

Atomic Rocket Games Presents a work based on H. G. Wells'

# The War Of The Worlds



*A FREE-TO-DOWNLOAD ROLEPLAYING PRODUCT*

## A Mini? Isn't That A Car?

*Well, yes, it is, but for the purposes of Mekton Zeta, a Mini is what you've got in your hands right this instant: A freely downloadable, 100% official, endorsed by R. Talsorian Games, Inc., Mekton Zeta adventure, created by the guys here at Atomic Rocket Games under provision from R. Talsorian Games, and what all that means in English is this:*

*Free Games!  
Go Play Mekton!  
You Know You Want To!*

# War Of The Worlds Credits

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The members of the Mekton Zeta Mailing List, Paul Romine for taking care of the RTG Website for so long with so little in the way of thanks, and every single person who downloads this document. Without you, we are nothing.

**This Work Of Speculative Fiction And Adventure Entertainment Has Been Based On The Works Of H. G. Wells. It Is Free To Distribute And May Not Be Sold For Profit. No Claims To The Ownership Of The Original Literary Text, Nor To The Ownership Of The Mekton Zeta Game System Are Made By This Document.**

## A Few Words From Atomic Rocket Games

Welcome to the first Mekton Zeta Mini, a free-to-download Mekton Zeta project brought to you by Atomic Rocket Games. Many, many special thanks go to Mike and Lisa Pondsmith of R. Talsorian Games, Inc., for all their hard work, and for bringing us this game in the first place. More thanks are due to them for helping us to do what we've always wanted to do:

Make Games.

For that, we are eternally grateful.

All that being said, there are a few things you need to know about this product:

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## Why The War Of The Worlds?

*Well, why not? Seriously, if we're going to be dealing with the oldest carrot in the anime universe, why not start with the story that kicked the whole ball out there into the field in the first place?*

*Most people don't associate a late 19th century novelist with anime. Which is a shame, really, considering how many anime are based in and around the concepts of Victoriana, Steampunk, and the like. The amount of "borrowing" done by these Anime sometimes comes very, very close to outright transplantation of the material into an anime-esque environment. If all you do to something is change the names and hair colors, is it now miraculously anime, or is it still 19th century fiction, but just with a bit of ink and paint added?*

*That's what we're here to find out.*

*So kick back, read it over, play it through, and have fun.*

*We're sure H. G. would approve.*

But who shall dwell in these worlds if they be inhabited?

. . . Are we or they Lords of the World?

. . . And how are all things made for man?

—KEPLER (quoted in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*)

**A**nime, as it stands, comes in a good many forms. Dramatic recreations of historical events, nearly soap-opera level retellings of mythological tales, completely over-the-top martial arts battles, and, of course, robots: Big robots; Small robots; Robots that fire lasers out of their eyes; Robots that defend the innocent with hearts of gold; Robots that terrorize small planets because they were shunned as children, by children. Robots, robots, everywhere.

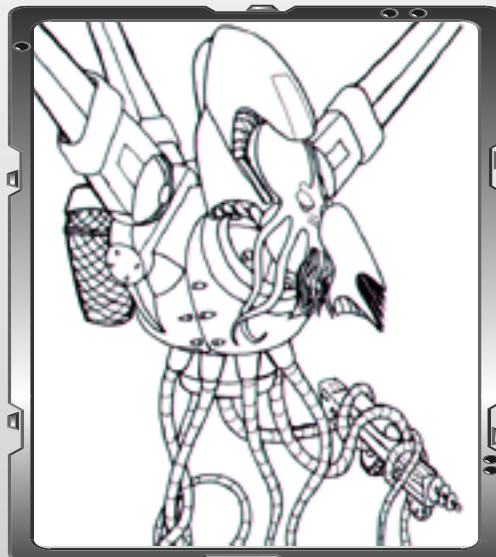
Equally as prevalent in Anime is the "Alien Invasion" genre. Terrifying monsters, with incomprehensible technology, superior intelligence, and one, single agenda: subjugate and rule the people of the Earth. The aliens are invariably evil, save for one fatal flaw, be it a weakness for song, a ritualized command structure that falls apart in the face of the cha-

otic human element, or anything and everything in between. If you can visualize it, odds are, it's been in Anime. In fact, the Japanese seem to have pretty much covered every aspect of the genre and fairly well perfected it.

Or have they?

Imagine a foe so implacable, so unstoppable, that an entire civilization verged on the brink of annihilation. A foe so far ahead of the people of Earth that they were like unto Gods, their power immense, the decision of life and death theirs to command with but a flick of a switch. Imagine the screams of the innocent as, ripped from their homes in the middle of the night, panic and terror filling their hearts, they flee before the enemy. Behind them, they hear the shouts of soldiers running through the middle of town. "They're coming," cries a father, half dressed, clutching his belongings to his chest as his wife stumbles, desperate to protect her child. "We've got to get to the river! The ship, it's going to wait for us, isn't it?"

In the distance, a thunder cracks through the night. A sound so horrible that nothing like it has been heard before, or will be, again. On the horizon, a bright flash sears through the darkness like lightning. Explosions. Screams. The father stops in his tracks, his wife staring at the flames leaping from what was their last hope for salvation.



Behind them, the soldiers turn as one, and aim their cannons at the behemoth that unleashed such fury against the ship that would have saved the populace, wouldn't it? The commander shouts an order, and his men, brave and loyal soldiers of their homeland, all, fall into place. Cannons and guns are leveled at the invader, rapidly loaded, and, with a thundering crash, fired as one. The invader staggers, stumbles, and falls. Throughout the town, a cry of hope goes up, and then falls into a wail of despair as, from the North, another of the terrible machines crests the top of a church, crushing the roof beneath its monstrous foot. From the South - look, there! - another, and then another! The invaders are here!

The father closes his eyes and holds his wife and child to him as the tripods sweep their heat-rays across the roofs of the city of London, burning away centuries of history and culture. Silently, he prays that it will be quick...

Sound familiar?

It should. What you've just read is a short recap of any number of scenes that take place within the work of the Master - H. G. Wells. The book? "The War Of The Worlds," written in 1898, and, arguably, the definitive text on Alien Invasion. It starts very, very simply...

*"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. With infinite complacency men went to and fro over this globe about their little affairs, serene in their assurance of their empire over matter. It is possible that the infusoria under the microscope do the same. No one gave a thought to the older worlds of space as sources of human danger, or thought of them only to dismiss the idea of life upon them as impossible or improbable. It is curious to recall some of the mental habits of those departed days. At most terrestrial men fancied there might be other men upon Mars, perhaps inferior to themselves and ready to welcome a missionary enterprise. 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. And early in the twentieth century came the great disillusionment."*

*-The War Of The Worlds, Book One: "The Coming Of The Martians", Chapter One: "The Eve Of The War"*

And so the stage is set. Very soon after this, vast goutts of green flame are seen by observers of the planet Mars, signaling the imminent arrival of the invaders, who would, in their own time, bring about the near total destruction of the greatest human civilization of the time.

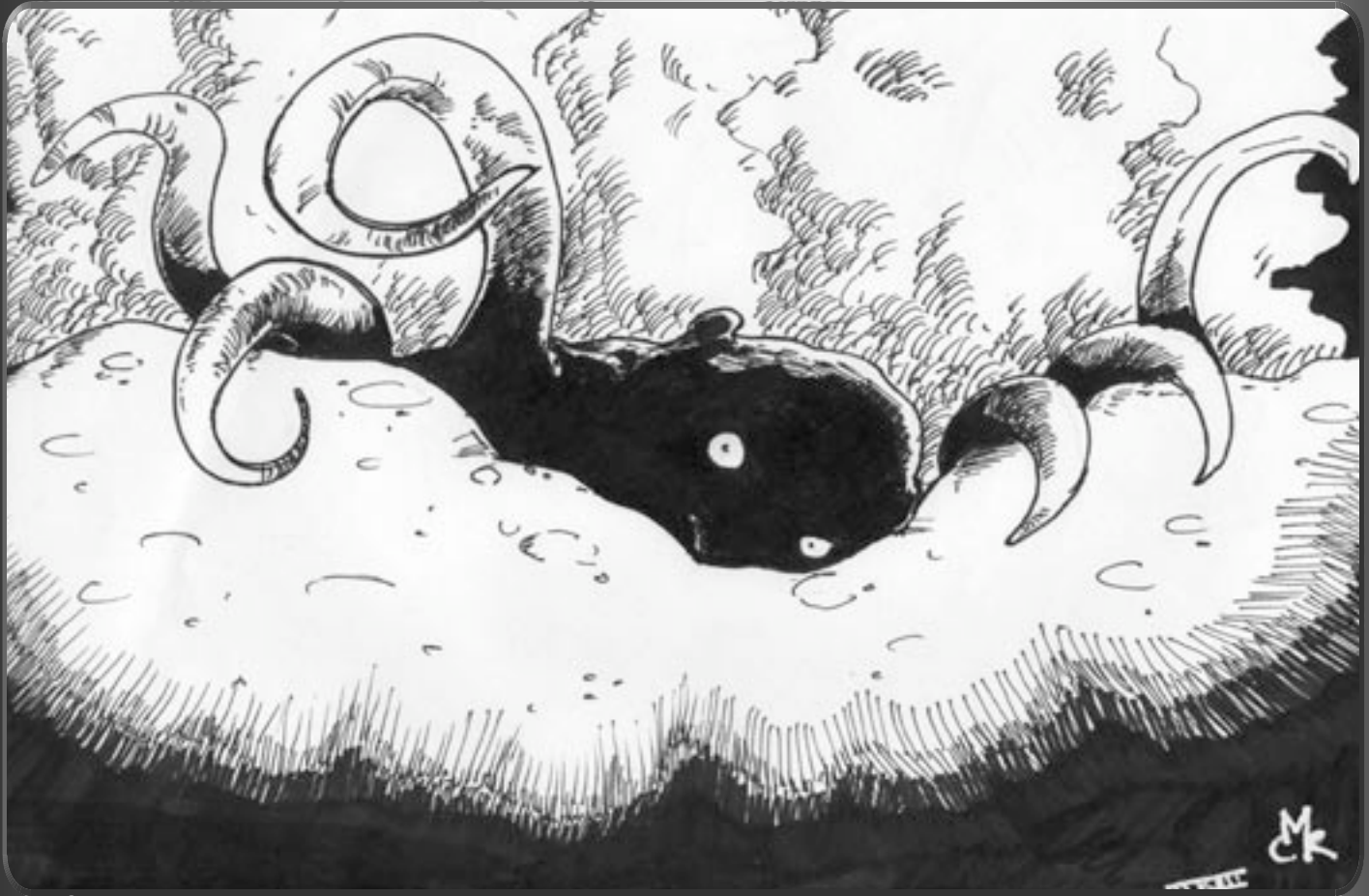
Which one is that?

*Why, the British Empire, of course.*



**An illustration of the face of the enemy, presented to the public in The Times but a few short days after the first landing.**





**A**t the time that Wells wrote *The War Of The Worlds*, Great Britain controlled a rather large portion of the world, both economically and literally. Just as a certain nuclear energy altered, dinosaur-like, fire-breathing giant monster always picks Tokyo as his primary point of contact with humanity, so, too, did the writers of the time focus on their homelands as the major focal point of any and all great disasters. Doubt that it still holds, today? Look at how many modern films focus on the United States. As a particular Secret Agent once said; "It's amazing how England looks nothing at all like Southern California!"

At its heart a human drama, *The War Of The Worlds* is not only a tale of alien invasion, but can

also be considered one of the greatest examples of the ideals that really good Anime strives to achieve: It's got action, romance, loss, adventure, and the best technology afforded to it by the time-frame in which it falls. The good ship "*Thunder Child*," for instance, is a relic by today's standards, but in the letter of the day, was a capital ship of the finest caliber, with gleaming guns, sturdy plating, and boilers capable of moving it through the water at, when you consider that most people were unused to anything faster than a horse-drawn carriage or coal-fueled train at the time, what must have been a terrifying speed... Fully thirty miles an hour, or perhaps a bit more with a good stiff current.

A critical point to mention about the *War Of The Worlds* is that the Martians, ultimately, succeeded

in doing something, however temporarily, that no nation on Earth had been able to do: They brought the British Empire to its knees. Shipping was disrupted, government was obliterated, and the people of the nation were driven into exile or captured for insidious, secret purposes known only to the invaders. Centuries of culture and history were nearly obliterated in the space of just under four weeks. While, ultimately, the Earth itself proved to be the ultimate weapon against the invaders, the month-long reign of terror changed man's way of life in far-reaching, as-yet undiscovered ways.

And so, we would like to present you with the first example of the Alien Invasion Genre in Anime. Written by an Englishman, from the perspective of an Englishman, but good, solid, Alien Invasion Anime, nonetheless.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as we begin our illustrious production, please, remember that this is but a fiction. There are no Martians waiting for you outside the theatre, and the sounds you hear are but newly pressed wax recordings, played for you in synchronous presentation from the four corners of the hall.

For your enjoyment tonight, we present to you H. G. Wells' spectacle, *The War Of The Worlds*.

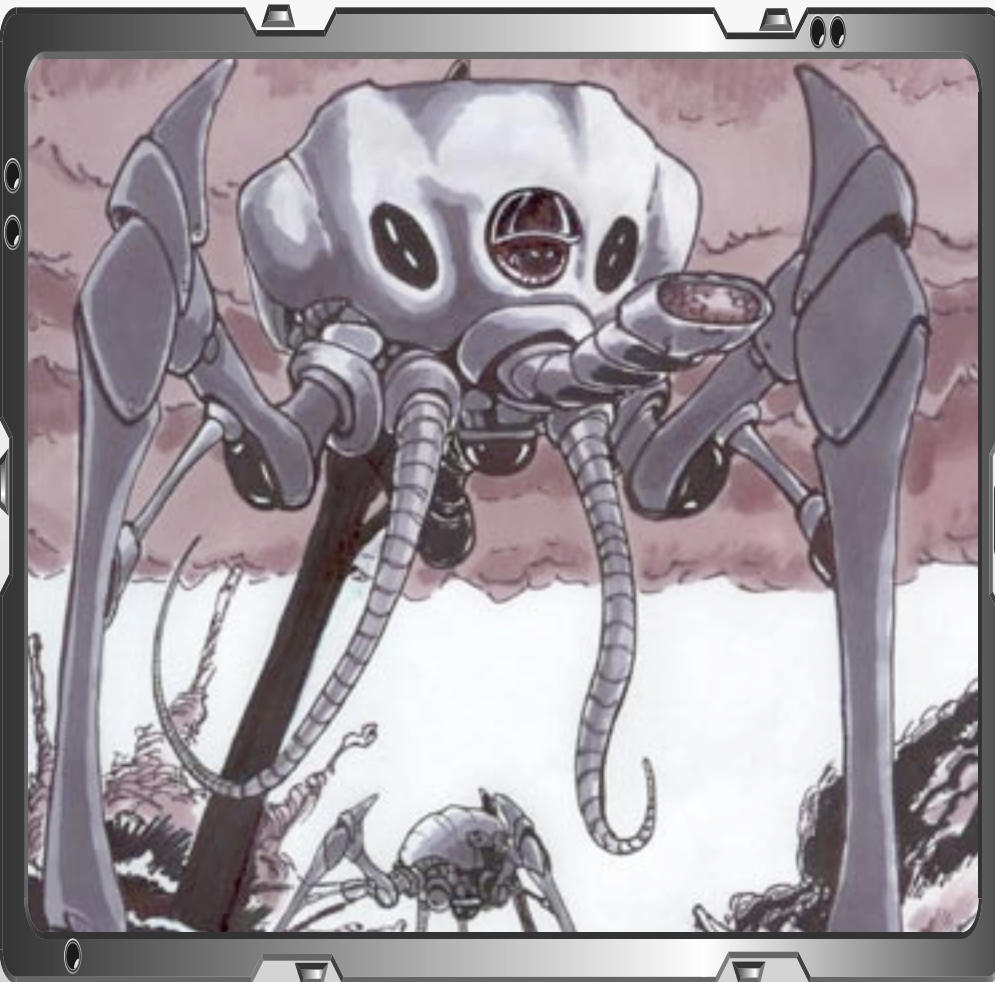
### **Weapons Of Martian Destruction**

*The Martians come to Earth intent on dominating the planet. To this end, they bring with them three terrible weapons: The Heat Ray, The Black Smoke, and The Red Weed.*

*In the case of The Heat Ray, we have chosen to illustrate this in simple Mekton Zeta terms: for that it is an energy weapon is evident to any reading Mr. Wells' manuscript.*

*For The Black Smoke, we have Mr. Well's indefatigable genius to thank for the first definite instance of biological weapons in Science Fiction. We have chosen to use the Special Effects Weapons rules from Mekton Zeta Plus to generate this vile concoction of Martian depravity.*

*As to The Red Weed, however, it is but a plant, possibly brought to this orb by accident. We have not described it in game terms, but will say that it grows voraciously, chokes waterways, and is virulent and inedible.*





<b>SERIES NAME</b>	H. G. Wells' The War Of The Worlds
<b>REFEREE</b>	You!



BASIC SERIES INFORMATION	
<b>PREMISE</b>	TURN OF THE CENTURY ENGLAND IS INVADED!
<b>GENRE</b>	ALIEN INVASION
<b>LIGHT, MEDIUM OR SERIOUS?</b>	SERIOUS, I DARE SAY.
<b>REALISM</b>	AS REALISTIC AS IT CAN BE, OLD FELLOW.
<b>TECH LEVEL</b>	FOUR (4)
<b>STARTING YEAR</b>	1898

IMPORTANT NOTES	
<b>MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY</b>	BASIC SURGERY AND TAXONOMY. ALL THE BEST THE BRITISH EMPIRE HAS TO OFFER, OF COURSE!
<b>NEW TECHNOLOGIES</b>	MARTIAN HEAT RAY, THE RED WEED, THE BLACK SMOKE, AND THE TRIPOD WALKERS
<b>SPECIAL RULES</b>	NO HUMAN MECHA, STEAMSHIPS ARE THE PINNACLE OF EARTH TECHNOLOGY.

PLAYER CHARACTER INFORMATION	
<b>ROLE OF THE PCs</b>	PC'S ARE SOLDIERS, DOCTORS, JOURNALISTS, OR SIMILAR, EACH OF THEM FIGHTING AGAINST THE MARTIAN INVADERS!
<b>RANDOM, CONCEPT OR CINEMATIC?</b>	CHARACTERS ARE CONCEPT DRIVEN, BUT BUILT WITH 60 CHARACTER POINTS EACH.
<b>REQUIREMENTS</b>	ALL CHARACTERS MUST HAVE A FIELD OF EXPERTISE, SUCH AS JOURNALISM, TAXONOMY, SEAMANSHIP, OR THE LIKE.
<b>LIMITS</b>	NO MECHA SKILLS AT GAME START. "HEAVY WEAPONS" COVERS SHIP-BASED AND LAND-BASED CANNON.
<b>PROS &amp; TEMPLATES</b>	ALL PROFESSIONS EXCEPT AS LISTED BELOW, ALL TEMPLATES BUT ANIME HERO, MODIFIED APPROPRIATELY.
<b>ESPERS</b>	THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA IN WELLS' WORK.
<b>ESPER PCs?</b>	NONE.
<b>ESPER POWER LEVEL</b>	IRRELEVANT.
<b>FREQUENCY OF ESPERS</b>	ZERO.
<b>ALIENS</b>	THE ALIENS IN THE WAR OF THE WORLDS ARE THE PRIMARY FOES OF THE PLAYER CHARACTERS.
<b>HOW COMMON?</b>	THE ALIENS RAVAGE ENGLAND BY THE HUNDREDS. THEIR NUMBERS ARE UNKNOWN, BUT SEEMINGLY ENDLESS.
<b>ALIEN PCs?</b>	MOST ASSUREDLY NOT!

GOVERNMENT & CULTURE INFORMATION	
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>	ENGLAND IS RULED BY A MONARCHIC PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM AT GAME START, AND ANARCHY BY THE END OF THE WAR.
<b>CULTURE</b>	THE BRITISH EMPIRE IS THE PINNACLE OF CIVILIZATION ON EARTH, HOME TO SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND CULTURE.
<b>PLANETS</b>	THE CONCEPT OF LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS IS LAUGHABLE, OLD CHAP. COME NOW, SERIOUSLY, MISTER WELLS.
<b>SYSTEMS</b>	ONE SYSTEM, AND THAT IS SOL.
<b>LANGUAGES</b>	THE QUEEN'S ENGLISH, PLUS ALSO POSSIBLY FRENCH, GERMAN, LATIN, ITALIAN, OR THE LIKE.

MECHA TECHNOLOGY	
<b>SUPERHEROIC OR MILITARY?</b>	VERY MILITARY
<b>ROLE OF MECHA</b>	HUMAN TECHNOLOGY IS USED TO BETTER MANKIND. MARTIAN TECHNOLOGY IS USED TO CONQUER AND SUBJUGATE.
<b>AVAILABILITY</b>	STEAMSHIPS, TRAINS, AND THE LIKE ARE READILY AVAILABLE TO HUMANS. MARTIAN MECHA MUST BE CAPTURED!
<b>REQUIREMENTS</b>	HUMAN TECHNOLOGY IS LOUD, INEFFICIENT, AND DANGEROUS. MARTIAN TECHNOLOGY IS NOT. QUITE SIMPLE, REALLY.
<b>WEAPONRY</b>	HUMAN WEAPONS ARE AT 19TH CENTURY TECH LEVEL. MARTIANS HAVE HEAT RAYS, SPACE TRAVEL, ETCETERA.
<b>MTS SYSTEMS NOT AVAILABLE</b>	REFLEX CONTROLS, A.C.E., INTERNAL AUTOMATION, CLOAKING, STEALTH, SHADOW IMAGER, ESPER LENS, THOUGHT CONTROL, TURBO CHARGER, TECHNO-ORGANICS, LIGHTSPEED, TELEPORTATION, TRANSFORMATION, COMBINERS.
<b>WEIGHT EFFICIENCY LIMIT</b>	NOT APPLICABLE. WEIGHT INEFFICIENCY MUST BE TAKEN FOR HUMAN MECHA (STEAMSHIPS, TRAINS, ETC.)
<b>SPACE EFFICIENCY LIMIT</b>	MARTIANS MAY REDUCE ALL SPACE COSTS BY 50%. HUMANS HAVE NO SUCH TECHNOLOGY.
<b>STANDARDS</b>	SFX WEAPONS (HEAT RAY) AND ENTANGLING MELEE WEAPONS ARE AVAILABLE AS SMT'S TO MARTIANS.

SPACE TECHNOLOGY	
<b>STARSHIP AVAILABILITY</b>	MARTIANS HAVE THE SPACE GUN, WHICH FIRES THEIR FORCES THROUGH THE VAST COSMIC VOIDS.
<b>SPACE TRAVEL AVAILABILITY</b>	THE CONCEPT THAT MAN CAN FLY THROUGH SPACE IS LUDICROUS. NOT ON GOD'S GREEN EARTH!
<b>SUBLIGHT DRIVE</b>	UNKNOWN TL.
<b>HYPERDRIVE</b>	NONE.
<b>SPACE ENVIRONMENTS</b>	NONE.

**S**o, how do you actually play in this setting? Relatively easily, actually. Very few modifications need to be made to the existing Rookie and Professional templates to play in a rousing game of *The War Of The Worlds*.

The obvious changes are simple: Remove all mecha and driving skills from the templates, and replace them with skills that are appropriate to the concept of the character. Such things as Expert, Paint/Draw, Play Musical Instrument, Dance, Blade, Photography & Film, and the like are all perfectly suitable, and fit well within the era and genre. In fact, as you can see on the Series Synopsis sheet, characters are indeed required to have their own area of expertise at the start of the game, be it Journalism, Seamanship, or some other worthwhile pursuit. Skills such as Riding, Navigation, and Heavy Weapons are suitable for this game, and should be left intact.

Next, modify the equipment and starting cash for each template. "Hip Hop Clothing," for instance, becomes a Gentleman's Suit and accessories (pocket watch, hat, long coat), while "Motorcycle" can become a carriage and driver, or perhaps a personal horse. The "Really Racy Set Of Clothes" that The Girlfriend is too shy to wear becomes a new French gown, straight from Paris, which is kept in its packing box to be dreamt about when no one is nearby. Large Caliber Handguns become hunting rifles (2-Barrel Shotgun in MZ), dueling pistols (Single shot Combat Pistols in MZ), or the like.

Professions are even simpler to modify. First, remove from the game any Mecha based Profession and replace them with Artillerists, Gunnery Technicians, Marine Infantry, and the like. The Mechajock becomes the Chief Gunnery Sergeant onboard the HMS Thunder Child, his Mecha skills replaced with Heavy Weapons, Expert: Naval Weapons, Expert: Seamanship, and the like. The ERT Member becomes a skilled physician, plying his trade out of a bustling London hospital, trying to stem the tide of the sick and dying with newfound techniques in electroshock, chemical treatments, and surgery.

It's all in how you play it, you see.

Building Mecha is also very simple, because one side of this fight doesn't really have any, and the other is locked into a resource-limited design scheme. The Martians come to Earth with enough materials to build a few Tripods per transport rocket. The Humans possess Steamships (Ironclad Destroyers, Frigates, and Torpedo Rams are the letter of the day), while field artillery (in the form of small, mobile cannons that require highly skilled and trained crews to operate), and both foot (infantry) and horse-mounted (cavalry) troops are the de facto standard of modern warfare. At the start of the War, the Humans have no concept of what the Martian Technology is capable of. Only through cunning and perseverance are they able to strike back at the Martians.

Every victory brings them closer to the doors of the Future.

### Tripod Form

**COST:**.....x0.2

**MODIFIERS:**.....

-3 to Maneuver Value  
2x Land MA

**PROPULSION:**.....

Land: Legs (See Notes)  
Other: Any

**HARDPOINTS:**.....

Torso, Head, Pod, Binder, Hand Held Weapons

**SPECIAL:**.....

May change facing 1/turn at no MA cost, height is 10x Leg Servo Level in Metres.

**NOTES:**.....

The Tripod can be considered a midway point between the Tank and Beastmecha modes. While gaining a terrific mobility increase from its long, stilt-like legs, the Tripod is vulnerable to being tripped, and requires all three of its legs to walk. Any Entangling Melee Weapon used to attempt to trip a Tripod is considered to be at +2 WA for purposes of the trip. Tripods are also considered to be one weight category less than normal for purposes of determining knockback/knockdown effects in combat. Because of its unique construction, any Head type servo can be declared to operate as a "turret" for weapon arc purposes.





**A** fictitious ship, the *HMS Thunder Child* is mentioned by H. G. Wells in only passing detail, for very good reasons. It is listed as an ironclad torpedo ram, a common vessel of the day, and anyone reading *The War Of The Worlds* would instantly recognize it as such. They would know its size, shape, and overall performance, just as any modern day reader would instantly have a vision of an appropriate vessel spring to mind upon reading the term "Aircraft Carrier."

Sadly, we today do not have that luxury. We can read about Ironclads in history books, and see them in museums, but beyond that, we have no real day to day knowledge. So, we have to approximate, based on what we *do* know, using other ships of the period as "character examples", if you will, and keep those things in line with the statistics needed to make a suitable Mekton unit.

For the purposes of this supplement, it has been decided that the *Thunder Child* would be built using the rules from Mekton Zeta Plus. She is built as a x10 scale, Boat Form Mekton, with an internal combustion powerplant. The powerplant is listed as "hot" due to the explosive nature of the *Thunder Child's* fuel. The *Thunder Child* is built with the Weight Inefficiency modifier, raising her MV to a whopping -10. This is lowered to a -5 by way of the Commander/Multiple Actions rule in Mekton Zeta Plus. While the Bridge Crew of the ship is technically 10, only the Captain, First Officer, Navigator, Helmsman, and Master Gunner have any real importance when it comes to the operation of the ship in combat. The Captain gives the orders, the First Officer interprets and relays them, the Helmsman and Navigator keep the ship moving properly, and the Master Gunner gets his lads in the turrets operating at peak efficiency.

According to our sources, the Torpedo Rams of the day sported anywhere from two to twenty guns, although it was certainly possible that they might have carried more. For purposes of the game, the *Thunder Child* has its guns lumped into a pair of turreted, +2 WA, 3 Kill, Burst Value 2 projectile weapons. The guns are bought with a +2 Weapon Accuracy to represent not only the sheer

volume of ammunition the guns of the *Thunder Child* puts into the air with each shot, but also to model the skill and training of the British Navy, one of the most powerful and well equipped fleets of the time. The Burst Value of the weapons is used to mimic the potential for volley fire, allowing for a quick series of retorts from the guns of the ship, resulting in a decent amount of damage to the opponent. While both sets of guns are turreted, allowing them a full 360 degree range of fire, they are not in any way linked. Aiming and firing each set of guns requires an action from the command crew. Both sets of guns draw from the same ammunition store.

The Ram Prow of the *Thunder Child* is a seldom used last ditch tool. Unlike the small, four- or five-man crew "torpedo boats" of the 1700's, ships such as the *Thunder Child* rarely engaged in ramming tactics, as they were simply too valuable to be lost in such a way. Despite the sharp, chisel-like shape of her prow, and the extra reinforcement provided by the slabs of iron armor, it was the rare and desperate captain that would order his helmsman to set for ramming speed and crash positions.

Because of her small size and large engines, this class of vessel was actually quite fast, for the time (despite her "slow" surface MA of 2), and thus could be used as a stopgap interceptor, holding a line while the larger, slower vessels steamed (yes, steamed) into position. Like most Ironclads, her draft was very low, and thus she did not provide much of a target when facing the enemy directly. Even against broadsides, she would prove a difficult foe to strike, thanks to her low profile and short turning radius. The most vulnerable parts of the *Thunder Child*, her "stacks", through which all of the venting of her engines took place, were an unprotected, choice target.

The sharp eyed player or Referee will note that while the *Thunder Child* is built as a x10 scale unit, her weapons are built as x1 scale, and that further, her armor is bought as unscaled. This is intentional, as it serves to model the fact that while typical hand weapons could not hope to damage such a vessel, infantry portable cannon could and did.









**The Martian Tripod Walker represents the lower end of the Martian Invasion Technology. While formidable, it pales in comparison to the technology necessary to launch the Invasion forces across the void of space, and in essence is little more than a vehicle for the devastating arsenal that it carries.**

The description Wells gives of the Tripods is very clear: They move awkwardly, with a jerking, tilting motion, and look for all the world like someone has set a milking stool turning as they walk. They have several long, nimble tentacles, with which they can manipulate objects, damage structures, and capture humans, which they place into large metal baskets at the rear of the Tripod's body for some never-quite-revealed, nefarious purpose.

The Martian Tripod is operated by a lone Martian, who sits in an open air control chair, under a hooded canopy. From within this control seat, the Martian breathes labored breaths, straining against the heavier gravity of the Earth. Beneath it, the galvanized metal limbs of the Tripod hurtle it across the landscape at speeds even an educated man of the day might doubt possible. From high above the ground, the cold-hearted Martians can sweep their deadly Heat Rays, striking targets over half a kilometer away, devastating the landscape. At night, they unleash the insidious, creeping fury of their Black Smoke rockets, spreading death over the land like a creeping fog.

The Tripod Transformation listed earlier in this supplement was devised as a way to show the flexibility of the Mekton Zeta ruleset. Using the Tripod form, mecha can be designed that gain a tremendous height advantage (or disadvantage, depending on the use of height and stature in individual campaigns), as well as a substantial increase in Land MA. However, they are more susceptible to being tripped by entangling melee weapons (including their own Gripper Tentacles, if turned against another Tripod), or toppled by ramming attacks and body blows.

The Martian Tripod is a very low cost, lightweight unit, as befits a device that must be capable of being stored, in pieces, within a relatively small delivery vessel. While it is unknown precisely

how many Martians were transported within each of the cylinders that were fired from the surface of Mars by the Space Gun, each of those cylinders was capable of constructing one tripod relatively quickly, with others following shortly thereafter. It would be a safe assumption that each Martian invader could easily have obtained and operated its own Tripod Walker. It is possible that there could be hundreds of them on the loose in England at any given point in time during the war.

The Heat Ray, that devastating weapon of the Martian Invasion force, is built as a 4-Kill Beam Weapon. It's Weapon Accuracy is unchanged, but its range has been increased to 16 hexes, allowing it to fire at a range of 800 metres before incurring any penalties. It is bought with a Burst Value of 3 to simulate its "sweeping" effect. Needless to say, it is also purchased with a large amount of space efficiency so that it can fit into the head of the Tripod, where it is wielded by the Martian pilot with deadly accuracy.

The Black Smoke weapon has been constructed as a 6-shot salvo of missiles. Each missile is a 10 Kill smoke warhead, which has had the Special Effect Weapon modifier added to it. The SFX for the Black Smoke Rockets are as simple as they are deadly. Upon contact with the Black Smoke, which clings low to the ground, and is capable of climbing up low stairways and slipping through the cracks of doors, any human or terrestrial life form must make a roll of 1D10 + BODY vs. a DIFF 20 effect, or, quite simply, die. The Martians, envisioned by H. G. Wells, have created a weapon designed to destroy the dominant forms of life, both plant and animal, on the Earth, while leaving the buildings and water supply intact. The Black Smoke cannot cross water, and is in fact rendered inert upon contact with it. The smoke ceases to block line of sight after 5 rounds, but lingers for 1 hour per Kill of the warhead (an average of 10 hours per rocket).

Finally, the Gripper Tentacles are just that – Handy, Entangling Melee weapons attached to the small, bulbous "arm" junctions beneath the equally small trunk section of the Tripod War Machine.









**Where to from here, you ask? The Martians are defeated in but over a single month of the calendar, and not by the hand of Man, whom until the coming of the invaders reigned supreme among the creatures of the Earth, but by the lowly microbe, a virus innocuous to humanity, but lethal to those not born of this good, green world. Now, honestly, where's the fun in that, you ask?**

The fun in that, you see, is the adventure of sneaking into the Martian camps late at night, as they huddle beneath their Tripods, their large, bear-sized forms laboring to adjust to the heavier gravity and thicker air of Mother Earth, as you and your compatriots seek to try and steal or destroy the giant, glittering war machines.

The fun in that comes as the Martians are destroyed, one by one, by small resistance cells hiding out among the forests and towns of England, seeking to defend their land – For Queen and Country isn't just a saying, you know, it's a way of life.

The fun in that comes from the roleplay, as the war escalates and ends, the tension of perhaps losing loved ones, perhaps finding new compatriots. The fun in that comes from watching as a way of life ends, and a new one, with the dawning of the 20th Century, begins.

And when The War is over? What then? Where, then, does the tale of The War Of The Worlds take our brave heroes?

It is said that the secret of defying gravity, that which will allow man to fly, is discovered by researchers after the Martians have all been accounted for, and their machines have ceased prowling the land. The Heat Ray is examined, and will surely be understood one day. And the various technologies the Martians brought with them, save for The Black Smoke, are all within the grasp of Humanity to understand, given time. And, perhaps, even that most insidious of Martian weapons will one day be understood, too, although we pray that no one would ever turn it upon their foes.

Perhaps the other nations of the Earth, upon hearing of and confirming the new technological might of the British Empire, seek to counter this advance with technology of their own? Imagine a world where the Russians and the Americans conspire to counter the English Tripod Threat with multi-legged war machines of their own...

And what of the impacts, seen from observatories, upon Venus? What of the Martians that made their way there? Will they have to be reckoned with, one day? Will they come to the Earth intent on finishing what their predecessors could not? Perhaps they will come, and man will still not be ready for them.

And perhaps... Just perhaps, Man will not wait to see what the Martians do. Perhaps he will go to them. Who can say that Man will not build a Space Cannon of his own, and point it sky-

ward, thoughts of exploration, or perhaps conquest, fresh and vital in his mind?

We leave you now with a closing, the only one suitable for a work such as this. We have enjoyed your company this evening, good audience. May you be seen safely home.

Good night.

*"I go to London and see the busy multitudes in Fleet Street and the Strand, and it comes across my mind that they are but the ghosts of the past, haunting the streets that I have seen silent and wretched, going to and fro, phantasms in a dead city, the mockery of life in a galvanised body. And strange, too, it is to stand on Primrose Hill, as I did but a day before writing this last chapter, to see the great province of houses, dim and blue through the haze of the smoke and mist, vanishing at last into the vague lower sky, to see the people walking to and fro among the flower beds on the hill, to see the sight-seers about the Martian machine that stands there still, to hear the tumult of playing children, and to recall the time when I saw it all bright and clear-cut, hard and silent, under the dawn of that last great day..."*

*And strangest of all is it to hold my wife's hand again, and to think that I have counted her, and that she has counted me, among the dead."*

*-The War Of The Worlds, Book Two: "The Earth Under The Martians", Chapter Ten: "The Epilogue"*



# The Invasion Has Begun!

**F**rom across the stars they come, launched into the void from an angry red planet. Night after night, the cylinders fall, crashing into the countryside – falling stars bearing the doom of Man.

For six long nights, they fall into the fields and hills of England: cylinders containing the arms and means of a great and terrible war. From the great craters created by the impacts lumber the Tripods, three-legged instruments of Man's demise.

Heat rays sweeping the streets, the Martians set London aflame, bringing the mighty British Empire to its knees. Anarchy and terror rule the day, the Monarchy displaced and fled across the Channel to France. Fields and forests lie in ruin, as thick, death-bringing clouds of The Black Smoke roll forth heralding the Martian advance.

High above the terrified masses, their terrible, inhuman eyes looking down upon the last vestiges of humanity within the British Isles, the Martians march across the Earth. Seeking to make it their own, they sweep their malice to and fro, their anger and hate for a species so vastly their inferior incomprehensible. They are without mercy, they are without remorse, they are without souls.

But all is not lost. You and your companions, thrown together by fate and happenstance. Your leader has a plan, and your group is ready. You will steal one of the war machines – one of the Tripods – tonight, as the Martians make camp. You have guns, knives, and swords as your weapons. Your leader was a member of the infantry. He fought the Martians at Coventry, where one of the machines was brought down by cannon.

Though the Martians have their Heat Ray, they are but flesh, and blood. They can be injured. They can be killed.

For Queen and Country, you will take the fight to the invaders. You will win this War Of The Worlds.

**T**ake up arms against the forces of Mars in this free-to-download supplement for R. Talsorian Games' Mekton Zeta roleplaying game.

Set in 1898, this Victorian-era adventure takes the game of Mekton Zeta to the dawning of the 20th Century, to the Empire of Queen Victoria, and into the pages of history.

**For Queen and Country! Rule Brittania!**

DESIGNED FOR USE WITH AND USING R. TALSORIAN'S ANIME ROLEPLAYING GAME



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