H.G. Wells, (1886-1946), English novelist, journalist, sociologist, and historian, famous for his works of science fiction. Wells's best-known books are *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Invisible Man* (1897), and *The War Of The Worlds* (1898).

H.G. Wells was born on September 21, 1886 in Bromley, Kent. His father was a shopkeeper and a professional cricketer, and his mother served from time to time as a housekeeper at the nearby estate of Uppark. His father's business failed and Wells was apprenticed like his brothers to a draper, spending the years between 1880 and 1883 in Windsor and Southsea. Later he recorded these years in *Kipps* (1905).

In 1883 Wells became a teacher-pupil at Midhurst Grammar School. He obtained a scholarship to the Normal School of Science in London and studied biology under T.H. Huxley. However, his interest faltered and in 1887 he left without a degree. He taught in private schools for four years, not taking his B.S. degree until 1890. Next year he settled in London, married his cousin Isabel and continued his career as a teacher in a correspondence college. From 1893 Wells became a full-time writer. After some years Wells left Isabel for one of his brightest students, Amy Catherine, whom he married in 1895.

As a novelist Wells made his debut with *The Time Machine* (1895), a parody of English class division and a satirical warning that human progress is not inevitable. The work was followed by such science-fiction classics as *The Island Of Dr. Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man* (1897) and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). *The First Men On The Moon* (1901) was a prophetic description of the methodology of space flight and *The War In The Air* (1908) describes a catastrophic aerial war. *Love And Mr. Lewisham* appeared in 1900, *Tono-Bungay* and *The History Of Mr. Polly* in 1909. Wells also published critical pamphlets attacking the Victorian social order, among them *Anticipations* (1901), *Mankind In The Making* (1903) and *A Modern Utopia* (1905).

Passionate concern for society led Wells to join the socialist Fabian Society in London, but he soon quarrelled with the society's leaders, among them George Bernard Shaw. This experience was basis for his novel *The New Machiavelli* (1911), where he drew portraits of the noted Fabians. After WW I Wells published several non-fiction works, among them *The Outline Of History* (1920), *The Science Of Life* (1929-39) and *Experiment In Autobiography* (1934). In 1917 Wells was a member of Research Committee for the League of Nations and published several books about the world organization. Between the years 1924 and 1933 Wells lived mainly in France. From 1934 to 1946 he was the International president of PEN.

In *The Holy Terror* (1939) Wells studied the psychological development of a modern dictator based on the careers of Stalin, Mussolini, and Hitler. Wells lived through World War II in his house on Regent's Park, refusing to let the blitz drive him out of London.