatures, pale and filthy, with staring eyes and crouching postures, which communicate in hoarse whispers or guttural grunts. The dirt-encrusted rags they wear indicate that these foul degenerates might once have been workmen, railway employees and engineers, as well as the occasional businessman or traveller, but no longer. Now they are beyond reason, and cannot think further than the next piece of food they might find. If the party venture into the tunnels in a group, and appear to be strong and confident, the scavengers will simply watch from the shadows. Good Spot Hidden or Listen rolls may allow the party to catch glimpses of the scurrying creatures, which will vanish into narrow side tunnels if spotted.

The party will now likely want to leave the tunnels as fast as possible. As they hurry along, a Listen roll will allow alert party members to notice the sounds of soft footsteps following their own, splashing in the shallow water, padding after them on the hard floor. When the party stops, these footsteps also stop briefly. Build up the tension and paranoia.

Should a party member venture off on his own, then 1D6 scavengers will attack him when he is out of sight of the party, dragging him down and inflicting savage bites. If the party make it to the scene in time, they will encounter the hapless party member struggling against skinny, ragged and filthy attackers. Discharging a firearm or shouting at them will cause them to cease their attack on their victim, and bright light, such as from a lantern or electric lamp might make them cower and shield their eyes, unused to such illumination after weeks spent in the gloomy darkness of the underworld. They will quickly scuttle off into whatever dark holes they appeared from, earning the party a brief respite. However, they now know that they party is a force to be reckoned with, and will attack in greater numbers later on. The amount of fresh meat the party represents will prove too much to resist, and they will try to swarm them - 1D4 scavengers for each party member. There are too many of them to kill, although if they lose more than 50% of their number they will break and flee into the tunnels. The best course of action for the party is to hold them off long enough to make a hasty retreat to the surface - Navigate rolls will prove quite important here. Once they emerge, shaken and dishevelled, into the fresh air, the scavengers will cease to pursue them, discouraged by the bright daylight. However, the party is advised to post watch during the hours of darkness.

The Battle on Primrose Hill

The party must act to prevent the Martians from signalling their compatriots on Mars to begin the next stage of the Invasion.

Secure in their victory over the empire of Man, the Martians are preparing to communicate the news of their conquest to their superiors on Mars. However, they are facing obstacles posed by the difficulties of communicating over the vast distances of interplanetary space. To enhance their telepathic capabilities, they have constructed an elaborate device, a Telepathic Resonance Transmitter, which will focus their psychic energy. Once they have reported their domination of Britain, Earth's greatest military power, as a beach-head, the second phase of the invasion will commence, in which a mighty armada of cylinders will be launched from Mars to begin the conquest of the rest of the Earth.

During the week prior to the transmission of the message to Mars, the Martians will test their equipment to ensure that it will function correctly. The telepathic broadcasts emitted by the Martians will affect the dreams of humans in the area. They will suffer dreams of Martians trying to speak to them, although the content of the message will be unclear they will pick up on a sense of satisfaction on the parts of the Martians, and anticipation of further conquests. Characters with psychic abilities will get more information. The effect will be similar to that of someone speaking with a chorus of voices saying exactly the same thing but slightly out of sync. The message will consist of the information that the Martians have conquered the primary landing site with minimal resistance, and that they are now ready for the launch of the colonisation fleet. The character will also get the understanding that this is a test of the apparatus, although the emanations will become stronger as time progresses.

The Martians are unable to communicate with their homeworld from Earth, as their innate telepathic abilities simply do not possess the range required. They understood this, and have thus brought with them a complex apparatus beyond the current scope of human science. While psychic phenomena are relatively rare among humans, and thus research in this field has been limited in the extreme on Earth, the Martians are well versed in its practical applications. They have developed a substance, an opaque, misty sort of crystal

which, when fashioned in the proper way and placed correctly in relation to a subject, is capable of storing the vibrations of psychic energy from that subject for later use. If an array of such crystals are arranged in a certain manner the psychic vibrations will begin to resonate, significantly amplifying the energy available.

The Martians have a set date on which they will signal their comrades on Mars, which will set in motion the launch of the great colonisation fleet. Attacking before this time will simply mean that the Martians must rebuild their transmitter, a delay of a few more days, when they will once more be able to signal their compatriots. The time of greatest weakness will be when the Martians have patched a large portion of their number into the transmitter, and it has accumulated a substantial amount of psychic energy. They must charge up their apparatus before transmitting is feasible. The Telepathic Resonance Transmitter charges at a rate of 5 magic points per round, so with Mars at its current distance of 120 million miles, they must spend 8 rounds charging it up fully. They may overcharge it, but this is unlikely. As it accumulates psychic energy, the crystals embedded in the structure will pulse with light, at first barely perceptibly, and quite slowly, but the peaks will grow stronger, and the pulses come more frequently until just before the Transmitter is ready to send its communication the crystals will be blazing with white light. They are fully charged, crackling with psychic energy. The air will feel greasy, with coronae of static electricity enhaloing nearby objects with an eery violet glow. The hairs on the skin of nearby humans will stand on end, the blood pound in their ears. Finally, as the transmission is sent they will hear the message in their heads, strong enough to temporarily blot out their own thoughts. Characters failing a POWx4 roll with suffer sudden nosebleeds as the delicate veins are ruptured by the psychic energy.

If this happens, the party have lost.

If the party manage to disrupt the Martians' transmission, this will not be the case. This could occur in a number of ways. The most likely is if the party manage to somehow critically damage the Transmitter when it is highly charged with psychic energy. Damaging the central crystal, smashing several subsidiary crystals, or killing the Controller, the Martian who is actually sending the transmission. In the first two cases, the release of the raw psychic energy will ravage the assembled Martians, while the latter will do its damage by virtue of the telepathic backlash against all those Martians in the surrounding area. Killing any Martians other than the Controller has no effect on the accumulation of energy or the transmission of the message.

Smashing the central crystal or more than four of the smaller crystals will cause the Transmitter to instantly discharge all accumulated magic points in a blast of psychic energy that will wash across the pit, and indeed London. An intangible wall of light will rush in all directions from the Transmitter, while a gout of energy will streak skyward. All Martians present must roll POW against the total magic points accumulated in the Transmitter on the Resistance Table. Reduce the magic point effect by one for each mile that the Martian was distant from the Transmitter. Failure indicates that the psychic shockwave has burnt out their minds, reducing them to a vegetative state. Passing indicates that they are stunned by the blast for a number of combat rounds equal to the total magic points accumulated in the Transmitter at the time of discharge. Humans within a number of yards equal to twice the accumulated magic points will be knocked insensible for a short time, although not permanently damaged. Characters failing a POWx4 roll with suffer sudden nosebleeds as the delicate veins are ruptured by the psychic energy.

Killing the Controller will result in a psychic scream of agony being accumulated, amplified and transmitted

by the Transmitter and rolling across the landscape. The Martians, with their highly psychically attuned brains, will suffer from this much more than the humans. The basic effect of this will be to cause all humans within half a mile to lose 1/1D6 SAN, and driving any Martians within a mile insane (reduce INT to zero).

If some party member gets a death wish, they could try to usurp the transmitting Martian, and use all that psychic power for their own applications. It should be noted that mere humans are unable to channel such energies without irreparable damage to their own minds. While they are in place to receive this power, they may use the magic points in whatever spells they desire. The Transmitter will continue to draw magic points from the patched in Martians until they are all drained of magic points, or killed. Needless to say, while the Controller has been usurped the Martians will be unable to send their communication. The character will be able to use this power for any spell of their own, or they may focus this energy on a single target per round. The target must match POW against the total magic points accumulated by the Transmitter, or their minds are destroyed, burned out by the raw energy. This attack uses up 5 of the accumulated magic points, but these may be reclaimed from any Martians still patched into the Transmitter. When all the Martians patched into the Transmitter are dead or mindless, or have no further magic points to donate, the Transmitter will begin to consume the individual who has replaced the Controller. 5 points are randomly taken from the character's attributes and converted to magic points. Unless the character can disengage (a POWx3 roll), this will continue each round until an attribute reaches zero, at which point the character will die, burnt out by the energies he or she tried to wield. Their death agonies will be amplified by the Transmitter, and will wash across the landscape, causing all humans within half a mile to lose 1/1D6 SAN, and driving any Martians within a mile insane (reduce INT to zero).

If the party manage to stop the Martians before they have sent their message, they have won. Humanity has won a miraculous reprieve.

The Epilogue

The outcome of the party's actions, and the repercussions for the destiny of mankind.

If the Martians get their transmission sent to Mars the party have failed, and the Martians truly have won. Several months later the colony pods will land, disgorging countless Martians and their diabolical machines. Even if the original forces were eventually defeated after the message was sent (an unlikely outcome), the British military is weakened, and is no match for this second wave. The Martians will first crush any remaining resistance in Britain before sweeping across the globe, conquering all in their path. Humanity will be subjugated, a slave race useful to the Martians only as labour or food. Pockets of resistance will exist, but they are few and far between. It is a dark fate for all of humanity. It might be interesting to run a campaign with the party playing the part of resistance fighters against the now-victorious Martians.

If the party managed to stop the message being transmitted, the defeat of humanity is averted, and society will begin to rebuild itself. The damaged parts of London will be reconstructed, government will return, and order restored to the Capital of the World. During the three weeks of the Martian invasion, they conquered the entire southeast of England, their rule stretching from the east coast to Southampton, and it is believed they were on the verge of mounting an assault on Birmingham. However, that was prevented. However, society will not get the whole picture. The Martians' death will be believed to have been the result of the

actions of terrestrial bacteria, to which they had no natural resistance. Research will begin on the Martians' technology, advancing human science by leaps and bounds, although some brock walls will be met - attempts to dismantle Heat-Ray generators in order to understand them and replicate their effects will lead to disaster in the Ealing and South Kensington laboratories, dissuading further research into that particular branch. The chemical composition of the Black Smoke is still unknown, as is the case with viridigen. Despite the horrors of the Invasion, it will have a positive effect on the destiny of humankind. Nations who might otherwise have directed their energies into petty nationalist hatreds will unite together into a League of Nations, an embryonic World State. The future looks brighter than it might have done had the Martians not put our little squabbles into perspective.

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Dramatis Personae

The Humans

The ARTILLERYMAN

He was one of the very few survivors of the fighting on Horsell Common, saved by his horse tripping in a rabbit hole. He witnessed the destruction of Weybridge, and escaped by hiding in a drain until they left, then escaping towards Walton. He has laid claim to Putney Hill and the surrounding area as his personal territory, and challenges all those who trespass upon it. He has been making plans, and has a vision of rebuilding society underground, out of the way of the Martians. However, he lacks discipline, and his grandiose plans have not come to much just yet.

Character Notes: The Artilleryman is full of fire and enthusiasm for his planned reconstruction of society. However he secretly maintains a resentment towards those who could be regarded as socially "superior" to himself, and all their trappings of the middle and upper classes. He is intolerant of anything he regards as "weak or silly", and there is no place in his brave new world for anyone who cannot make an active contribution. Despite his inspirational talk, he is really something of a dreamer, and lacks the ability or discipline to put his ideas to work. He is amiable towards those who he deems worthy of respect - people who show a practical ability, such as scientists, engineers, that sort of thing. To others his reactions range from disdain to outright hostility, depending on how they approach him.

THE ARTILLERYMAN, Age 29, Driver in the Horse Artillery

STR 14 CON 10 SIZ 11 INT 16 POW 9
DEX 11 APP 16 EDU 13 SAN 28 HP 10

Damage Bonus: 1D4

Weapons: Cutlass 40%, damage 1D8+1+db

Skills: Artillery 67%, Dodge 33%, Fast Talk 75%, Hide 49%, Machine Gun 33%, Make Grandiose Plans 85%, Mechanical Repair 57%, Persuade 67%, Ride Horse 43%, Rifle 40%, Sneak 48%,

MARVIN, Brigadier-General Richard

On the Sunday following the arrival of the Martian cylinders, military forces have gathered in the Martians' path in defence of London. Commanding the operations about the town is Brigadier-General Marvin, a brusque, efficient officer who served for a time in Africa, and is a veteran of the Zulu Wars. Greying and stern, he has his hands full organising both the placement of artillery in defence of the town and the evacuation of civilians before the fighting begins.

Character Notes: The Brigadier-General is a stern, competent officer, a model member of the British Army in Victorian times. He has little patience for time-wasters, as he will be busy organising the defences around Weybridge. He will, however, make time to receive whatever information is available regarding the Martian invaders, as long as the reporter keeps it to the point. Brusque, though infallibly polite - an officer and a gentleman.

Brigadier-General RICHARD MARVIN, Age 49, Commander of Military Forces Around Weybridge

STR 10 CON 16 SIZ 11 INT 14 POW 14
DEX 8 APP 14 EDU 18 SAN 70 HP 14

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: .41 Revolver 75%, damage 1D10

Skills: Command Military 78%, Conceal 50%, Credit Rating 73%, Dodge 28%, History 33%, Navigate 43%, Persuade 47%, Psychology 39%, Military Tactics 67%,

PEARCE, Marcus

A stockbroker before the Martians arrived, Mr. Pearce was recently captured by the Martians and implanted with one of their mind-control probes. He is subject to fits in which the Martian takes control of his body, or issues commands which the poor Mr. Pearce cannot resist.

Character Notes: The repeated strain of Martian possession has taken its toll on Pearce's mind, until by the time the party reach him he is something of a wreck. He has a slight stutter, and is continually nervous and jumpy. Of course this could just as easily be interpreted at first glance as a reaction to the horrors of the Martian invasion.

MARCUS PEARCE, Age 41, Former Stockbroker

STR 15 CON 13 SIZ 11 INT 14 POW 8
DEX 13 APP 11 EDU 19 SAN 15 HP 12

Damage Bonus: +1D4**Weapons:** Fist/Punch 60%, damage 1D3+db**Skills:** Accounting %, Bargain %, Be Nervous %,**SEVEN RAGGED SURVIVORS****Weapons:** Bite (children) 25%, damage 1D2

Fist/Punch (adults) 56% (children) 30%, damage 1D3+db

Small Club (adults) 28%, damage 1D6+db

	STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	POW	HP	db
ETHEL	10	8	13	10	8	10	none
FRED	14	9	12	9	15	11	+1D4
MAVIS	10	11	10	15	9	11	none
STAN	7	8	10	16	7	9	none
ELIZA*	6	5	6	9	8	6	-1D6
JACK*	7	10	7	9	8	8	-1D4
VICKY*	6	6	5	5	10	7	-1D6

* Children; Jack is about 11 years old, Eliza and Vicky are 7 and 5 years old respectively.

OGILVY

The astronomer named Ogilvy works at an observatory near Ottershaw in Surrey. He was intensely interested in the jets of gas spurting out from Mars several months ago, but was convinced at the time that they were natural phenomena, such as meteor impacts or volcanic eruptions. However, through his association with the American astronomer Percival Lowell, a prominent proponent of the theory of an inhabited Mars, he became persuaded that they were the products of Martian intelligence. Ogilvy was the first to discover the first Martian cylinder when it landed on Horsell Common early on Friday morning, and quickly realised its artificial origins. He had a part in organising the excavation of the cylinder and keeping the crowds at a safe distance. On the evening following the arrival of the cylinder, he was a member of the ill-fated Deputation sent to try to communicate with the extra-terrestrial visitors, of which he is the only survivor.

Character Notes: Ogilvy is a typical academic type, slightly sheltered, not terribly practical, but he knows a lot about his field, and will enthuse at great length about it. When the party encounter him he is not terribly well, being badly injured and in shock. He will go along with whatever is suggested to him as long as it gets him away from the Martians.

OGILVY, Age 58, Well-Known Astronomer

STR 11 CON 11 SIZ 12 INT 15 POW 14
DEX 13 APP 14 EDU 19 SAN 54 HP 3

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: none

Skills: Accounting 17%, Astronomy 79%, Credit Rating 71%, Hide 16%, Library Use 56%, Mechanical Repair 23%, Operate Telescope 73%, Photography 24%, Physics 18%, Sneak 14%, Spot Hidden 63%,

PHILLIPS, Corporal Henry

The scout assigned to guide the party onto Horsell Common, a Corporal in the Horse Artillery by the name of Henry Phillips, is one of the best scouts stationed in Weybridge, and has seen a fair degree of action.

Character Notes: Corporal Phillips is a down-to-earth soldier in the British Army, a stout Yorkshireman who has no qualms with saying what he thinks. He knows better than to endanger his life unnecessarily, and it is apparent that he has a good, if unremarkable career in Her Majesty's Armed Forces ahead of him. Blunt, to the point, and reliable. Polite to his social (and military) superiors.

Cpl. HENRY PHILLIPS, Age 27, Artillery Scout

STR 10 CON 16 SIZ 12 INT 14 POW 11
DEX 11 APP 12 EDU 16 SAN 48 HP 14

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: .303 Lee-Enfield Rifle 67%, damage 2D6+4

Skills: Climb 53%, Conceal 48%, Dodge 33%, First Aid 36%, Hide 76%, Listen 43%, Make Maps 52%, Navigate 67%, Operate Heliograph 74%, Ride 43%, Sneak 81%, Spot Hidden 56%, Track 48%,

TWO WOULD-BE CART THIEVES

	STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	POW	HP	db
Bert	14	12	13	13	12	13	+1D4
Alf	11	10	11	7	10	11	none

Weapons: Fist/Punch 67%, damage 1D3+db

Grapple 33%, damage special

.32 Revolver 25%, damage 1D8

Scavengers

In the labyrinthine tunnels beneath London lurk warped, filthy creatures. These pale, staring beings that scuttle in the darkness were once human. The Martian invasion drove them below ground, where they have been scratching out a living among the dead, dressed in filthy rags that once might have been respectable clothing. Starving in the darkness, they have gone slowly insane, their civilised veneer crumbling until they are little more than animals. Now they feed on anything they can find - rats, dogs, human flesh. They have taken to feeding on the rotting carrion of those killed by the Black Smoke, whose bodies litter the streets of the capital. However, increasingly of late they have started preying upon the few remaining survivors in London, the drunken creatures of despair making easy pickings. They roam the streets during the hours of darkness, swarming over anyone who looks too weak to hold them off.

Statistics are those of normal humans, apart from a sanity rating of zero, and an INT of 2D6, representing their degraded mental condition.

The Martians

The CONTROLLER

The Controller of the Martians is the commanding officer of the Martian forces, the most powerful of the Overlords sent to Earth. In this role it is the Controller who sends the message to Mars confirming the victory over the pathetic humans. The other Overlords follow the Controller's orders without question.

Source Material

While writing this adventure and formulating the statistics and information on Mars, the Martians and the first War of the Worlds, I have used a variety of sources - some for information, and others for inspiration. Here are some of the ones I found most useful, with hyperlinks where available.

Books

[The War of the Worlds, by H. G. Wells](#) - The original novel, here in e-text format. A must-read.

[MARS, by Percival Lowell](#) - One of the main proponents of the theory of an inhabited Mars, renowned for seeing a system of canals spanning the face of Mars.

[The Tripods Trilogy, by John Christopher](#) - (*The White Mountains, The City of Gold and Lead, The Pool of Fire*) What might have happened had the Martians won. Those *are* Fighting-Machines, aren't they?

[War of the Worlds: Global Dispatches, edited by Kevin J. Anderson](#) - The Martian Invasion as seen by various contemporary notables.

[The Space Machine, by Christopher Priest](#) - A kind of *The War of the Worlds* and *The Time Machine* cross-over. Good scientific romance, also very useful for information on Martian society.

Music

[Jeff Wayne's Musical Version of The War of the Worlds](#) - ULLA! The classic 1978 album featuring Richard Burton, Justin Hayward and David Essex among others. I particularly recommend the instrumentals from the album "Highlights from Jeff Wayne's Musical Version of *The War of the Worlds*" for use as atmospheric music.

[Mars, the Bringer of War, by Gustav Holst](#) - Another excellent piece of atmospheric music, this time from Holst's *The Planets* suite.

Games

[Forgotten Futures, by Marcus L. Rowland](#) - The scientific romance roleplaying game; available as shareware, as well as the **[Forgotten Futures library](#)**, a collection of period images and articles.

[Jeff Wayne's The War of the Worlds](#) - A real-time strategy game for the PC by **[Rage](#)** and **[GTInteractive](#)**. Quite simply wonderful.

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Recent Advances in Human Technology

[The Airship](#)

[Butteridge's Flying Machine](#)

[Cavorite](#)

[Gibberne's Nervous Accelerator](#)

[The Land Ironclad](#)

[The Mono-rail](#)

[The Oxygen Shell](#)

The Airship

"These German airships [...] were capable of ninety miles an hour in a calm, so that they could face and make headway against nearly everything except the fiercest tornado. They varied in length from eight hundred to two thousand feet, and they had a carrying power of from seventy to two hundred tons."

- HG Wells, *The War in the Air*

The hydrogen-filled Airships that proliferated at the beginning of the twentieth century were true leviathans of the air. The German airships were held together by skeletons of steel and aluminium and a strong canvas outer skin, within which was a rubber gas-bag, divided into between fifty and a hundred gas tight compartments filled with hydrogen. By means of pumping air into a long sac within the gas bag, the bouyancy of the whole craft could be controlled, allowing its pilots to compensate for changes in weight resulting from the consumption of fuel or the dropping of bombs. The engine and propellor were located at the aft end of the long steel spine that ran the length of the airship. and the men and magazines were forward in a series of cabins under the expanded headlike forepart.

The engine was a supreme triumph of German invention, of the extraordinarily powerful *Pforzheim* type, and was controlled by wires from the cabin at the front of the airship, which was indeed the only habitable part of the ship. In case of malfunction the engineers would clamber along the airship on a rope ladder. The lateral instability of the craft was partly corrected by a horizontal fin on either side, and steering was accomplished by means of two vertical fins, which normally lay back like gill-flaps on either side of the head. A striking feature was the apparatus for wireless telegraphy that dangled from the forward cabin.

Butteridge's Flying Machine

People talk glibly enough of epoch-making events; this was an epoch-making event. It was the unanticipated and entirely successful flight of Mr. Alfred Butteridge from the Crystal Palace to Glasgow and back in a small businesslike-looking machine heavier than air--an entirely manageable and controllable machine that could fly as well as a pigeon.

"It wasn't, one felt, a fresh step forward in the matter so much as a giant stride, a leap. Mr. Butteridge remained in the air altogether for about nine hours, and during that time he flew with the ease and assurance of a bird. His machine was, however neither bird-like nor butterfly-like, nor had it the wide, lateral expansion of the ordinary aeroplane. The effect upon the observer was rather something in the nature of a bee or wasp. Parts of the apparatus were spinning very rapidly, and gave one a hazy effect of transparent wings; but parts, including two peculiarly curved "wing-cases"--if one may borrow a figure from the flying beetles--remained expanded stiffly. In the middle was a long rounded body like the body of a moth, and on this Mr. Butteridge could be seen sitting astride, much as a man bestrides a horse. The wasp-like resemblance was increased by the fact that the apparatus flew with a deep booming hum, exactly the sound made by a wasp at a windowpane."

- HG Wells, *The War in the Air*

The remarkable apparatus designed and built by Mr. Alfred Butteridge was the most advanced flying machine of its time, far more so than the flimsy, butterfly-like devices of Asia, or the dangerously unstable *Drachenflieger* of Germany. Carried aloft by laterally spinning horizontal planes, the Butteridge machine could travel at speeds of up to 40 mph or hover over a point with equal ease. In manoueverability and ease of control it was unparalleled.

The two sets of spinning planes which contrive to lift the machine are similar to the airscrews used to provide the horizontal motion to certain models of aeroplane. However, they are oriented at ninety degrees to the usual direction, usually spinning in the horizontal plane, and the blades are considerably longer. By working the control pedals and levers, the pilot can alter the angle and the speed at which the blades spin, allowing him to bank the machine left or right, and change the altitude of flight. By inclining the blades forward, some of the generated lift is transferred to forward movement. A skilled pilot with a Butteridge Flying Machine can easily outmanoeuvre any other model of Flying Machine, a fact that has been repeatedly and vocally pointed out by Mr. Butteridge. The original model of the Butteridge Flying Machine was only capable of carrying a single pilot, but plans are being made to build larger versions.

Cavorite

The object of Mr. Cavor's search was a substance that should be 'opaque' - he used some other word I have forgotten, but 'opaque' conveys the idea - to "all forms of radiant energy." 'Radiant energy,' he made me understand, was anything like light or heat, or those Roentgen Rays there was so much talk about a year or so ago, or the electric waves of Marconi, or gravitation. All these things, he said, radiate out from centres, and act on bodies at a distance, whence comes the term 'radiant energy.'

"[...] Now all known substances are 'transparent' to gravitation. You can use screens of various sorts to cut off the light or heat, or electrical influence of the sun, or the warmth of the earth from anything; you can screen things by sheets of metal from Marconi's rays, but nothing will cut off the gravitational attraction of the sun or the gravitational attraction of the earth. Yet why there should be nothing is hard to say. Cavor did not see why such a substance should not exist, and certainly I could not tell him. I had never thought of such a possibility before. [...] Suffice it for this story that he believed he might be able to manufacture this possible substance opaque to gravitation out of a complicated alloy of metals and something new - a new element, I fancy - called, I believe, helium, which was sent to him from London in sealed stone jars."

- H. G. Wells, *The First Men in the Moon*

The unusual metal alloy dubbed "Cavorite" was invented by the equally unusual Mr. Cavor, a scientific researcher whose forte was molecular physics. First manufactured on the 14th of October, 1899, Cavorite has the effect of shielding objects from the effects of gravitational attraction, making anything shielded by the Cavorite in this way effectively weightless. Cavorite is also completely opaque to light, heat and electric waves. The practical applications of this remarkable substance are almost limitless, from flying machines to interplanetary craft.

Charlottenburg Steel

"**W**here strength was needed there was the new Charlottenburg alloy, German steel as it was called, the toughest and most resistant metal in the world."

- HG Wells, *The War in the Air*

Following extensive analysis of Martian materials technology, which was far in advance of our own, German metallurgists in Charlottenburg, Germany, developed this alloy. It is one of the strongest materials known to man, and has been extensively used in the construction of such structures as the League of Nations Tower in London, England, which rises 150 floors above the surrounding landscape, and the Channel Bridge which provides a monorail link between Dover and Calais. Its great strength to weight ratio has led to its utilisation in a variety of applications in which weight is critical, especially in aeronautics. The armaments on the new generation of airships are constructed almost exclusively of German steel, as are the frameworks and plating of the latest Land Ironclads (*qv*).

Gibberne's Nervous Accelerator

"**I**t will be obtainable of all chemists and druggists, in small green bottles, at a high but, considering its extraordinary qualities, by no means excessive price. Gibberne's Nervous Accelerator it will be called, and he hopes to be able to supply it in three strengths: one in 200, one in 900, and one in 2000, distinguished by yellow, pink, and white labels respectively."

- H. G. Wells, *The New Accelerator*

First developed by Professor Gibberne of Folkestone, this remarkable drug vastly speeds the functioning of the human nervous system, increasing the activity possible by hundreds, even thousands of times. While under the influence of sufficient quantities of this substance, the user can become to all effects invisible to the general populace, moving many times faster than the eye can follow. To the user, all those around him are frozen almost motionless, or moving incredibly slowly.

The Land Ironclad

The Mono-rail

"There had been talk of mono-rails for several years. But the real mischief began when Brennan sprang his gyroscopic mono-rail car upon the Royal Society. It was the leading sensation of the 1907 soirees; that celebrated demonstration-room was all too small for its exhibition. [...] Inaudible, but convincing, the great inventor expounded his discovery, and sent his obedient little model of the trains of the future up gradients, round curves, and across a sagging wire. It ran along its single rail, on its single wheels, simple and sufficient; it stopped, reversed stood still, balancing perfectly. It maintained its astounding equilibrium amidst a thunder of applause. The audience dispersed at last, discussing how far they would enjoy crossing an abyss on a wire cable. "Suppose the gyroscope stopped!" Few of them anticipated a tithe of what the Brennan mono-rail would do for their railway securities and the face of the world.

"In a few years they realised better. In a little while no one thought anything of crossing an abyss on a wire, and the mono-rail was superseding the tram-lines, railways: and indeed every form of track for mechanical locomotion. Where land was cheap the rail ran along the ground, where it was dear the rail lifted up on iron standards and passed overhead; its swift, convenient cars went everywhere and did everything that had once been done along made tracks upon the ground."

- HG Wells, *The War in the Air*

Recent years have seen a revolution in transport across the globe. Never before has it been easier and more comfortable to travel from place to place. Mono-rail tracks span our countryside, allowing us to travel quickly, efficiently and safely. The English Channel has been bridged by a series of great Eiffel Tower pillars carrying mono-rail cables at a height of a hundred and fifty feet above the water, except near the middle, where they rise higher to allow the passage of shipping. The ill-made roads of the past, muddy in winter, dusty in summer, have been superseded by this masterpiece of modern engineering.

The Oxygen Shell

"It was his first experience of an oxygen-containing bullet. A great flame spurted from the middle of the Prince, a blinding flare, and there came a thud like the firing of a gun. Something hot and wet struck Bert's face. Then through a whirl of blinding smoke and steam he saw limbs and a collapsing, burst body fling

themselves to earth."

- HG Wells, *The War in the Air*

Explosive bullets loaded with oxygen were first developed as an effective weapon against the hydrogen-filled [Airships](#) that proliferated at the beginning of the twentieth century. Intended to start fires within the gas bags that formed the main body of these Airships, they were also found to be extremely effective against human targets. Their explosive properties, combined with the pressurised oxygen within, combine with devastating consequences, easily sufficient to kill, or destroy a limb at the very least. These large cartridges, fired from a short-barelled rifle, were only accurate at limited range. That said, the enormous size of the early Airships meant that it was quite hard to miss one's target.

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A Timeline of History

1899: October - Cavorite first manufactured at Lypne.

April 1900 - Cavor and Bedford visit the Moon. An account of this journey, *The First Men in the Moon*, is written shortly after, and serialised in *The Strand* magazine.

1901-1902 - Messages from Cavor received from the Moon.

1902: June - [The War of the Worlds](#), the Martian Invasion of Earth.

1903 - Land Ironclads first deployed in Africa.

1904: January - The Universal Peace Conference is held in London, England. The Great Powers sign a treaty of mutual cooperation against the threat of future Martian attack and the sharing of research into Martian technology.

1905 - [The Selenite War](#).

1907 - The Brennan Mono-rail first demonstrated to the Royal Society

1908 - *The War of the Worlds*, an account of the Martian Invasion, is published.

1914 - Mr. Alfred Butteridge demonstrates his Flying Machine in a flight from the Crystal Palace to Glasgow and back again.

1923 - [The War on Mars](#). Scouts sent to Mars from Earth as advance guard of the Space Flotilla.

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Notes on Selenite Biology

The lunar race of Selenites is as startlingly different from anything before encountered as the Martians were when humanity first set eyes upon that alien race. These notes aim to provide a general outline of Selenite biology, with pertinent information for the casual reader.

The Selenite form seems to be almost infinitely mutable, and Selenites exist in almost every size and proportion imaginable. The information given here can only be at best a broad guide to the points which most Selenites share in common with each other, although there will always be exceptions.

The Selenites

[The Eyes](#)

[The Carapace](#)

[Speech](#)

Variations on a Theme: the Different Types of Selenite

[The Administrators](#)

[The Erudite](#)

[The Specialists](#)

[The Enforcers](#)

[The Archers](#)

[The Matrons](#)

[The Fishers](#)

[The Mooncalf Butchers](#)

[The Mooncalf Tenders](#)

Mooncalves

Lunar Vegetation

The Denizens of the Lunar Sea

The Selenites

"For a moment my eyes sought him in the wrong place, and then I perceived him standing facing us both in the full light. Only the human features I had attributed to him were not there at all!

Of course I ought to have expected that, only I didn't. It came to me as an absolute, for a moment an overwhelming shock. It seemed as though it wasn't a face, as though it must needs be a mask, a horror, a deformity, that would presently be disavowed or explained. There was no nose, and the thing had dull bulging eyes at the side - in the silhouette I had supposed they were ears. There were no ears. [...] I have tried to draw one of these heads, but I cannot. There was a mouth, downwardly curved, like a human mouth in a face that stares ferociously. [...] The neck on which the head was poised was jointed in three places, almost like the short joints in the leg of a crab. The joints of the limbs I could not see, because of the puttee-like straps in which they were swathed, and which formed the only clothing the being wore."

In general form the Selenite physiology bears a superficial resemblance to that of humans - two arms, two legs, a head upon which are two eyes, a mouth. However, this is where the similarity ends. In truth the Selenites are closer to insects than to man. Their bodies are generally covered in a chitinous carapace that supports and protects the internal organs. Their hands resemble the end of an elephant's trunk, with two flexible, boneless "digits" used for grasping and manipulating objects.

The Eyes

"This led to a comparison of the lunar and terrestrial eyes. The former is not only excessively sensitive to such light as men can see, but it can also see heat, and every difference in temperature within the moon renders objects visible to it."

The Selenite eyes might be compared to those of terrestrial insects. Rather than the single lens of the larger tellurian animals, the Selenite eye is composed of a great many tiny lenses compounded to allow the Selenite to see quite acutely. It can also perceive light quite far into the infra-red spectrum, allowing it to "see" heat differentials in its surroundings, thus what might be to a human pitch black is clear as day to a Selenite, provided that there is a variation in temperature.

The Carapace

"...Ever and again one of their queer heads came down close to my face, or a soft tentacle-hand touched my head or neck. I don't remember that I was afraid then or repelled by their proximity. I think that our incurable anthropomorphism made us imagine there were human heads inside their masks. The skin [...] was hard and shiny, quite in the beetle-wing fashion, not soft, or moist, or hairy, as a vertebrated animal's would be. Along the crest of the head was a low ridge of whitish spines running from back to front, and a much larger ridge curved on either side over the eyes."

The Selenites differ from the larger animals of Earth in that they have no internal skeleton, but rather have a chitinous carapace protecting and supporting their internal organs. This exoskeleton bears a resemblance to the shell of Earthly insects, and it composed of a similar substance. It has been posited that the greater gravity of Earth has prevented the insectoid form from becoming larger than six inches or so, the size of the largest insects in ancient prehistory. On the Moon, however, there were no such restrictions. One advantage conferred by the Selenites' chitinous armour is that it is, in most cases, flexible and capable of being altered and sculpted into the desired shape. It is this fact more than any other that has led to the vast array of shapes and sizes exhibited in the Selenite population.

Speech

"They conversed with one another in their reedy tones, that seemed to me impossible to imitate or define. [...] They faced one another, their queer heads moved, the twittering voices came quick and liquid."

Selenites communicate using a piping, twittering vocalisation similar to that of terrestrial birds. It is not possible for humans to exactly replicate their speech due to the constraints of the human vocal apparatus. It is possible to approximate it, albeit at a much lower pitch. Much of the information is carried in the rhythm and relative tone of the speech. Consonants are few, and generally used to break up words and separate syllables. It is generally easier for Selenites to learn human speech than it is for humans to learn to speak Lunar, but this may be due to the application of some of the Selenites' finest minds to the study of terrestrial language. That being said, the only resource that the Selenites have on Earthly matters is Mr. Cavor, whose English is idiosyncratic at best, as demonstrated by the propensity among English-speaking Selenites to pepper their speech with little phrases that they have picked up from Cavor - "If I may say", and "If you understand" being some of the more common of these.

The study of Selenite language has been aided by the fact that throughout the moon a common language is used. That said, a new system of notation has had to be developed to compensate for the imprecise phonetics of human writing, and the mere twenty-six letters of the Latin alphabet do not provide a sufficient range of articulation to capture the true nature of Selenite speech. The wide vocal range of most Selenites also means that they make excellent mimics, and are capable of reproducing recognisable imitations of voices, even of humans.

It should be noted here that the Selenites have no written language of their own. The ability of the Selenite race to store data within the vast brains of the Erudite caste has negated the difficulties that faced humanity in passing on knowledge.

Variations on a Theme: The Different Types of Selenite

Selenite society is divided into two principle castes, which are in turn subdivided into a wide variety of groups each specialised for their determined place in society. The ruling caste is composed of the greatest intellects of the Moon - beings whose entire existence is geared towards intellectual pursuits. The other caste is by far the more numerous, and consists of the hundreds of types of workers required by Selenite

society.

The Administrators

There are administrators, of whom Phi-oo is one, Selenites of considerable initiative and versatility, responsible each for a certain cubic content of the moon's bulk...

"I see them going hither and thither with a retinue of bearers, attendants, shouters, parachute-carriers, and so forth - queer groups to see."

About 5 ft. high [with] small slender legs about 18 in. long, and slight feet of the common lunar pattern. On these balanced a little body, throbbing with the pulsations of his heart. He had long, soft, many-jointed arms ending in a tentacled grip, and his neck was many-jointed in the usual way, but exceptionally short and thick. His head [...] "is of the common lunar type, but strangely modified. The mouth has the usual expressionless gape, but it is unusually small and pointing downward, and the mask is reduced to the size of a large flat nose-flap. On either side are the little eyes.

"The rest of the head is distended into a huge globe and the chitinous leathery cuticle of the mooncalf herds thins out to a mere membrane, through which the pulsating brain movements are distinctly visible. He in is a creature, indeed, with a tremendously hypertrophied brain, and with the rest of his organism both relatively and absolutely dwarfed."

The Erudite

The erudite for the most part are rapt in an impervious and apoplectic complacency, from which only a denial of their erudition can rouse them. Usually they are led about by little watchers and attendants, and often there are small and active-looking creatures, small females usually, that I am inclined to think are a sort of wife to them; but some of the profounder scholars are altogether too great for locomotion, and are carried from place to place in a sort of sedan tub, wabbling jellies of knowledge that enlist my respectful astonishment."

The Specialists

If, for example, a Selenite is destined to be a mathematician, his teachers and trainers set out at once to that end. They check any incipient disposition to other pursuits, they encourage his mathematical bias with a perfect psychological skill. His brain grows, or at least the mathematical faculties of his brain grow, and the rest of him only so much as is necessary to sustain this essential part of him. At last, save for rest and food, his one delight lies in the exercise and display of his facility, his one interest in its application, his sole society with other specialists in his own line."

The Enforcers

"...To rule over these things and order any erring tendency there might be in some aberrant natures are the most muscular beings I have seen in the moon, a sort of lunar police, who must have been trained from their earliest years to give a perfect respect and obedience to the swollen heads."

For the most part Selenites are physically frail, lightly built and with a carapace that is quite thin and serves little more function than to contain the internal organs. However, in some specialised specimens that carapace has, through injections of nutrients, irritants and the like, been thickened and hardened into serviceable armour, and the muscular structure enhanced through regular exercise and medical treatment. Such armoured and muscled Selenites serve to police the tunnels and galleries of the Moon, dealing with those few Selenites with disruptive tendencies. Such specimens could probably match or even outclass the average human for size and strength, and also have the added advantage of an integral suit of plate armour, so only strong crushing blows or bullets can really harm them, as blades tend to glance off.

The Archers

"...Struggling in the grating between those defensive spears appeared the head and shoulders of a singularly lean and angular Selenite, bearing some complicated apparatus. [...] He was aiming in the queerest way with the thing against his stomach. "Chuzz!" The thing wasn't a gun; it went off like cross-bow more, and dropped me in the middle of a leap.

"I didn't fall down, I simply came down a little shorter than I should have done if I hadn't been hit, and from the feel of my shoulder the thing might have tapped me and glanced off. Then my left hand hit against the shaft, and I perceived there was a sort of spear sticking half through my shoulder."

While there were no Selenites specifically assigned to the task of war or fighting prior to the arrival of humans on the Moon, there were a number of classes of Selenite who fulfilled similar roles, and possessed appropriate abilities. One such class was that of the Archers, originally a caste of hunters of the animals that dwell in the less densely populated lunar tunnels. Their angular frames and wide-set eyes are adapted to the pursuit of the swift-footed creatures that they hunt. Their large, flat feet and sturdy legs make them into an extremely stable firing platform.

The Matrons

"My alternative route takes me round by a huge, shadowy cavern, very crowded and clamorous, and here it is I see peering out of the hexagonal openings of a sort of honeycomb wall, or parading a large open space behind, selecting the toys and amulets made to please them by the dainty-tentacled jewellers who work in kennels below, the mothers of the moon world - the queen bees, as it were, of the hive. They are noble-looking beings, fantastically and sometimes quite beautifully adorned, with a proud carriage, and, save for their mouths, almost microscopic heads.

"Of the condition of the moon sexes, marrying and giving in marriage, and of birth and so forth among the Selenites, I have as yet been able to learn very little. [...] I am of opinion that, as with the ants and bees, there is a large majority of the members in this community of the neuter sex. Of course on earth in our cities there are now many who never live that life of parentage which is the natural life of man. Here, as with the ants, this thing has become a normal condition of the race, and the whole of such eplacement as is necessary falls upon this special and by no means numerous class of matrons, the mothers of the moon-world, large and stately beings beautifully fitted to bear the larval Selenite [...] they are absolutely incapable of cherishing the young they bring into the moon; periods of foolish indulgence alternate with moods of aggressive violence, and as soon as possible the little creatures, who are quite soft and flabby and pale coloured, are transferred to the charge of celibate females, women 'workers' as it were, who in some cases possess brains of almost masculine dimensions."

The Fishers

"In one great place [...] a number of boats were fishing. We went alongside one of these and watched the long-armed Selenites winding in a net. They were little, hunchbacked insects, with very strong arms, short, bandy legs, and crinkled face-masks."

The Mooncalf Butchers

"They were short, thick, little beggars, with long arms, strikingly different from the ones we had seen before. [...] Their sturdy little forms - ever so much shorter and thicker than the mooncalf herds - were scattered up the slope in a way that was eloquent of indecision."

The Mooncalf Tenders

"...He seemed a trivial being, a mere ant, scarcely five feet high. He was wearing garments of some leathery substance, so that no portion of his actual body appeared, but of this, of course, we were entirely ignorant. He presented himself, therefore, as a compact, bristling creature, having much of the quality of a complicated insect, with whip-like tentacles and a clanging arm projecting from his shining cylindrical body case. The form of his head was hidden by his enormous many-spiked helmet - we discovered afterwards that he used the spikes for prodding refractory mooncalves - and a pair of goggles of darkened glass, set very much at the side, gave a bird-like quality to the metallic apparatus that covered his face. His arms did not project beyond his body case, and he carried himself upon short legs that, wrapped though they were in warm coverings, seemed to our terrestrial eyes inordinately flimsy. They had very short thighs, very long shanks, and little feet."

The Mooncalf Tenders are the most common variety of Selenite to be found on the Moon's surface, their task being to drive the mooncalves out to pasture each lunar day. They generally wear protective clothing consisting of an insulated suit, helmet, darkened goggles and puttees around the joints. This gear protects

them from both the freezing cold of the lunar dawn and evening, and the glaring radiation of the Sun at the height of the day. Their forms are ideally suited to their tasks, their legs adapted to scrambling over the rough terrain of the lunar surface, their eyes, although still sensitive by human standards, are inured to the harsh glare of the Sun, and his body resistant to the extremes of temperature and relatively attenuated air.

The Mooncalves

First of all impressions was its enormous size; the girth of its body was some fourscore feet, its length perhaps two hundred. Its sides rose and fell with its laboured breathing. I perceived that its gigantic, flabby body lay along the ground, and that its skin was of a corrugated white, dappling into blackness along the backbone. But of its feet we saw nothing. I think also that we saw then the profile at least of the almost brainless head, with its fat-encumbered neck, its slobbering omnivorous mouth, its little nostrils, and tight shut eyes. (For the mooncalf invariably shuts its eyes in the presence of the sun.) We had a glimpse of a vast red pit as it opened its mouth to bleat and bellow again; we had a breath from the pit, and then the monster heeled over like a ship, dragged forward along the ground, creasing all its leathery skin, rolled again, and so wallowed past us, smashing a path amidst the scrub, and was speedily hidden from our eyes by the dense interlacings beyond."

Among the various foods which go to feed the swarming Lunar population the Mooncalf is very prominent. These gargantuan cattle, the size of a battleship, reside in vast caves beneath the surface during the long lunar night, and are driven up steep ramps to the surface by the Mooncalf Tenders to graze during the day. They gorge themselves upon the lush, fast-growing vegetation throughout the fortnight-long day until dusk falls across the Moon, when they return once more into the sublunar depths. It has been theorised that they were bred by the Selenites from some large burrowing creature, like an enormous worm, until now, immeasurable ages after their domestication, they are the perfect meat source, huge, docile, a single specimen capable of feeding a great many hungry Selenites. Their meat has been described as "loose in texture, and whitish brown in colour - rather like lumps of some cold souffle, and it smelt faintly like mushrooms. [...] It had the same laxness in texture that all organic structures seem to have upon the moon; it tasted rather like a gauffre or a damp meringue".

Lunar Vegetation

And all this time the lunar plants were growing around us, higher and denser and more entangled, every moment thicker and taller, spiked plants, green cactus masses, fungi, fleshy and lichenous things, strangest radiate and sinuous shapes."

Figure it to yourself! About us the dream-like jungle, with the silent bayonet leaves darting overhead, and the silent, vivid, sun-splashed lichens under our hands and knees, waving with the vigour of their growth as a carpet waves when the wind gets beneath it. Ever and again one of the bladder fungi, bulging and distending under the sun, loomed upon us. Ever and again some novel shape in vivid colour obtruded. The very cells that built up these plants were as large as my thumb, like beads of coloured glass."

The Denizens of the Lunar Sea

"The caverns and passages are naturally very tortuous. A large proportion of these ways are known only to expert pilots among the fishermen, and not infrequently Selenites are lost for ever in their labyrinths. In their remoter recesses, I am told, strange creatures lurk, some of them terrible and dangerous creatures that all the science of the moon has been unable to exterminate. There is particularly the Rapha, an inextricable mass of clutching tentacles that one hacks to pieces only to multiply; and the Tzee, a darting creature that is never seen, so subtly and suddenly does it slay..."

"In one great place heavy with glistening stalactites a number of boats were fishing. [...] Among their catch was a many-tentaculate, evil-eyed black thing, ferociously active, whose appearance they greeted with shrieks and twitters, and which with quick, nervous movements they hacked to pieces by means of little hatchets. All its dissevered limbs continued to lash and writhe in a vicious manner."

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The Selenites

The insect-like inhabitants of the Earth's Moon have a highly developed and structured society, in which every individual is ideally suited to his place in society. The Selenites are primarily subterranean, although they do make use of the lunar surface during the 14-day long lunar "days".

The statistics given below are for a "baseline" Selenite, as they would be if the Selenite did not undergo the training and education required to adapt it to its assigned place in lunar society. Characteristic modifiers for specific classes of Selenite are given below.

SELENITES, Insectlike Moon-Men

Characteristics	Rolls	Averages
STR	1D4	2-3
CON	2D6	7
SIZ	1D6+6	9-10
INT	3D6	10-11
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	4D6	14
	Move 9	Av. HP 8-9

Av. Damage Bonus: -1D6

Weapons: Fist/Punch 60%, damage 1D3+db

Armour: 1 point of chitinous carapace.

Skills:

Spells: Selenites rarely learn spells. A random member has a percentage chance equal to one-half INT to know 1D4 spells.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6

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Mars

To better understand the Martians, and what drove them to attempt the invasion of Earth, it is perhaps useful to know some facts about the conditions that prevail upon their homeworld. There follows a summary of current knowledge about the Red Planet - its geography (or rather, areography), climate and landmarks. We are indebted to Mr. Percival Lowell for much of the information on the climate and features of Mars, and Mr. Jacoby Wace for the information on Martian cities.

Mars - Some Facts and Statistics

The Martian Climate

The Great Canals

The Cities of Mars

Mars - Some Facts and Statistics

"The planet Mars, I scarcely need remind the reader, revolves about the sun at a mean distance of 140,000,000 miles, and the light and heat it receives from the sun is barely half of that received by this world. It must be, if the nebular hypothesis has any truth, older than our world; and long before this earth ceased to be molten, life upon its surface must have begun its course. The fact that it is scarcely one seventh of the volume of the earth must have accelerated its cooling to the temperature at which life could begin. It has air and water and all that is necessary for the support of animated existence."

Astronomers have studied Mars for many years, and over that time a considerable body of information has been collected concerning conditions on the Red Planet. Add to this in recent years the findings of the numerous probes fired from the Great Cannons of Canaveral, Sumatra, Kourou and Kenya, which were relayed by Hertzian wave across the gulf of space, and it is possible to paint a detailed picture of our sister world.

The eccentricity of the orbit of Mars is such that its nearest approach to the Sun is 129,500,000 miles, the mean distance is 141,500,000 miles, and most remote is 154,500,000 miles. The diameter of Mars is about 4215 miles, giving a surface area just over a quarter of that of Earth. The gravitational attraction on the surface of Mars is 38% that of Earth; that is, a man on Mars would only weigh 38% of what he would weigh on Earth.

The Martian sidereal day (the day relative to the stars rather than the Sun) is 24 hours, 37 minutes, 22.7 seconds long, some forty minutes longer than our own sidereal day of 23 hours, 56 minutes, and the planet travels about the sun once every 686.98 terrestrial days.

Mars has two tiny moon, discovered in 1877, and known as Deimos (Dread) and Phobos (Fear). Deimos, at a distance of 14,600 miles from the planet's centre, orbits once every 30 hours and 18 minutes; Phobos, at a distance of 5,800, every 7 hours and 39 minutes. Phobos goes round the planet faster than the planet turns upon itself, and would thus appear to any observers on the planet's surface to break the conformity of stellar motions by rising in the west and setting in the east. Deimos is just as unconventional, as it remains above the horizon for two days at a time. In addition, the proximity of each moon to the planet means that its distance from any point on the surface varies at different times, and with its distance its apparent size changes in a dramatic manner. Deimos has a diameter of about 10 miles, Phobos of about 36 miles. Phobos would thus, at its closest approach to the surface of the planet (i.e. in the zenith), show a disk like the Moon. Otherwise both satellites would appear as stars.

The Martian Climate

"The secular cooling that must someday overtake our planet has already gone far indeed with our neighbour. Its physical condition is still largely a mystery, but we know now that even in its equatorial region the midday temperature barely approaches that of our coldest winter. Its air is much more attenuated than ours, its oceans have shrunk until they cover but a third of its surface, and as its slow seasons change huge snowcaps gather and melt about either pole and periodically inundate its temperate zones. That last stage of exhaustion, which to us is still incredibly remote, has become a present-day problem for the inhabitants of Mars."

- HG Wells, *The War of the Worlds*

Conditions on Mars are very close to those theorised by astronomers for many years. It is a dry, cold world, covered for the most part in deserts of red dust and rock, with long-extinct volcanoes pushing their way through the thin atmosphere. There are ice caps at each pole, formed for the most part of water ice, which melt during the Martian summer. What little water there is lies deep beneath the surface or locked at the poles.

At the poles, conditions resemble those of corresponding areas of earth. Mars is tilted on its axis by 25 degrees from its plane of orbit, which means that it experiences seasons much as we do on Earth. During the northern hemisphere's winter, an ice cap accumulates around that pole, and the ice cap of the southern hemisphere melts as it experiences its summer, and vice versa. During the winter, conditions at the pole are severe in the extreme, much colder than the winters of our own poles. In the summer, the ice caps melt to form small polar seas, fringed by transient growths of vegetation vitalised by the release of liquid water that the thaw provides.

The temperate zones, although they would not be recognised as such on our own world, cover the greater part of the Martian surface. Indeed, the regions of Mars that might be called tropical barely reach the temperature of a brisk day in early spring on earth. These areas are generally a couple of degrees above the freezing point of water at noon, with temperatures plummeting well below freezing after dark. The sunlight in the temperate regions is thin and watery, like that on a frosty day.

Perhaps one can get the best idea of conditions across most of Mars by considering a combination of the summits of the higher terrestrial mountain ranges, and the vast sandy wastes of the Sahara - the former for the cold and the relatively attenuated nature of the atmosphere, the latter for the bright sunshine and the dry, dusty desert landscape, as well as the freezing night time conditions. While the air is biting cold in the shade, the sunshine - weaker than on earth - nonetheless relieves this to some degree. It is perfectly possible to become sunburned on Mars, as the thin atmosphere does not filter out as much of the light from the sun as that of earth does.

Occasionally, through some freak disturbance of the Martian weather, enormous dust storms blow out of the deserts, blanketing large areas in an ochre twilight of howling wind and abrasive dust. These dust storms may last weeks at a time.

All things considered it is a testament to Martian science and ingenuity that their species has lasted this long, given the situation on their world.

The Great Canals

"When the great continental areas, the reddish-ochre portions of the disk, are attentively examined in sufficiently steady air, their desert-like ground is seen to be traversed by a network of fine, straight, dark lines. The lines start from points on the coast of the blue-green regions, commonly well-marked bays, and proceed directly to what seem centres in the middle of the continent, since most surprisingly they meet there other lines that have come to the same spot with apparently a like determinate intent. And this state of things is not confined to any one part of the planet, but takes place all over the reddish-ochre regions."

- Percival Lowell, *MARS*

A number of other, less recognised theories were borne out by closer investigation of the Martian globe. In particular the assertions of Signor Schiaparelli and Mr. Lowell regarding a system of canals spanning the face of Mars, distributing precious water across the desert. Lowell first proposed the existence of Martian waterways following his examination of the Martian sphere during the Oppositions of 1894 and 1896 from his observatory at Flagstaff, Arizona. Although initially ridiculed by other astronomers, Lowell and his theories have since been vindicated by the evidence gathered in the years following the Invasion.

The canals of Mars appear through an Earth-based telescope as a network of lines, long, fine and perfectly straight, or curving in a uniform manner along their length. In fact they always trace the most direct route between any two points along their length, being arcs of great circles, spanning the globe. They uniformly stretch from the coasts of the tiny and seasonal polar seas of Mars to the centre of the continents, where they meet other similar canals. These canals are rendered visible to us by a combination of their vast length (many earthly rivers would be lost in their inhumanly straight courses), and the belts of cultivated and irrigated land that line their banks.

The major canals are generally in the region of two miles wide, which is maintained for their entire length. An example of such a canal might be the Titan canal, which stretches north from the Bay of Titans on the

South Polar Sea for over 2,300 miles. Smaller canals are generally no more than a mile across. From each canal runs a network of small channels which irrigate the land for up to thirty miles on either side of the canal. The depth of these canals is unknown, but the Martians' Fighting Machines have never been known to wade across them, so it is reasonable to suppose that they are at least one hundred feet in depth, perhaps more.

The Cities of Mars

"A vast range of buildings spread below him; [...] There were also trees curious in shape, and in colouring, a deep mossy green and an exquisite grey, beside a wide and shining canal. [...] The long facade of the great building, whose roof he had looked down upon before, was now receding in perspective. [...] In front of the facade was a terrace of massive proportions and extraordinary length, and down the middle of the terrace, at certain intervals, stood huge but very graceful masts, bearing small shiny objects which reflected the setting sun. [...] The terrace overhung a thicket of the most luxuriant and graceful vegetation, and beyond this was a wide grassy lawn on which certain broad creatures, in form like beetles but enormously larger, reposed. Beyond this again was a richly decorated causeway of pinkish stone; and beyond that, and lined with dense redweeds, and passing up the valley exactly parallel with the distant cliffs, was a broad and mirror-like expanse of water. The air seemed full of squadrons of great birds, manoeuvring in stately curves; and across the river was a multitude of splendid buildings, richly coloured and glittering with metallic tracery and facets, among a forest of moss-like and lichenous trees."

- H G Wells, *The Crystal Egg*

The cities of Mars are almost exclusively constructed along the banks and at the intersections of the Great Canals, the lifelines of Mars, and are shown up by the cultivated land around them that supports their populations of Old Martians.

These cities by far outclass the metropolises of earth for grace and aesthetic achievement. Paris, London and Florence pale into obscurity against the glittering towers of Mars, the graceful spires which, in the gentle gravity of Mars, rise soaringly into the Martian sky. The cities are adorned with splendid gardens, all the more of a luxury considering the arid conditions that prevail across much of Mars.

While the residences of the Martians are palatial in their grandeur, the Old Martians live in squalor, in dismal ghettos on the outskirts of the cities, furthest from the canals. Even so, their homes are beautifully constructed, especially in comparison with the run-down tenements that form terrestrial slums even today.

Sadly, many of these great cities lie in ruins, destroyed by the millennia of war that have wracked the Red Planet. Their towers lie shattered, the glittering buildings smashed into rubble. What beauty might still exist without the shadow of War that falls across the red plains of Mars?

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Notes on the Martian Biology

Much study has been made of the bodies of the Martians that came to Earth. What specimens were left after the predations of dogs and suchlike have been dissected, analysed and preserved for posterity. Everyone is familiar with the almost complete specimen preserved in spirits at the Natural History Museum in London, and the various drawings which have been made from it. By such study, we have learned much about our attackers, their physiology, their life cycle, and much more. Presented here is a digest of pertinent information, condensed from the report on Martian biology delivered to the Royal Society by Professor Howes following highly detailed investigation.

The Martian Anatomy

[The Skeleton](#)

[The Tentacles](#)

[Internal Structure](#)

[Martian Feeding Patterns](#)

[The Martian Reproductive Process](#)

[The Eyes](#)

[The Martian Brain and Psychology](#)

The Martian Slave Race

The Red Weed and Other Martian Vegetation

The Martians: A General Overview

The inhabitants of Mars are quite shockingly different from ourselves, both in terms of gross physical characteristics, and mentality. Individual Martians seem to be effectively immortal, as they do not age, become ill, or die, having long since eliminated from their planet the bacteria which cause fevers and other morbidities. They are admirably adapted for life on the desolate world of their origin. It has been surmised that the Martians themselves were at least in part responsible for this adaptation, having deliberately altered their bodies to allow them to relentlessly pursue their goal of acquisition of knowledge.

The Skeleton

Those who have never seen a living Martian can scarcely imagine the strange horror of its appearance.

The peculiar V-shaped mouth with its pointed upper lip, the absence of brow ridges, the absence of a chin beneath the wedgelike lower lip, the incessant quivering of this mouth, the Gorgon groups of tentacles, the tumultuous breathing of the lungs in a strange atmosphere, the evident heaviness and painfulness of movement due to the greater gravitational energy of the earth--above all, the extraordinary intensity of the immense eyes--were at once vital, intense, inhuman, crippled and monstrous. There was something fungoid in the oily brown skin, something in the clumsy deliberation of the tedious movements unspeakably nasty."

Martians have no skeleton as such, rather a flexible, cartilaginous shell of interlocking plates which protects the internal organs (such as they are) and assists in breathing. It is this lack of rigid support that led to the misshapen appearance of the Martian invaders during their time on Earth and their painful, laboured breathing. This shell of cartilage is located immediately beneath the skin, which is itself extremely tough, akin to thick leather and quite capable of stopping small calibre bullets at long range, as well as insulating the internal systems (such as they are) from the effects of pressure and temperature to some extent.

The skin is lubricated by an oily secretion, which causes it to shine "like wet leather". It is believed that without this oleaginous substance the skin would grow stiff and crack. There is evidence to suggest that this fate befell more than one of the Martian invaders, whose hides were desiccated and split, presumably by the actions of the terrestrial bacteria which eventually defeated them.

The Tentacles

"In a group round the mouth were sixteen slender, almost whiplike tentacles, arranged in two bunches of eight each. These bunches have since been named rather aptly, by that distinguished anatomist, Professor Howes, the HANDS. Even as I saw these Martians for the first time they seemed to be endeavouring to raise themselves on these hands, but of course, with the increased weight of terrestrial conditions, this was impossible. There is reason to suppose that on Mars they may have progressed upon them with some facility."

The tentacles, which provoked such horror among those first humans to encounter Martians, are composed of a similar configuration of muscle to that found in the tentacles of octopi, squid and other such molluscs. There is evidence to suggest that they are used as a means of locomotion in the kinder gravitational field of the Martians' native world. However, on Earth they are of little use as locomotion, rather they are used as manipulative appendages. It has been posited that intricate gesticulation is used as a mode of communication between Martians in place of vocal communication. The tentacles are on average around six feet long, and start to each side of the mouth. The last twelve inches of each tentacle are remarkably sensitive to pressure, temperature and pain, and shows an amazing degree of dexterity and flexibility. In texture the tentacles are somewhat rough, and moistened by a similar secretion to that which maintains the pliability of the skin, although the tentacular secretion is slightly adhesive rather than oily, which would seem to be an aid to the Martians' ability to grip and manipulate objects. Located behind each bunch of tentacles is a large nerve bundle, which controls the complex motor functions of the tentacles.

Internal Structure

T*he internal anatomy, I may remark here, as dissection has since shown, was almost equally simple. The greater part of the structure was the brain, sending enormous nerves to the eyes, ear, and tactile tentacles. Besides this were the bulky lungs, into which the mouth opened, and the heart and its vessels. The pulmonary distress caused by the denser atmosphere and greater gravitational attraction was only too evident in the convulsive movements of the outer skin."*

Martian Feeding Patterns

A*nd this was the sum of the Martian organs. Strange as it may seem to a human being, all the complex apparatus of digestion, which makes up the bulk of our bodies, did not exist in the Martians. They were heads--merely heads. Entrails they had none. They did not eat, much less digest. Instead, they took the fresh, living blood of other creatures, and INJECTED it into their own veins."*

The physiology of Martians is quite unlike our own, their cerebral functions having been greatly advanced seemingly at the expense of the locomotive, olfactory and digestive systems among others.

The injection of blood involved in Martian feeding is accomplished by means of retractable pipette of bone, similar in appearance to the horn of the narwhal, but thinner, almost needle-like, measuring approximately three feet in length, normally retracted and concealed in the creature's throat. This hollow instrument is able to telescope out, and is plunged into the neck of the Martian's unfortunate victim, from which the living blood is pumped directly into the Martian's veins by means of a specialised chamber of the heart. A valve within that chamber ensures that the blood can only flow into the Martian's body. The pipette is also joined to the respiratory system, which, by means of a strong exhalation on the part of the Martian, cleans out the tube in a spray of blood after the Martian has finished feeding and prevents it from becoming blocked by the clotted blood of its victims. It is this exhalation through the feeding-tube that produces the Martians' distinctive call. Other than this they appear to have no vocal apparatus.

The Martian Reproductive Process

W*onderful as it seems in a sexual world, the Martians were absolutely without sex, and therefore without any of the tumultuous emotions that arise from that difference among men. A young Martian, there can now be no dispute, was really born upon earth during the war, and it was found attached to its parent, partially BUDDED off, just as young lilybulbs bud off, or like the young animals in the fresh-water polyp.*

"In man, in all the higher terrestrial animals, such a method of increase has disappeared; but even on this earth it was certainly the primitive method. Among the lower animals, up even to those first cousins of the vertebrated animals, the Tunicates, the two processes occur side by side, but finally the sexual method superseded its competitor altogether. On Mars, however, just the reverse has apparently been the case."

Martians reproduce by means of budding, a parent Martian growing larger than normal over a period of time before splitting into two Martians, the smaller of which can be said to be the "child" of the larger. The first

indication that a Martian is on the verge of reproducing is the presence of a small growth on the Martian's side, which gradually develops small tentacles, and the other features of a Martian, before splitting from the parent. This young Martian shares all of the characteristics of a fully-grown Martian, although on a smaller scale, typically being two feet across at the time it completely separates from the parent, and is an autonomous individual from that time.

The Eyes

"Two large dark-coloured eyes were regarding me steadfastly. The mass that framed them, the head of the thing, was rounded, and had, one might say, a face. There was a mouth under the eyes, the lipless brim of which quivered and panted, and dropped saliva. The whole creature heaved and pulsated convulsively. A lank tentacular appendage gripped the edge of the cylinder, another swayed in the air."

Large, baleful eyes dominate Martians' faces, the visible portion being six inches across, the eyeball itself being closer to ten inches in diameter. The eye is somewhat flattened at the front, giving the whole structure an exaggerated egglike appearance. Perhaps due to their genesis on a planet whose landscape is entirely dominated by various shades and hues of red, orange and ochre, it appears that their eyes are incapable of seeing the colours at the blue and violet end of the spectrum, which appear as black to them. Instead they seem to be able to perceive light beyond the red end of the visible spectrum, perhaps even allowing them to detect an object by its radiation of heat. The eye is guarded by a nictitating membrane, a transparent scale that the Martian can flick across to protect the eye in moments of danger, as well as to moisten its surface.

The Martian Brain and Psychology

"The internal anatomy, I may remark here, as dissection has since shown, was almost equally simple. The greater part of the structure was the brain, sending enormous nerves to the eyes, ear, and tactile tentacles. Besides this were the bulky lungs, into which the mouth opened, and the heart and its vessels. The pulmonary distress caused by the denser atmosphere and greater gravitational attraction was only too evident in the convulsive movements of the outer skin. And this was the sum of the Martian organs. [...] They were heads--merely heads."

During dissection of the Martians for anatomical study, it was repeatedly noted that the Martian body bears little resemblance to our own, in terms of the placement and structure of organs. They are grossly distorted, with some systems enhanced, others atrophied, and some entirely absent. However, what provoked the most discussion and controversy was the structure of the Martian brain. It resembles the human brain to such a great extent that it has been theorised that once, in the dim past of their species, the Martians may have been very similar to humans, both in physical form and in behaviour, and that in the Martians we see the eventual goal towards which aeons of human evolution has been driving. Some have suggested that the Martians augmented the natural process of evolution through their advanced technologies.

There are some notable differences between the Martian brain and the human brain. It appears that, during their transition from near-human creatures to the tentacled monstrosities that waged war against Earth, the

Martians extensively modified the structure of their brain. More specifically, they seem to have discarded all those portions of the brain which govern the emotions, with the exception of fear, which is a necessary driving force in the development and preservation of a species. They transformed their own bodies into mere vessels for their intellects, vast and cool and unsympathetic, calculating machines composed of living blood and tissue. They know not hatred, nor rage nor envy, and neither do they know love, nor joy nor mercy. Their war against our planet was not carried out because of hatred for mankind, but merely because we possessed something that they needed, a vibrant, warm, living world. They were totally ruthless and implacable in the pursuit of their goal, the domination of humanity and the conquest of our world. They have eliminated emotion and its irrationality, but conversely a portion of the brain, normally unnoticeable in the human brain, has been hypertrophied to an astounding extent. Some scientists have theorised, based on reports of Martian behaviour, that this enhanced segment of the brain provides the Martians with the power of telepathy, the ability to project thought into the mind of another, or to read the contents of that mind. This facility for psychic communication is believed to be highly specialised in the vast majority of Martians, being used solely for the purpose of communication between individuals. It is thought to have an effective range of approximately two miles, although perhaps there exist Martians that have been trained in the use of this ability and are able to use it at a greater range than the majority. If this is the case, then it can be theorised that they are also trained in other, similar psychic techniques. There is a certain amount of evidence to support this theory. A member of the Army who was captured by the Martians but later escaped recalls:

"I was brought before a particular Martian which the rest of them seemed to treat with some sort of deference, and forced to kneel down before it. It reached out one of its tentacles, and touched the slimy appendage to my brow, staring at me all the while. As I looked into those dark, saucerlike eyes I realised that I could not move a muscle! It was as if I had been mesmerised, unable to do a single thing. Only with great effort was I able to continue to breathe, for it seemed the Martian had, somehow, paralysed every muscle in my body. It then reached out more tentacles, touching them to my face and head, and I was completely unable to resist that cold, creeping caress. Suddenly, horribly I felt the Martian inside my mind! Words cannot adequately describe the sensations I experienced as it sifted through my thoughts and memories, searching for some item of information that it required; I can only convey it as a cold presence pressing on my perception, its thoughts vast and heartless and unspeakably *other*, incomprehensible to the human mind. I felt this presence smothering my thought and will like a wet cloth smothers a flame. I believe I must have fallen to the ground insensible at that point, for the next I knew I was back in the cage with the other captives."

If this psychic ability is indeed present in Martians, there is reason to believe that it may also be present in humans, albeit perhaps to a much lesser degree. There have indeed been cases whereby humans have appeared to exhibit extra-sensory perception, and work is being carried out to research this subject, perhaps with a view to using it against the Martians.

The Martian Slave Race

T*heir undeniable preference for men as their source of nourishment is partly explained by the nature of the remains of the victims they had brought with them as provisions from Mars. These creatures, to judge*

from the shrivelled remains that have fallen into human hands, were bipeds with flimsy, siliceous skeletons (almost like those of the siliceous sponges) and feeble musculature, standing about six feet high and having round, erect heads, and large eyes in flinty sockets. Two or three of these seem to have been brought in each cylinder, and all were killed before earth was reached. It was just as well for them, for the mere attempt to stand upright upon our planet would have broken every bone in their bodies."

At this point it might be appropriate to describe the creatures which the Martians brought with them for food on their long journey. Essentially hominid in appearance, the specimens recovered from the cylinders measured well over six feet in height, but due to the gentler gravity of Mars their muscular and skeletal structure is relatively weak compared to those of humans. In fact their body weight is approximately the same as that of a human, only their tall frames mean that they appear to be thin, spindly creatures, almost flimsy. They walk erect, and have two arms and two legs, each limb having four digits - three dextrous fingers and an opposable thumb on each hand, four long, evenly-sized toes on each foot. The chest cavity is relatively oversized, giving the bipeds' physique a passing resemblance to that of a greyhound. Most of its volume is occupied by the large lungs with which the biped breaths the thin atmosphere of Mars. There is a single eardrum situated at the base of the skull, and the eyes are large with pronounced brow ridges. The iris is a deep red, almost maroon, coloured so by the blood vessels within. It is curious to note that the Martian bipeds possess almost no pigmentation at all. The skin is extremely pale, almost translucent, hairless and very smooth. The bipeds, like the Martians, lack visible olfactory apparatus, the organs governing their sense of smell being located at the back of the throat. The size of the cranial cavity indicates that these creatures possess an intellect comparable with that of a human.

There were few if any specimens of this creature left alive at the time of the Martians' arrival on Earth, and it has been concluded that, even were one of these creatures to survive any length of time on Earth, the unfortunate wretch would be incapable of anything beyond the feeblest of movement.

The Red Weed and Other Martian Vegetation

"Apparently the vegetable kingdom in Mars, instead of having green for a dominant colour, is of a vivid blood-red tint. At any rate, the seeds which the Martians (intentionally or accidentally) brought with them gave rise in all cases to red-coloured growths. Only that known popularly as the red weed, however, gained any footing in competition with terrestrial forms. The red creeper was quite a transitory growth, and few people have seen it growing. For a time, however, the red weed grew with astonishing vigour and luxuriance... especially wherever there was a stream of water."

The strange plants which sprung up across the land shortly after the arrival of the Martians have been universally dubbed "Red Weed", regardless of actual characteristics. These include the Red Creeper, which swarmed up buildings and trees like a scarlet ivy, strangling plants with its crimson fronds, and the Red Sponge, a kind of algal growth which was briefly seen floating down the Thames. The most common form, and the most long-lived of the Martian plants, was the variety now known as the Red Weed, a bulbous growth similar in form to certain species of cactus or succulent desert vegetation. In structure the plant was arranged as a stocky stem not dissimilar in structure to the stems of tropical plants, perhaps an inch thick and easily snapped, from which grew a number of fleshy lobes, generally the size of a man's hand. The

Weed has thick, rubbery skin, reducing the loss of moisture by evaporation and protecting it from the intense cold of the Martian climate.

The individual cells of the plant, when examined under a microscope, are very large compared with the cells of terrestrial plants, and are mostly filled with thin, watery sap. The fact that the Red Weed was only found in close proximity to bodies of water, or where the ground was naturally damp, indicates that they require a large amount of moisture to survive - if deprived of that moisture, the large cells will become flaccid, and the whole plant will wilt and die.

The Red Weed grows voraciously, having been reported to grow as much as three feet in one day. It spreads with alarming rapidity, and within a week of the Martians first landing the weed had spread all along the Thames Valley. The Weed grows in spurts, dawn of each day marking the growth period. As soon as the sun's rays touch the plants, they writhe and grow, rustling and waving of their own accord, and seed pods burst with loud reports, scattering the seeds beyond the mass of weed so that the plant can slowly encroach upon unclaimed land. The seeds start growing almost immediately, especially if there is an abundance of moisture about, for example in rivers or after a rainstorm.

It has been discovered that the Red Weed is in fact quite edible, if somewhat unpalatable. It has a watery, metallic flavour, which some claim reminds them of medicinal iron tonic. Other than a certain amount of iron and other trace minerals leached from the soil (depending upon where the weed grew), it has little nutritional value, being composed mostly of water and cellulose. Still, some survivors of the Invasion tell stories of how they were forced to live on Red Weed during the Martian occupation, even brewing it up into a watery soup, and it seems to have done them little harm.

From the plant's characteristics, it has been theorised that this species was actually designed by the Martians to reduce the amount of water lost by evaporation from their canals, and tracts of irrigated land can be seen from Earth using a reasonably powerful telescope. It can be deduced that the seasonal changes on the face of Mars noticed by Mr. Lowell at his observatory in Arizona are indeed the effects of changing seasons on the Martian vegetation. It is quite likely that the Red Weed and its related varieties are planted along the banks of the canals, and it is these vast swathes of vegetation that rendered the canals visible from Earth, as the canals themselves would be far too narrow to see even with the finest telescope.

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A Report on Martian Technology

From the examples of technology and machinery that the Martians carried with them from their home world, as well as those items they manufactured during their time on Earth, we must assume that the invaders are at the very least centuries ahead of us technologically; considering the age of their world and their civilisation it is likely that they are even more advanced than that. However, it must be said that the careful investigation into their instruments and machineries, and the underlying principles involved in their operation, has advanced terrestrial science and technology by a degree that would otherwise have taken a great many years to achieve.

Principles of Martian Technology

Martian Power Sources

Viridigen

The Heavy Element Engine

Martian Devices

The Gun

The Cylinder

The Heat-Ray

The Fighting Machine

The Magnetic Acceleration Cannon

The Black Smoke

The Handling-Machine

The Digging Machine

The Flying Machine

The Crystal Egg

Principles of Martian Technology

Some major points must be mentioned to allow better comprehension of the fundamental mechanisms of Martian technology.

"And of their appliances, perhaps nothing is more wonderful to a man than the curious fact that what is the dominant feature of almost all human devices in mechanism is absent--the WHEEL is absent; among all the things they brought to earth there is no trace or suggestion of their use of wheels. One would have at least expected it in locomotion. And in this connection it is curious to remark that even on this earth Nature has never hit upon the wheel, or has preferred other expedients to its development. And not only did the Martians either not know of (which is incredible), or abstain from, the wheel, but in their apparatus singularly little use is made of the fixed pivot or relatively fixed pivot, with circular motions thereabout confined to one plane. Almost all the joints of the machinery present a complicated system of sliding parts moving over small but beautifully curved friction bearings. And while upon this matter of detail, it is remarkable that the long leverages of their machines are in most cases actuated by a sort of sham musculature of the disks in an elastic sheath; these disks become polarised and drawn closely and powerfully together when traversed by a current of electricity. In this way the curious parallelism to animal motions, which was so striking and disturbing to the human beholder, was attained."

The peculiar arrangement of disks that provides much of the motive force in Martian machinery is one of the idiosyncrasies of their engineering design. Composed of small metal disks arranged like a stack of pennies, and of approximately the same dimensions, held in a sheath of synthetic material, and with a thin layer of a substance similar to India-rubber, yet electrically conductive, between each metal disk and the next. The metal disks effectively have no resistance to the passage of electricity, and on application of an electrical current become very strongly magnetised, drawing tightly together.

As well as this pseudo-muscular system, they make large use of pneumatics, utilising a green vapour, dubbed "[viridigen](#)" by investigators of Martian technology, of which more below. Suffice to say that this vapour has the property of significant expansion upon application of an electric current. This rapid expansion greatly cools the vapour in accordance with Boyle's laws of gas behaviour, with the result that, if the [viridigen](#) is held in a container insulated from heat, on removing the electrical current, Boyle's Law once more takes effect, causing the gas to contract to its normal volume. In this way it is possible to build efficient reciprocating engines without need for the wheels found in comparable terrestrial devices; these engines are not used for the purposes of generating electricity, but rather for the conversion of electrical energy into movement.

This mechanism was used to provide the greater part of the motive force required to move their engines, with the previously described pseudo-muscular system being used in conjunction with pneumatics for more precise control. Apparently they could not completely insulate the pneumatic systems from heat, requiring them to periodically vent excess viridigen from their machines, due to its failure to contract to its original volume.

Further peculiarities of Martian technology have been investigated by terrestrial scientists. It seems that the Martians have a sophisticated method of controlling the flow of electricity, using wafer-thin slices of a crystalline material, believed to be silicone or a similar substance. these crystalline wafers act as the "brain" of the more complex machines, and where reactions greatly superior to a living creature are required, for example in the Flying Machine, the Fighting Machines, etc. Great matrices of this wafer are to be found in the machines, connected not by metallic wires, as is the case with earthly electrical devices, but with fine

strands of a transparent material, often no thicker than a human hair. It is thought that pulses of light, rather than electricity, are sent down these fibres, and are converted into electrical impulses at the other end, in a similar fashion to the way electrical pulses are sent down telegraph wires.

It is apparent from careful examination of Martian engineering that they have developed a treatment for metal which renders it virtually frictionless, allowing the construction of highly efficient bearings without the need for oil or other lubricants. This treatment takes the form of some sort of coating to the surfaces of the metal that will be in contact with each other. Applying it to one surface reduces friction quite substantially, but application to both surfaces practically eliminates it.

A Note On Martian Power Sources

Viridigen

Throughout the Martians' time on Earth, one consistent element of their engines and machines has been the presence of green smoke or flame, and flashes of green light. A distinctive property of the cylinders as they fell to Earth was the trail of green vapour they left as they passed through our atmosphere, and as has been mentioned previously, flashes of green light and clouds of green smoke have been associated with their industrial activities. This green gas has been labelled "viridigen". As noted before, it has the peculiar property that, when subjected to an electric current, it undergoes expansion. It seems that the individual particles of the vapour become highly charged, repelling each other with great force, and fluorescing at the same time. A subsequent property of this relationship between the pressure of the gas and electrical charge is that when the pressure of the gas is changed, it generates an electrical charge.

This pressure change can be accomplished mechanically, for example by compressing the gas in a piston, or thermally, by heating or cooling the gas whilst holding the volume constant. The nature of the charge depends upon the nature of the pressure change. An increase in pressure generates a negative charge, whilst a decrease in pressure generates a positive charge. It appears that the Martians generally used the former method of electrical generation, heating the gas in a container of fixed volume, which, according to Boyle's laws, increases the pressure inside that container and causes the viridigen to generate a negative charge.

The Heavy Element Engine

One of the more exciting discoveries prompted by investigation of Martian technology is the source of much of the power for their various Machines. These consist of rods or bars of heavy metals contained in a case treated with a similar energy-blocking substance to the gravity shield arrays of the Flying Machine. This is with good reason, as the heavy elements used to power the Martian Machines emit a dangerous amount of Becquerel rays. The Martians were apparently aware of the dangerous nature of their power sources, as the case for the Heavy Element Engine is extremely sturdily constructed, in several cases being the only part of a destroyed fighting machine to remain intact. This is a fortunate thing for the inhabitants of the Earth, for if even one of these engines had been broken open, the area surrounding it would surely have become uninhabitable due to the deadly radiations released.

The mechanism by which these radiations were converted to usable energy is very elegant. A coolant fluid was used to transfer the heat from the Heavy Element Engine to an electrically insulated chamber of viridigen gas. The heating of this gas in a confined space would cause it to release a negative charge, which would be channeled away by means of electrodes in the walls of the chamber. By using a series of these chambers, and allowing them to heat and cool in turn, a steady flow of electricity could be generated.

Study of the Heavy Element Engine has been hampered by the fact that, with few exceptions, when the Martians realised at the end that they were dying they shut down their engines permanently. Apparently built into the engines as a failsafe were a number of metal rods which were extracted or inserted to control the output of the Engine. The complete insertion of these rods served to shut down the Engine almost completely, and the procedure cannot be easily reversed. Research into the Heavy Element Engine has thus been suspended until a method can be developed to remove the rods while still allowing some control over the output of the Engine - it has been theorised that complete removal of the rods could cause an Engine to produce a catastrophic amount of heat.

Martian Devices

The Gun

"Hundreds of observers saw the flame that night and the night after about midnight, and again the night after; and so for ten nights, a flame each night. Why the shots ceased after the tenth no one on earth has attempted to explain. It may be the gases of the firing caused the Martians in- convenience. Dense clouds of smoke or dust, visible through a powerful telescope on earth as little grey, fluctuating patches, spread through the clearness of the planet's atmosphere and obscured its more familiar features."

The colossal engine used to launch the [cylinders](#) from the surface of Mars to our own terrestrial sphere is located on the slopes of the largest mountain on Mars. The forging of this great object was detected by terrestrial astronomers during the Martian opposition of 1894, first at the Lick Observatory, then by Perrotin of Nice and other observers, who all noted a bright, glowing spot on the illuminated face of Mars.

It is believed that, unlike the protagonists of a certain scientific romance, the Martians did not make use of gunpowder or other such crude explosives to launch their projectiles from this mighty cannon--it has been theorised that the relatively thin atmosphere of Mars reduces the efficacy of such combustion-based explosives; rather they utilised the capabilities of their notorious [Heat-Ray](#). Large masses of water were frozen into ice and placed at the base of the gun barrel. The [cylinder](#) would then be placed above this mass of ice. A feature of the [cylinder](#) which was not immediately apparent to observers on Earth was that it had arrayed on its base a number of [Heat-Ray](#) generators, positioned so as to spread their effects over a given area. When the barrel of the gun was correctly aligned with the Earth, the [Heat-Ray](#) generators would be activated.

The result would be the near-instant conversion of the ice to a much larger volume of superheated steam, the pressure of which would force the projectile along the length of the barrel, accelerating until it reached a

sufficient velocity to overcome the gravitational energy of Mars. Once the projectile was safely away the Heat-Ray generators would detach from the base of the cylinder and be discarded. The invading forces would then have begun their journey towards our world, and the gun barrel would be packed with more blocks of ice in preparation for its next firing twenty-four hours later.

The Cylinders

T*he Thing itself lay almost entirely buried in sand, amidst the scattered splinters of a fir tree it had shivered to frag- ments in its descent. The uncovered part had the appearance of a huge cylinder, caked over and its outline softened by a thick scaly dun-coloured incrustation. It had a diameter of about thirty yards. He approached the mass, surprised at the size and more so at the shape, since most meteorites are rounded more or less completely. It was, however, still so hot from its flight through the air as to forbid his near approach. A stirring noise within its cylinder he ascribed to the unequal cooling of its surface; for at that time it had not occurred to him that it might be hollow.*

"...Then suddenly he noticed with a start that some of the grey clinker, the ashy incrustation that covered the meteorite, was falling off the circular edge of the end. It was dropping off in flakes and raining down upon the sand. A large piece suddenly came off and fell with a sharp noise that brought his heart into his mouth.

"...And then he perceived that, very slowly, the circular top of the cylinder was rotating on its body. It was such a gradual movement that he discovered it only through noticing that a black mark that had been near him five minutes ago was now at the other side of the circumference. Even then he scarcely understood what this indicated, until he heard a muffled grating sound and saw the black mark jerk forward an inch or so. Then the thing came upon him in a flash. The cylinder was artificial--hollow--with an end that screwed out! Something within the cylinder was unscrewing the top!"

The conveyances in which the Martian forces made their fateful voyage to Earth have been subject to great scrutiny in the period following the failed invasion. The first cylinder to land, which fell to Earth on the common between Horsell, Ottershaw and Woking, now resides on public display at the Science Museum in London, along with the Martian Flying Machine and models of the Fighting Machines and Handling Machines.

The cylinder itself measures approximately thirty yards across the base, and tapers towards the nose like a bullet; this was not immediately apparent until it was excavated from the pit which it had formed for itself upon impact, and which the cylinder's occupants had fortified against curious humans by piling up great mounds of earth around the perimeter. The cylinder is double-walled; the space between the two hulls being filled with an insulating material. The walls of the cylinder are of considerable thickness, and composed of an unknown alloy which must be unique to Martian technology. Around the circumference are a number of nozzles, from which was expelled viridigen gas to adjust the attitude and course of the cylinder. There is evidence to suggest that the nose of the cylinder was plated with an ablative material which burned off during the cylinder's fiery descent through Earth's atmosphere, in order to protect the passengers of the cylinder from the intense heat generated by the friction of its passage through the air. Marks on the cylinder's surface reminiscent of the marks on bullets caused by the rifling of a gun barrel suggest that for at

least part of its journey the cylinder had a spin imparted to it; the centrifugal force resulting from such rotation would generate a passable facsimile of planetary gravity, and prevent the atrophication of the occupants' muscles during their long journey to Earth. The rate of spin may even have been gradually increased during flight to acclimatise the travellers to the Earth's higher gravity.

The Heat-Ray

"It is still a matter of wonder how the Martians are able to slay men so swiftly and so silently. Many think that in some way they are able to generate an intense heat in a chamber of practically absolute non-conductivity. This intense heat they project in a parallel beam against any object they choose, by means of a polished parabolic mirror of unknown composition, much as the parabolic mirror of a lighthouse projects a beam of light. But no one has absolutely proved these details. However it is done, it is certain that a beam of heat is the essence of the matter. Heat, and invisible, instead of visible, light. Whatever is combustible flashes into flame at its touch, lead runs like water, it softens iron, cracks and melts glass, and when it falls upon water, incontinently that explodes into steam."

This was perhaps the most dreadful and destructive weapon employed by the Martians in their subjugation of the inhabitants of Earth. Projected from a camera-like apparatus normally slung beneath the cowl of the dreaded Fighting Machines, the Heat-Ray causes all materials it touches to near instantly heat to incandescence. Spectroscopic analysis of the beam indicates that the apparatus projects light at a single wavelength beyond the red end of the visible spectrum. This was first witnessed by humans shortly after the invaders landed at Horsell Common: preceded by three puffs of green smoke or flame and a deep, resonant humming sound, the Heat-Ray was reflected from a parabolic mirror to strike at the Deputation of astronomers and members of the general public who approached the Pit.

Thus far, terrestrial scientists have had little success in replicating the effects of the Heat-Ray. Experiments at Ealing at South Kensington have resulted in disaster as the attempts to reverse-engineer the Martians' Heat Rays in order to construct a working Heat-Ray of our own have gone horribly awry. Nonetheless Britain remains in the forefront of research into Martian technology, and is the envy of the rest of the world. It should, however, be noted that an American inventor, Mr. Nikola Tesla, has been rumoured to have had a degree of success in creating an apparatus with similar effects to the Heat-Ray, based upon technology of his own devising..

The Fighting Machines

"And this Thing I saw! How can I describe it? A monstrous tripod, higher than many houses, striding over the young pine trees, and smashing them aside in its career; a walking engine of glittering metal, striding now across the heather; articulate ropes of steel dangling from it, and the clattering tumult of its passage mingling with the riot of the thunder. A flash, and it came out vividly, heeling over one way with two feet in the air, to vanish and reappear almost instantly as it seemed, with the next flash, a hundred yards nearer. Can you imagine a milking stool tilted and bowled violently along the ground? That was the impression those instant flashes gave. But instead of a milking stool imagine it a great body of machinery on a tripod

stand... Seen nearer, the Thing was incredibly strange, for it was no mere insensate machine driving on its way. Machine it was, with a ringing metallic pace, and long, flexible, glittering tentacles (one of which gripped a young pine tree) swinging and rattling about its strange body. It picked its road as it went striding along, and the brazen hood that surmounted it moved to and fro with the inevitable suggestion of a head looking about. Behind the main body was a huge mass of white metal like a gigantic fisherman's basket, and puffs of green smoke squirted out from the joints of the limbs as the monster swept by me."

The terrible Fighting Machines are perhaps the most vivid impression that survivors have of the Invasion, the hundred-foot tall Titans striding across the landscape with their strange loping gait, laying waste left and right with their devastating [Heat-Rays](#). These constructions are in themselves a masterpiece of engineering, each part precisely machined and interlocked with its fellows. The Fighting Machines were constructed almost exclusively from an advanced alloy of aluminium (which is incidentally much stronger than aluminium alone), which was left unpainted and glittering in the sunlight.

The main body of the fighting machine, holding the Heavy Element Engine, the Heat-Ray and the cowl in which the Martian operator sat, was supported by three spindly, jointed legs, controlled using the pseudo-muscular system described previously. The Fighting-Machines were equipped with a number of devices fitting for their terrible purpose: a Heat-Ray generator mounted on an articulated arm; a wire-mesh basket behind the hood of the machine, in which captured humans were deposited; a steam-hose, used to lay the clouds of Black Smoke once they had served their purpose. Beneath the main body of machinery dangled six glittering tentacles, operated on the same principle as the pseudo-muscular system described above. The discs were covered by an armoured sheath of interlocking rings of aluminium, protecting the pseudo-muscles from damage. The tentacles could be used to administer an electric shock to the Martians' victims, subduing struggling humans before they were placed in the metal basket.

The Magnetic Acceleration Cannon

*"... **T**he Martian beside us raised his tube on high and discharged it, gunwise, with a heavy report that made the ground heave. The one towards Staines answered him. There was no flash, no smoke, simply that loaded detonation.*

"I was so excited by these heavy minute-guns following one another that I so far forgot my personal safety and my scalded hands as to clamber up into the hedge and stare towards Sunbury. As I did so a second report followed, and a big projectile hurtled overhead towards Hounslow. I expected at least to see smoke or fire, or some such evidence of its work. But all I saw was the deep blue sky above, with one solitary star, and the white mist spreading wide and low beneath."

The Martians made surprisingly little use of any analogue to terrestrial artillery. For the most part they relied upon their Heat-Rays to quash any resistance to their conquest. The only occasion on which they used any sort of ballistic weapon was in the delivery of their dreadful canisters of Black Smoke. This powder was dispensed by means of canisters fired from reusable tubes, wielded by the Martian [Fighting Machines](#).

The Magnetic Acceleration Cannon consisted of a hollow tube containing a great many rings of a similar

material to the discs of the pseudomuscular structure, having virtually no electrical resistivity. It is believed that a powerful electrical current was exerted upon each ring in turn, strongly magnetising them and accelerating the canister of Black Smoke, which was ceramic bound with bands of a ferrous substance, towards its target. Each firing tube, once expended, was discarded (presumably to be reloaded at a later time), and another tube taken up. The loud report that characterised the firing of the Black Smoke is believed to be that of the canister accelerating past the speed of sound.

It is possible that the Magnetic Acceleration Cannons could fire a variety of shells, from the Black Smoke canisters deployed against the British military, to explosives or incendiaries. No such shells were discovered among the artifacts left by the Martians, so it must be presumed that they were sufficiently confident in the capabilities of their Black Smoke to silence opposition that they regarded other types of ammunition to be unnecessary.

The Black Smoke

E*ach of the Martians ... had discharged, by means of the gunlike tube he carried, a huge canister over whatever hill, copse, cluster of houses, or other possible cover for guns, chanced to be in front of him. Some fired only one of these, some two--as in the case of the one we had seen; the one at Ripley is said to have discharged no fewer than five at that time. These canisters smashed on striking the ground--they did not explode--and incontinently disengaged an enormous volume of heavy, inky vapour, coiling and pouring upward in a huge and ebony cumulus cloud, a gaseous hill that sank and spread itself slowly over the surrounding country. And the touch of that vapour, the inhaling of its pungent wisps, was death to all that breathes."*

The Black Smoke, used to such terrible effect against the population of London, is more accurately described as an extremely fine dust or powder. It is quite substantially heavier than air, and when released tends to stay in a dense, hill-shaped cloud which slowly flattens and spreads across the ground.

The Smoke is insoluble in water; instead it forms a layer of scum on the surface which sinks slowly to the bottom, making way for more. It appears that the Smoke undergoes some chemical reaction upon contact with moisture which renders it inert, as it is quite possible to drink without harm water which has had the scum strained from it. Similarly, moisture in the air causes the microscopic particles of dust to slowly group together into larger particles, and sink gently to the ground.

Despite a degree of knowledge concerning the behaviour and effects of the Black Smoke, little is known of its chemical composition, and scientists are still not entirely certain of precisely how it has its effect. Spectrum analysis of the black powder points unmistakably to the presence of an unknown element with a brilliant group of three lines in the green, and it is possible that it combines with argon to form a compound which acts at once with deadly effect upon some constituent in the blood, causing it to near-instantly coagulate. Its behaviour when exposed to moisture only serves to enhance its lethal properties; as it is inhaled by its victims, it is believed to undergo a reaction with the natural moisture present in the lungs. This causes it to coat the internal surface of the lungs with a smothering layer of powder, preventing the victim from obtaining vital oxygen from the air. The only ways to avoid its effects are to move to a

sufficiently elevated position that one is above the level of the cloud, or to filter the air one breathes through a moistened cloth of fine weave.

The Handling-Machine

T*he mechanism it certainly was that held my attention first. It was one of those complicated fabrics that have since been called handling-machines, and the study of which has already given such an enormous impetus to terrestrial invention. As it dawned upon me first, it presented a sort of metallic spider with five jointed, agile legs, and with an extraordinary number of jointed levers, bars, and reaching and clutching tentacles about its body. Most of its arms were retracted, but with three long tentacles it was fishing out a number of rods, plates, and bars which lined the covering and apparently strengthened the walls of the cylinder... Its motion was so swift, complex, and perfect that at first I did not see it as a machine, in spite of its metallic glitter. The fighting-machines were co-ordinated and animated to an extraordinary pitch, but nothing to compare with this. People who have never seen these structures, and have only the ill-imagined efforts of artists or the imperfect descriptions of such eye-witnesses as myself to go upon, scarcely realise that living quality...*

...At first, I say, the handling-machine did not impress me as a machine, but as a crablike creature with a glittering integument, the controlling Martian whose delicate tentacles actuated its movements seeming to be simply the equivalent of the crab's cerebral portion. But then I perceived the resemblance of its grey-brown, shiny, leathery integument to that of the other sprawling bodies beyond, and the true nature of this dexterous workman dawned upon me."

After the Fighting Machines, the Handling-Machines seem to have been the most common artifact brought to Earth by the Martians. They were used extensively within the Martians' pits, either assembling other machines, or operating the devices used to refine earth into useful metals, or moving various items around the pit. It seems that the Martians are able to use these machines almost as extensions of their own bodies, having complete control over the actions of their myriad manipulatory appendages.

The machine itself resembles nothing so much as a large, metallic crab, flat and broad across the top of the carapace, with the Martian operator residing in a hood on top of the machine, from where it works a complex series of levers to activate the assortment of devices attached to the machine. The five articulated legs are activated by the sham musculature previously described. The various arms, tentacles, levers and instruments show a very high precision in engineering and control, allowing the Martians to handle even the most delicate items quite safely. Appendages which are not being used are retracted into the main body of the machine, in order to avoid encumbering the operation of the active devices.

The Digging Machine

D*own on the left a busy little digging mechanism had come into view, emitting jets of green vapour and working its way round the pit, excavating and embanking in a methodical and discriminating manner. This it was which had caused the regular beating noise, and the rhythmic shocks that had kept our ruinous*

refuge quivering. It piped and whistled as it worked. So far as I could see, the thing was without a directing Martian at all."

It is worth noting that the Martians made extensive use of mechanisms whose actions were completely autonomous from direct control. The machines, of which the described Digging Machine is one example, are for the most part substantially smaller than the machines operated by Martian controllers, with few specimens exceeding ten feet in any dimension. These devices too moved about on articulated legs, normally five or more. Human scientists have managed to restore a couple of these devices to a functional state. However, attempts to actually control them have had less luck - one device had to be forcibly deactivated when it started excavating the workshop in which it was being tested.

For the most part the machines only perform a single task, like excavating a pit, or assembling some of the smaller machinery. However, they seem to possess a sort of rudimentary intelligence, unlike terrestrial automata like player pianos or other such devices. The machines do not merely perform the same action over and over again, but are able to vary their behaviour according to the situation - for example, the Assembling Machine is able to determine which components it requires to build the ordered machine, and to go looking for those components, despite the fact that they may be scattered in various parts of the Martians' pit, or concealed beneath a pile of other items. Similarly the Digging Machine is able to determine which sections of the pit to dig, which are unstable and need to be reinforced, and which areas are already in the desired state.

The actions of the machines seem to be controlled by a complex arrangement of crystalline wafers. These wafers have extremely detailed patterns etched into them, generally only visible with the aid of a powerful microscope. These patterns appear to be designed to channel electricity in a way which allows the machines to operate independently of outside direction. The patterns of these wafers, and their properties, are being vigorously investigated. It is believed that further development of this technology will be of immense aid in the future development of automated machines.

The Flying Machine

*" '... **O**f a night, all over there, Hampstead way, the sky is alive with their lights. It's like a great city, and in the glare you can just see them moving. By daylight you can't. But nearer--I haven't seen them—' (he counted on his fingers) 'five days. Then I saw a couple across Hammersmith way carrying something big. And the night before last' --he stopped and spoke impressively—'it was just a matter of lights, but it was something up in the air. I believe they've built a flying-machine, and are learning to fly.'*

I stopped, on hands and knees, for we had come to the bushes.

'Fly!'

'Yes,' he said, 'fly.' "

During their time on Earth, a major project of the Martians seemed to be the construction of a Flying

Machine. The great device was found among their other machineries in the great Pit on Primrose Hill. That it was operational is certain, for it played a decisive part in the Battle of the Thames, the English Navy's final, desperate bid for victory over the Martians, by raining down canisters of the [Black Smoke](#) upon the fleet. There are also reports that it was at least partially functional as little as four days before the invaders succumbed to terrestrial bacteria.

This strange construction, wide and flat and sinuously curved, with a [Heat-Ray](#) mounted on top, was seen by the few survivors around London, swooping through the air for brief periods before landing. It was first seen by humans on the Wednesday after the arrival of the invaders. Witnesses in London recall seeing this vast, broad object rushing almost silently across the landscape, adhering to the contours of the terrain, followed shortly after by a roaring crash, like a clap of thunder, that smashed windows and stripped houses of their slates in the monstrous device's wake. During high-speed travel, the Heat-Ray generator was not apparent, presumably having withdrawn into the main structure of the machine.

The engines which allowed the craft to reach such incredible speeds are of great interest to terrestrial engineers. Like much Martian technology, they too make use of the remarkable properties of viridigen gas. Air from the atmosphere is taken in through several vents in the front surface of the craft, where it is used to "burn" a fine spray of viridigen fuel in the presence of the catalyst which induces the fuel to release viridigen. The expansion of hot gases from this combustion, composed for the most part of viridigen and the unreactive parts of the air, is used to power the forward movement of the craft. However, immediately before it leaves the engines, a powerful charge is applied to it, causing the viridigen to expand even more and greatly increasing the thrust of the engines. The principles behind these engines are being applied to craft using more terrestrial fuels, such as highly refined kerosene. So far experimentation has provided some compelling results.

The external hull of the craft is constructed from a number of interlocking plates. These plates are not rigidly joined together, rather their attitude in relation to other plates can be adjusted by means of pseudomuscular systems described previously. This allows the Martian pilots to alter the overall shape of their craft to a limited degree, and thus control the flow of air over the hull and the subsequently generated lift with great precision.

An unusual property of the machine was the fact that its weight is substantially less than one might expect considering the size and composition of the thing. It has also been noted that objects held a certain distance above the craft seem lighter than is otherwise the case. This strange effect has been traced to an apparatus within the lower hull of the craft. This mechanism consists of a large number of metal plates, arranged in a manner resembling the adjustable aperture of a camera or telescope. The thin metal plates of which these mechanisms are constructed are coated on their lower sides, in a similar fashion to enamelled tin, with a bluish-grey metal alloy, which seems to have the effect of at least partially blocking the effects of gravity. By adjusting the width of the apertures between these plates and thus the effective area of the blue metal, the Martians could adjust the weight of the craft (and also the strength of the gravity within the craft) to whatever degree they desired, perhaps even making it effectively weightless. Despite the Flying Machine still being heavier than air, the gravity-blocking substance, in combination with the shape of the craft, allows it to take to the air for a time, not only to fly at high speeds, but also to hover over a point.

This substance has yet to yield to analysis in part because, as well as partially blocking gravity, it completely blocks all forms of radiative energy, including light, heat, Marconi and Roentgen Rays, and magnetism, meaning that spectroscopic analysis is ineffective. Examination under powerful microscopes has revealed an intriguing fact that its crystalline patterns are unlike anything seen before, and are extremely complex. Attempts to replicate the properties of this substance have universally met with failure.

It has become apparent that the higher gravity and denser atmosphere of Earth rendered their machine difficult to operate for extended periods of time without certain adjustments. Evidently the Martians underestimated the effect that these environmental differences would have on the operation of their machine. It is thought that the denser atmosphere meant that the engines produced more thrust than expected, and that at high speeds the shape of the craft rendered it unstable and difficult to control. Had this not been the case, then with control of the air the Martians could quite easily have spread across the face of the globe and totally dominated Mankind.

The Crystal Egg

"Unless we dismiss it all as the ingenious fabrication of Mr. Wace, we have to believe one of two things: either that Mr. Cave's crystal was in two worlds at once, and that, while it was carried about in one, it remained stationary in the other, which seems altogether absurd; or else that it had some peculiar relation of sympathy with another and exactly similar crystal in this other world, so that what was seen in the interior of the one in this world, was, under suitable conditions, visible to an observer in the corresponding crystal in the other world; and vice versa. At present, indeed, we do not know of any way in which two crystals could so come en rapport, but nowadays we know enough to understand that the thing is not altogether impossible. This view of the crystals as en rapport was the supposition that occurred to Mr. Wace, and to me at least it seems extremely plausible. . . "

- H G Wells, *The Crystal Egg*

Several years before the Martian Invasion of Earth, a peculiar possession fell into the hands of Mr. C. Cave, a naturalist and dealer in antiquities who owned a small shop near Seven Dials. This remarkable artifact took the form of an ovoid mass of crystal, brilliantly polished. By accident Mr. Cave discovered that under certain conditions this egg allowed the user to see a distant place and, in turn, anyone at the other end could see him. Further investigation, with the assistance of Mr. Jacoby Wace, then Assistant Demonstrator at St. Catherine's Hospital, Westbourne Street, determined that this strange vista was of the planet Mars, many millions of miles away.

To use the crystal, a thin ray of light, of no greater diameter than a millimeter, was directed upon the egg, which caused the interior of the crystal to glow with a pale, diffuse light. If the crystal was then viewed from an angle of 137 degrees to the incidence of the light ray it was possible to view glimpses of an alien landscape. The success of the procedure varied from person to person - Mr. Wace was never able to see the alien landscape as Cave was, although he did observe the glow, while Mr. Harbinger - whose name will be familiar to the scientific reader in connection with the Pasteur Institute - was quite unable to see any light whatever. The viewing also seemed to depend upon the mental state of the viewer - it seemed clearest when

Cave was particularly tired or weak.

Mr. Cave was able to supply descriptions of our sister world's inhabitants, flora and fauna as well as he was able to see. He deduced that he was viewing Mars through a corresponding crystal to the one he possessed, mounted on a tall mast overlooking a Martian valley. It was apparent that there were as many as twenty of these crystals mounted on masts, and thus up to nineteen other crystals present on Earth.

The crystal was lost following Mr. Cave's death, passed on to an antique dealer in Great Portland Street who in turn sold it to a tall dark man in grey. Extensive research has been unable to uncover the identity of this gentleman, nor find any more of the crystals. The mechanism which links these crystals to each other is also unknown and unaccountable by earthly scientists.

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A Discussion of Martian History and Civilisation

Before one can grasp the nature of Martian civilisation, one must know something of the long history that provides a background against which recent events have unfolded. Much of this history is drawn from Martian folklore, as the vast span of Martian civilisation has rendered the more distant events into legend, and it is impossible to distinguish history from myth. That said, before the fall of their civilisation the Martians kept meticulous archives and annals of history, which have proven invaluable in reconstructing the long and fascinating history of this ancient race. The authors would also like to thank Dr. Jacoby Wace, Professor of Martian Studies at Cambridge University, whose assistance in compiling this summary of Martian history has been invaluable.

Martian History

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Martian History

The Primeval Age

Martian civilisation has existed in one form or another for at least twenty million years. Over that vast span of time a succession of civilisations have risen and declined, each building on the achievements of its precursor. It was during this period of Martian history that the Great Canals were constructed to distribute precious water across the face of the planet, colossal undertakings that spanned generations.

The history of these civilisations is virtually unknown, having faded into the mists of time. Much of what we do know about pre-Disillusionment Mars comes from Old Martian folklore and legends, in which much of history is mixed together in the period known by the Old Martian storytellers as "when the Canals were young" - generally meaning a time before the Disillusionment - and is consequently uncertain, imprecise

and often contradictory.

The civilisations of this period are characterised by the immense scale of their buildings, cyclopean structures that tower over the smaller, more graceful efforts of later cultures. These monolithic constructions litter the deserts of Mars, often having outlasted newer buildings. The rationale behind the construction of these monuments to engineering remain shrouded in mystery.

The duration of these civilisations has been steadily increasing, each successive society lasting longer than previous examples, until the present day when the same social order has held sway for more than thirty thousand years. It is this most recent civilisation with which we now concern ourselves.

The Age of Enlightenment

An age ago there rose up a cultured and peaceful society of the race we know as the Old Martians. It was a meritocracy, the masses being governed by a scientific elite who ruled for the good of all. Their history reaches back into the hazy distance of time, and their culture was dignified by works of great art, philosophy and science. They reached to the two small moons of Mars and beyond, and managed the planet's resources wisely and carefully. Immense libraries were built, temples to knowledge in which the wisdom of the ages was enshrined. The Martian works of art of this period surpass any earthly equivalent, being possessed of a grace and aesthetic appeal which defies description. In the realm of scientific achievements they were masters in fields of science as yet undreamed of by terrestrial scientists. Their government was fair and just, free of the taints of selfishness and ambition which have corrupted human politics since the earliest civilisation. War and conflict had long since been banished from the face of Mars, and peace had reigned since time immemorial.

However, the ruling class of scientist-priests detected the beginning of a decline in their society. What had once been a perfect society was showing the first signs of creeping decadence. The ruling caste decided that in order to halt this decline it was necessary for them to govern even better than before. To this end a new, superior type of being was needed - one who could be free of the base physical needs, devoted only to thought and learning. To this end they created the race that we now know as the Martians, monstrous creatures composed almost entirely of brain. The Old Martians greatly modified their own form, discarding anything that might interfere with the New Martians' role of governing fairly and wisely.

For many years these living intellects ruled well, separated from the emotional substratum which interfered with the duties of government. Because they lacked a digestive system and its associated impact upon the nervous system, they were nourished by the blood of specially-bred cattle. Their government was benevolent and wise, and intellectual and aesthetic achievements rose to still greater heights. A new age of prosperity dawned upon Mars, and lasted for many millennia.

The Disillusionment

Unfortunately this glorious age was not to last. Over time the nature of these new Martians changed. Lacking emotional values they became mere selfish intellects, intelligences vast and cool and

unsympathetic. They ceased to care for the best interests of the populace, seeking only to preserve their own existence, even at the expense of those they were created to watch over. The Martians grew dissatisfied with the blood of cattle, and began to feed on the populace instead. Too late the Old Martians realised what they had created, and tried to overthrow their now-despotic rulers. Thus began a turbulent period of Martian history that xenohistorians have come to term the Disillusionment. The revolts against the Martians were ruthlessly crushed, the ringleaders rounded up and their blood drained to feed the monstrous rulers.

At the time of the Disillusionment, a small number of Old Martians went underground to escape the horrors they had unleashed upon Mars. They have spent the interminable years since the Martians seized power rebuilding their civilisation. They became resigned to the new order, as there was nothing they could do to fight the Martians, who controlled the Fighting Machines, the Heat-Rays, and, vitally in the arid climate of Mars, they controlled the canals. The Old Martians were content to simply avoid the New Martians altogether, and remember the glory of ages past. As it happened, the New Martians were also content to ignore the sad remnants of the civilisation they had supplanted.

This occurred many thousands of years ago, long before the rise of civilisation on Earth. Since then Mars has been under the despotic rule of the Martians, whose grip on the population remains unshakeable.

The Age of War

Mars is an old planet, and the inexorable process of cooling which must some day overtake Earth is already far advanced. This cold, creeping death was present even during the Age of Enlightenment, which led to the construction of the great canals for which Mars is renowned. In recent times the deterioration of the Martian climate has accelerated, water tables and average temperature dropping almost yearly. The planet's resources, after countless millennia of civilisation have taken their toll, are virtually exhausted. Mars is a dying world. This death is still far in the future, but it continually weighs upon the thoughts of the Martians.

The scarcity has brought the shadow of War once again to the red sands of Mars. Martian civilisation, which once reigned peacefully across the entire world, has splintered and fragmented into warring city-states each controlled by an elite council of Martians. In ages past, resources were generously shared, for the good of all. The Martians, however, have become selfish and uncaring, hoarding to themselves whatever they can seize from their fellows. Ancient and long-forbidden weapons have been unearthed and wielded against other Martians, until now the vast majority of Martian cities are shattered ruins, the bare bones of their once-graceful spires and palaces being slowly reclaimed by the desert. While the ancient instruments of war are remembered and rediscovered, much of the knowledge of the Old Martians has been lost, libraries burned during the raids of rival cities, records expunged lest the Old Martians remember the glory that was once theirs. It is no lie that the Martians have lost more knowledge in their millennia of war than mankind has yet discovered after centuries of scientific endeavour.

Not only do the Martians battle for the water and mineral wealth, but for the population. Uncountable years of depredation upon the Old Martians, a source of slave labour and food for the ruling class, has depleted their population enormously, and those that are left have suffered from the culling of their strongest members for food until the race has become weakened, thin and bloodless. Now the Martians seek out the enclaves of Old Martians who have been in hiding since the Disillusionment. As they wring the last drops of

life from their world, they turn towards their younger, more vibrant neighbour, the blue evening star that lies sunward. Their only hope for the survival of their race lies in a vast Migration, the conquest and colonisation of a younger, warmer world. To this end the strongest cities called a truce and pooled their resources. The resulting expeditionary force, the vanguard of a larger force, was launched from the great cannon buried in the side of a mountain.

Martian Civilisation

The Rulers

Conditions on Mars have been virtually static for the past fifteen thousand Martian years, the rebellions of the years immediately following the Disillusionment having been ruthlessly stamped out. The Martians now rule disparate, feuding city-states mostly constructed at the intersections of the Great Canals, populated by Old Martian slaves who greatly outnumber their inhuman masters. These Martian rulers reside in palatial complexes, travelling from place to place in their glittering metallic bodies. They feed upon their subjects, groups of which are often kept in special "parks", where Martians may hunt them as and when desired.

The method by which the rulers of individual city-states govern varies widely, with some being controlled by a supreme leader who reigns supreme, others by "families" of Martians descended from a common ancestor. The majority are ruled by a council of the most senior and learned Martians, usually no more than sixteen in number.

The Slaves

The Old Martians live for the most part in conditions of spartan scarcity, almost squalor. The Martians have appointed a select few of these wretches to act as a sort of police force, lording it over their fellows, puffed up with the petty authority the Martians have bestowed upon them. The slaves toil along the banks of the Great Canals to harvest the Red Weed which serves as a staple food for them, augmented by synthesised or highly processed dietary supplements. Their foodstuffs, housing and clothing are supplied by the Martians, in exchange for which they are worked until they drop, or their blood drained to feed the Martians. Small groups of slaves are often kept in wooded parks, to be captured and fed upon by their masters. The supervisors receive additional rations, slightly superior accommodation and clothing, and a measure of authority over their inferiors. For all this, they are just as likely to be selected to feed the Martians, who make little distinction between them and their charges.

The Hidden

It is rumoured that there still exist small enclaves of free Old Martians, who inhabit the ancient ruined cities scattered across the red plains of Mars. These settlements, concealed beneath the foundations of the once-graceful spires, and in the winding caverns beneath the ruined cities, are for the most part made up of pitiful scavengers who subsist on the glories of ages past, searching the ruins for long-forgotten

technologies and ancient knowledge. If truth be told their condition is little better than that of their fellows who labour under the Martians

There are, however, muttered tales among the Old Martian slaves, living in the shadows of their masters' glittering towers, that a conclave of free Martians have recreated the splendour of ages past, deep in the freezing desert, supplied by secret pipelines from the Great Canals. This community have unlocked the secrets of forgotten technology, and live in a manner which echoes the ways of old. They take in slaves who have escaped their masters, and protect them from the Martians.

Some young slaves regard this as an old wives' tale, similar to the Earthly fables built around the lost city of El Dorado or the sunken continent of Atlantis. They view it as a mythical city, a story created by downtrodden slaves to give them hope that somewhere on Mars there is a better place, a place not dominated by the monstrous Martians. Known as the city of *Ka*, there have been cases of slaves trying to escape to discover this place, never to return. No one knows their fate, whether they were picked up by Martian patrols, perished in the frozen wasteland of shifting red sand, or they really did find the city of their dreams.

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he Martian Overlords

These strange and alien beings originated on the red world of Mars. It is believed by some that in the distant past they looked similar to humans, and that over the millennia they have deliberately modified their own forms and physiology until their bodies are no more than vessels for their prodigious intellects. Their bodies are a large, rounded bulk, perhaps four feet across, with sixteen slender, whiplike tentacles and skin that glistens like wet leather. They build and use mechanical bodies according to their needs. Their world is dying, parched and cold, and so they attempted an invasion of Earth.

ATTACKS:

Martians have sixteen slender, whiplike tentacles, arranged in two bunches either side of the mouth. In combat a Martian can use these tentacles to pin down a victim before draining his blood. If the Martian successfully grapples an opponent, in subsequent combat rounds the victim can be hit by the Martian's feeding pipette with a 99% chance of success. Several Martians may combine STR to subdue a victim.

The Martian's feeding pipette causes the victim to lose 1D4 hit points and 1D3 STR (blood) each round. An Impale result means that the Martian has struck a vein or artery, and the victim loses 2D4 hit points and 1D6 STR that round. A single Martian can consume a STR value in blood up to one half of its SIZ. On being reduced to zero STR or zero hit points, the victim is drained of blood, and dies. A victim may escape by making a successful STR against STR roll on the Resistance Table.

STR lost due to blood loss returns naturally at a nominal rate of 1D3 points per game week, 1D4 points per game week if the victim is given iron rations or similar medical treatment. In an emergency, a blood transfusion may be attempted. It takes about an hour, and requires a successful Medicine roll, a Luck roll on behalf of the patient for the donor to have a compatible blood type. If both rolls are successful, it allows up to 1D6 points of STR to be transferred immediately from the donor to the recipient. If the Medicine roll is failed, only 1D3 points of STR may be transferred. If the Luck roll is failed, the donor's blood type is not compatible, the donor losing 1 point of STR due to blood loss, and the recipient losing 1D3 hit points due to the adverse reaction.

MARTIAN OVERLORDS, Extraterrestrial Invaders

Characteristics	Rolls	Averages
STR	2D6	7
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	3D6+12	22-23

INT	3D6+10	20-21
POW	3D8	13-14
DEX	2D4+4	9
	Move 4	Av. HP 15

Av. Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Tentacle 60%, damage Grapple.

Feeding Pipette 50%, damage 1D4 hit points+1D3 STR (blood).

Fighting Machine Tentacle 30%, damage 4D6 or 1D8+stun

Heat-Ray 40%, damage 3D10.

Armour: 7-point skin and cartilage.

Skills: Spot Hidden 50%, Operate Fighting Machine 70%, Operate Handling Machine 65%, Listen 15%.

Spells: Cloud Memory, Dominate, Mesmerise, Read Mind*, Telepathy**.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D8

***READ MIND:** Allows the caster to read the thoughts of a target by temporarily linking his mind to that of the target. Casting the spell costs 5 magic points and 1D6 Sanity points. It is possible to resist the effects of Read Mind by concentrating on something irrelevant - reciting nonsense, multiplication tables, nursery rhymes, and so on - or by blocking the caster's attempts at mind reading. This requires a successful POWx4 roll, as it takes a good degree of willpower to accomplish. If the attempt to resist is successful then the caster must roll his POW against the target's POWx2 on the Resistance Table. If the caster succeeds despite the target's resistance, it costs the target 0/1D3 Sanity points, as having one's mind picked for information against one's will is a thoroughly unpleasant and disturbing experience.

If the target does not resist then the caster must simply overcome their POW on the Resistance Table.

If the target tries to help the mind reader by concentrating on the information required then the target makes a POWx4 roll which, if successful, allows the caster to roll POWx2 against the target's POW on the Resistance Table.

The roll is made by the GM in a similar way to the Psychology roll: the result of the roll is kept secret, only the information gained, true or otherwise, is revealed to the caster. Depending on the level of success, the information retrieved by the caster may be accurate to varying degrees.

For example, succeeding by a couple of points might tell the user the target's general intent or mood. About ten points' worth of success might allow the caster to read the target's surface thoughts. Thirty or more might allow the caster access to the target's innermost thoughts and memories. For deeper or less accessible thoughts, such as specific memories, subconscious thoughts, information and suchlike, decrease the caster's chances by various amounts. Conversely, failure might yield incorrect or misleading information, or spectacular failure might allow the target to obtain some nugget of information from the caster during the time that the two minds are linked, while the caster gets nothing.

****TELEPATHY:** Allows the user to project thoughts into the mind of another. Assume that there is no difficulty in communication - the target is able to grasp the intent of the telepathic message even if he or she does not understand the language of the sender. The spell has a maximum range equal to one tenth of the caster's POW in miles, rounding fractions up. If the target is resisting the projection of thoughts into his mind, match magic points on the Resistance Table.

Martians have evolved the use of this spell to such a degree that it is their primary mode of communication, and they may use it with other Martians without expending magic points. When used on humans it requires the expenditure of one magic point.

Humans may have this spell, but to use it they must expend one magic point, regardless of the species of the target.

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The Old Martians

The malevolent Martians as encountered by humanity during the Invasion of 1898 are not the only intelligent race to inhabit their homeworld. Sharing their planet is the race of bipeds used by the Martians as a food source, slender and graceful creatures bearing a striking resemblance to humans. Their subservient status on Mars means that they are generally dressed in little more than rags, although what little remains of their records show Old Martians wearing graceful robes and headdresses.

In fact, these creatures are the last remnants of the original Martian race, indicative of their form before they modified their own physiology until their bodies became mere vessels for their intellects. These Old Martians are now little more than cattle and slave labour for their own creations, their blood going to feed the monstrous rulers of Mars and their toil building engines of war for their masters.

OLD MARTIANS, The Ancient Race

Characteristics	Rolls	Averages
STR	2D4	5
CON	3D4	7-8
SIZ	2D6+6	13
INT	2D6+10	17
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6	10-11
	Move 10	Av. HP 10-11

Av. Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: none

Armour: none

Spells: A member of one of the surviving enclaves of free Old Martians has a percentage chance equal to INT to know 1D4 spells. An Old Martian slave knows no spells.

Sanity Loss: No Sanity loss to see an Old Martian.

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Martian Weaponry and Technology

An Analysis of the Effects and Properties of the Martian Devices in Game Terms, for the Use of Referees.

MARTIAN FIGHTING MACHINES

There follows a list of the observed properties of the Martian Fighting Machines:

- Constructed from an advanced alloy of aluminium, they are heavily armoured enough that they can easily shrug off the fire of a Maxim gun and most man-portable weapons, as the military cordon around Horsell Common discovered to their cost.
- They can travel very swiftly when required, moving with a strange rolling gait at a speed of up to 50 mph.
- Measuring a hundred feet tall, they tower over the surrounding landscape, and have a SIZ of 80. Note that this means attackers receive an extra 25 percentiles to hit with bullet, thrown object or shotgun round. Other modifiers may apply for range, movement etc.
- Fighting Machines have six mechanical tentacles, actuated by the same pseudo-muscular arrangement as powers the long leverages of the machine's limbs. They are remarkably strong, and easily able to uproot young pine trees, giving an approximate STR rating of 15, although they are capable of very fine manipulation. They can also deliver a powerful electrical charge inflicting 1D8 points of stun damage, capable of rendering a grown man unconscious. The tentacles can also combine STR.
- The Fighting Machine has apparatus allowing it to direct a jet of superheated steam with which it lays the banks of Black Smoke once they have served their purpose.

OPTIONAL RULE: Hit Location

Because a Fighting Machine is such a large target, it is possible to try to select which part of it you want to hit. Some parts of the Fighting Machine have lighter armour than others, or can soak less damage before they are rendered inoperative. However, those parts may be harder to hit. Also take into account modifiers for range, size, moving targets, etc.

<i>Location</i>	<i>HPs</i>	<i>Armour</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Cowl*	45	25	0
Body	45	30	0
Legs**	40	17	-15
Heat-Ray generator***	20	15	-10

*An attack on the Cowl which penetrates its armour causes the Martian operator to take full rolled damage

as the bullet ricochets around the inside of the cowl or the shell explodes.

**For each leg reduced to half or less of its original HPs, reduce the Fighting Machine's Speed by a third of its maximum amount. Destruction of a leg causes the Fighting Machine to fall over and renders it immobile until repairs can be effected.

***Attacks on the Heat-Ray Generator may cause it to explode or otherwise malfunction. After it has been damaged, each round it is fired match the number of shots fired by the Heat-Ray against its remaining hit points on the Resistance Table. Failure indicates a malfunction, the severity of which is left to the referee to decide.

THE HANDLING-MACHINE

The Martian Handling-Machine is a squat, crablike construct possessing a variety of tools and manipulatory appendages. It has five jointed, agile legs that allow it to reach a respectable speed, albeit nothing to compare with that of the Fighting Machines. They are also have lighter armour, the Martian operator sitting exposed atop the machine while it works the complicated apparatus.

The tools, tentacles, grasping claws and other appendages may be used as weapons. Statistics are given [below](#).

OPTIONAL RULE: Hit Location

Because a Fighting Machine is such a large target, it is possible to try to select which part of it you want to hit. Some parts of the Fighting Machine have lighter armour than others, or can soak less damage before they are rendered inoperative. However, those parts may be harder to hit. Also take into account modifiers for range, size, moving targets, etc.

<i>Location</i>	<i>HPs</i>	<i>Armour</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Hood*	10	5	0
Body	45	25	0
Legs**	30	10	-10
Manipulatory equipment	15	5	-10

* Attacks which successfully penetrate the Hood do full damage against the Martian operator.

** For each leg reduced to half HPs or less, reduce the Handling-Machine's maximum Speed rating by 1. If more than two legs are destroyed the Handling-Machine is rendered immobile until repairs can be effected.

THE HEAT-RAY

The Martian Heat-Ray is a powerful infrared laser, capable of melting lead, softening iron and incinerating any combustible material it falls upon.

For game purposes, Heat-Rays are considered to be burst firing weapons - the number of shots fired does not represent discrete shots, but rather the length of time the Heat-Ray is played upon a target. Basically, the longer the beam of heat is directed at a target, the more damage the target takes, whereas if the Heat-Ray only briefly passes over a target, then the target will take substantially less damage. The damage taken from the multiple shots is grouped in a single roll, and then modifiers for armour are subtracted. Additionally, in contrast to the normal situation, armour penetrated by the Heat-Ray is rendered useless, as it burns to cinders or melts into slag.

Example:

"Forthwith flashes of actual flame, a bright glare leaping from one to another, sprang from the scattered group of men. It was as if some invisible jet impinged upon them and flashed into white flame. It was as if each man were suddenly and momentarily turned to fire. Then, by the light of their own destruction, I saw them staggering and falling, and their supporters turning to run."

A Martian fires a Heat-Ray at a human sheltering behind a thick wooden door with an armour value of 7 points. The Heat-Ray does 1D10 points of damage per "shot", and the Martian fires a "burst" of four shots. This represents the Martian focussing the Heat-Ray on the wood shielding the human until it burns through to the target behind. The Martian's Heat-Ray skill is 40%, and because it fires four shots in its burst, it receives a 20% bonus to hit, increasing its chances to 60%. It gets 34, a hit, and rolls 1D4 to see how many of its shots managed to hit the target. It gets a 3, meaning that the human takes 3D10 points of damage minus the 7 points of armour that the door provides. The Martian rolls 18 on its 3D10, minus the 7 points of door means it inflicts 11 HP of burns on the unfortunate human, who also has to make a Luck roll to avoid his clothing catching light.

THE BLACK SMOKE

The tubes which fire the canisters of Black Smoke have a base range of 500 yards; within five rounds of impact the smoke itself covers a roughly circular area half a mile in radius in fifty feet of choking black vapour. Those inside the cloud must hold their breath - use the *Call of Cthulhu* drowning rules. Failure of a CON roll indicates that the target has inhaled the poisonous wisps, treated as a POT 20 poison, and dies in writhing agony in 1D3 rounds as the Black Smoke coats the inside of his lungs in a layer of smothering powder which causes the blood to instantly coagulate. Once inhaled, the action of the Black Smoke is irreversible, even if the victim is removed from its area of effect.

Over time the vapour sinks and spreads. Every 1D4 hours, depending on weather conditions, increase its radius by half a mile, and halve its height. Elevated positions above the level of the smoke will allow one to escape its billowing darkness. Damp conditions will accelerate this settling of the dust, while wind will cause it to spread further away from the wind than into it.

MARTIAN MIND CONTROL

The Martians have developed a method of mind-control that allows them to direct the actions of human minions, by means of a combination of surgical implants, hypnotic suggestion and telepathic influence. These unfortunates are selected from the humans captured, and released to perform the Martians' bidding. The exact nature of the procedure used is still uncertain. What is known is that it requires the implanting of a fine platinum wire into the target's brain, and powerful hypnotic instructions by the Martian controller. The victim typically has no memory of his time at the hands of the Martians, his memory having been somehow erased. Attempts to recall the blanked period universally cause the victim to suffer a painful headache.

The Brain Implant used by the Martians effectively allows them to cast the spell Mesmerise at a range equal to half POW in miles. To successfully engage the implant the Martian must make a POW vs. POW roll on the Resistance table. Each time after the first that a Martian attempts to control a given victim, that victim receives a +1 bonus to their POW for the purposes of making the resistance roll. A single Martian may command no more than one minion at any given time, although there is no limit to the number of minions it can implant. Victims lose 1D4/1D8 Sanity points from the mental contact with the Martian controller each time they are controlled, or 1/1D4 Sanity points if the Martian failed the POW vs. POW roll. If a victim suffers injury the Martian controller must make a POWx3 roll, otherwise control over that victim is lost until a new POW vs. POW roll is made.

While the implant remains dormant, the victim is an outwardly normal person, the implant virtually undetectable save by X-Ray examination or a very close inspection of the victim's scalp, which will reveal a small incision half an inch long with perhaps a quarter of an inch of hair-fine silvery wire protruding from it. Once activated the Martian has almost complete control over the target, allowing the Martian to control the victim's actions and state of mind telepathically. This control can range from suggestions, such as what to say or do, to complete domination. When under the Martian's complete control the victim is a mindless automaton. Completely dominated victims walk around with disjointed movements and blank, staring faces. When merely receiving suggestions victims might wear a faraway expression or be insensible to stimuli for a short time, usually no more than a second or two. When the control is broken the victim retains no memory of their actions.

At first this mind-control is almost absolute, but through an as yet unknown mechanism the victim gradually builds up a resistance to the Martian's telepathic commands. Control diminishes from absolute subjectivity to the Martian's commands to powerful impulses to a slight urge or compulsion. Victims often go insane after a short time, rarely more than a week, driven mad by "voices" in their heads which compel them to do things. Many such unfortunates kill themselves to silence the voices. There have been cases in which someone under Martian control has, with medical assistance, recovered from Martian domination, but these are sadly rare, as such aid was generally difficult to come by during and immediately after the invasion.

THE TELEPATHIC RESONANCE TRANSMITTER

The primary form of communication between Martians is thought transference, or telepathy. Over short distances, a few miles or so, this is perfectly adequate for communication between individuals. However, communication across interplanetary distances is another matter entirely. The Martians are simply unable to transmit thought across such vast distances, and so have developed an apparatus to overcome this limitation - the Telepathic Resonance Transmitter. Though its operation and underlying principles are yet to be understood by human scientists, it is known that this device allows a number of Martians to combine their telepathic energies to allow them to transmit messages between the planets. It is known that crystal prisms of an unknown composition play a vital role in its function, somehow acting to trap psychic emanations and amplify them. It is believed that without this apparatus the Martians are unable to harness psychic energy in sufficient quantities to extend the range of their telepathic abilities.

In game terms, the Telepathic Resonance Transmitter vastly increases the range of the Martians' Telepathy spell. One Martian, the operator, is the focus of the procedure, and is the actual sender of the message. Other Martians patch into the apparatus and add their own psychic energy to the transmission. For each five magic points contributed, the range of the spell increases by a factor of 10. Thus spending 5 magic points gives a range equal to the operator's POW in miles, 10 magic points gives a range of 10 times POW, 15 magic points gives 100 times POW, and so on. Normally the Martians use a large number of assistants, each spending a small number of magic points.

The table below gives an example of how the Telepathic Resonance Transmitter would affect the range for a Martian operator with the average POW of 13-14.

<i>Magic Points spent</i>	<i>Maximum Range of Telepathy (miles)</i>	<i>Average Range (miles)</i>
5	POW	13-14
10	10xPOW	135
15	100xPOW	1350
20	1000xPOW	13,500
25	10,000xPOW	135,000
30	100,000xPOW	1,350,000
35	1,000,000xPOW	13,500,000
40	10,000,000xPOW	135,000,000
45	100,000,000xPOW	1,350,000,000

And so on. Add another 5 magic points, add another zero. Thus to contact Mars at its farthest distance from the Earth, across 250,000,000 miles of void, would require an expenditure of 45 magic points.

Vehicle Statistics

Here are the statistics of a Martian Fighting Machine and Handling-Machine to conform with the format

given in the Vehicle Chases rules (pp. 252-3 in *CoC 5.5*):

<i>type of vehicle</i>	<i>max Speed</i>	<i>armour</i>	<i>HPs</i>	<i>handling</i>	<i>driver & passengers</i>	<i>accel/decel</i>
Martian Fighting Machine	10	25	110/40 (legs)	10	1+15 (human captives)	4X
Martian Handling-Machine	5	20	60/30 (legs)	10	1	1X

Weapon Statistics

Below are the game statistics of the various Martian weapons to conform with the format given on pp. 58-9 of *CoC 5.5*:

Weapon	Base chance	Damage	Base range	Attacks per round	Ammunition	HPs resisting attack	mal
Heat Ray	25+cloth. fire %	1D10	250 yards	burst	generator	20	96
Steam Jet	30	1D4	25 yards	burst	50	20	98
Black Smoke	01	POT 20/850y	500 yards	1	1	30	98
Fighting Machine Tentacle	30	4D6/1D8 +stun	touch	1	-	30	-
Handling Machine Tools	25	2D8	touch	3	-	20	-

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