

Even further into the realm of fantasy, the theme 'Dr. Who and the Martians' produced some enthusiastic accounts of the famous time-traveller's visit to Mars and provided the opportunity for some affectionate parodies. We finished with some acrostics, of which these are examples.

Masses of mangled mortals scattered  
Around the pit where the cylinder fell.  
Red eyes glaring, searching for life,  
Tentacles trapping unfortunate victims,  
Indigo light burning the headlands.  
A gripping fear takes control ...  
Never to see normal life again.

Militant Martians raid our Earth,  
Attacking all they see,  
Roasting heat rays burning,  
Transforming all to ashes,  
Immune to any counter-attack  
And void of any remorse.  
No sense, no pain, no feeling,  
Suffering, sadness ... then silence.

Magnificent metal machines with  
Articulated arms above.  
Rising high over the rooftops, the new  
Terrestrials from outer space.  
Intelligence so far advanced, so  
Accurate their minds.  
No human can compare with them,  
So Earth must be dooomed.

## Wells, Ford and *Tono-Bungay*

M. S. Ray

It is well known that *Tono-Bungay* (1909) contains a vicious caricature of Joseph Conrad, who appears in the figure of the captain of the *Maud Mary*, a Roumanian Jew accused of incompetence and bribery.<sup>1</sup> It does not appear to have been previously suggested, however, that the character of Pollack, who is also present on the *Maud Mary*, bears a certain resemblance to Ford Madox Ford. It would not perhaps be surprising if Wells' novel were to juxtapose portraits of the two men in this way, since Wells, as he remarks in his autobiography, first met Conrad "in association with Ford Madox Hueffer and they remain together, contrasted and inseparable, in my memory."<sup>2</sup> Pollack, who accompanies George Ponderevo on the quap expedition, is described as "one of those tall blond young men who smoke pipes and don't help much"<sup>3</sup>, which recalls Wells' portrait of Ford in *Experiment in Autobiography* as "a long blond with a drawing manner".<sup>4</sup>

*Tono-Bungay* was published serially in the *English Review*, its first instalment appearing in the first issue of the new journal in December 1908. Ford was the founder and editor of the *English Review*, but Wells had been very much involved in the journal's affairs from the earliest discussions in January 1908. Indeed, the original agreement between Ford and Wells was that the latter would act as joint editor and provide half the capital of £5,000, but Wells very quickly decided not to undertake these responsibilities, an abdication which Ford was later to regard as treacherous. It is interesting to conjecture whether *Tono-Bungay*, which Wells completed writing in the Spring of 1908, contains some oblique references to Wells' dealings with Ford in the matter of the *English Review* a few months before. Ponderevo's original partner in the quap episode had been Gordon-Nasmyth, and Ponderevo tells us how

We found that Gordon-Nasymth, still unaware of the altered value of the stuff, and still thinking of the experimental prices of radium and the rarity value of cerium, had got hold of a cousin named Pollack, made some extraordinary transaction about his life insurance policy, and was buying a brig. We cut in, put down three thousand pounds and forthwith the life insurance transaction and the Pollack side of this finance vanished into thin air, leaving Pollack, I regret to say, in the brig and in the secret.<sup>5</sup>

Wells here seems to be attempting to transfer his *own* guilt about his dealings with the *English Review* onto Ford. Wells dealt rather shabbily with Ford during the initial negotiations for financing the review, breaking his promises and leaving Ford to provide £2,800 of the capital.<sup>6</sup> In *Tono-Bungay*, however, it is Pollack/Ford who deals shabbily with Ponderevo, leaving him to provide £3,000. The reference to the insurance policy may be a barbed comment on an article written by Arthur Marwood, who stepped in to finance the *English Review* after Wells withdrew. Marwood's article appeared in the first issue of the Review and was entitled "Actuarial Scheme for Insuring John Doe against All the Vicissitudes of Life".<sup>7</sup>

Ponderevo's feeling of having unnecessarily made Pollack a partner in the quap episode parallels Ford's feelings towards Wells over the *English Review*; as Ford was to say in a letter to Mrs Wells in January 1909, "I regard myself as being responsible for having introduced into the affairs of the Review a person whom I ought to have known, & indeed did know, could hardly be expected ever to keep to his engagements".<sup>8</sup> In the same letter, Ford outlines his version of the Review's origins:

Last January Wells asked me to start the Review, saying that *Tono-Bungay* was not marketable & the Review would advertise him & do him good. His proposal was that he should share in the Editing & bear half the cost. A little later in conversation he said — I use his own words — that he wanted to back out of the Editing & that he felt like a worm for deserting me. I agreed to his backing out of the Editing. A week later he said that he desired to back out of contributing to the cost of the Review & that once more he felt like a worm.<sup>9</sup>

If Wells did indeed feel 'like a worm' about his behaviour towards Ford, this may

indicate why he transferred, perhaps in a spirit of mischief, his own guilt onto Pollack/Ford, as he put the finishing touches to *Tono-Bungay*. Whatever the reasons were, the jest appears to have failed, since Ford's editorial eye did not notice this portrait of him, if such it be; Ford told a correspondent in 1910 that the last person to "put me into a book" was Henry James, who was believed to have modelled Merton Densher in *The Wings of the Dove* on Ford.<sup>10</sup>

#### Notes

1. See Bernard Bergonzi, *The Turn of a Century: Essays on Victorian and Modern English Literature* (London, 1973), p.98, and my own forthcoming article, "Conrad, Wells and *The Secret Agent*: Paying Old Debts and Settling Old Scores," to be published in *Modern Language Review*.
2. *Experiment in Autobiography: Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain (Since 1866)*, 2 vols (London, 1934), p.617.
3. *Tono-Bungay* (London: Macmillan, 1909), p.391.
4. *Experiment*, p.617.
5. *Tono-Bungay*, pp.283-84.
6. For discussion of Wells' relationship with Ford in the foundation of the *English Review*, see Arthur Mizener, *The Saddest Story: A Biography of Ford Madox Ford* (London, 1971), pp.154-55, 160-64; Ford Madox Ford, *Return to Yesterday* (London, 1931), pp.378-79, 384-87; Norman and Jeanne MacKenzie, *The Time Traveller: The Life of H.G. Wells* (London, 1973), pp.241-43, and *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Richard M. Ludwig (Princeton, N.J., 1965), pp.28-38, *passim*.
7. On Marwood's Actuarial Scheme, see Ford, *Return to Yesterday*, p.396, and Mizener, p.156.
8. Ludwig, p.32.
9. *Ibid.*, p.31.
10. *Ibid.*, p.45.

### H.G. Wells at work (1894-1900): A Writer's Beginnings

Bernard Loing

Since 1954, most of the manuscripts, drafts and early versions of H.G. Wells's works have been kept in the University of Illinois at Urbana. The aim of this research is to initiate a thorough and detailed study of these precious documents, and examine and reassess three of the author's early works according to the procedures of "textual genetics" (as defined and applied — to French literary prose works — by the "Centre d'analyse des manuscrits modernes du C.N.R.S."). The three works are two scientific romances, *The Time Machine* (1895) and *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896); and Wells's first "realistic" novel, *Love and Mr. Lewisham* (1900). After