

A Timeline of War

In the early part of the nineteenth century no one on the planet could have known that we were being watched by an intelligence that we could not comprehend. As the world busied itself with the everyday tasks of work and invention, the population of this small blue globe carried on unhindered by the knowledge that others had designs on their home. No one on the surface of the world gave any thought to any danger to them from the stars. The sky was filled with beauty and mystery and the chances of danger to the human race coming from the heavens was unthinkable. Yet across the gulf of space, minds that are to our minds as ours are to those of the beasts that perish, intellects vast, cool and unsympathetic, regarded this earth with envious eyes, and slowly and surely drew their plans against us.¹

In the first years of the 19th century the world was in the grip of a new age of discovery and technology. The nations of the Earth marvelled at the advances that were being made in medicine and engineering and rejoiced in the glory of their own achievements.

In the year 1809 astronomers across the world observed the future of their planet mapped out in the sky. What appeared to be asteroids were seen streaking away from Mars. The ejections were logged as strange anomalies but no cause for concern was felt and the world carried on regardless.

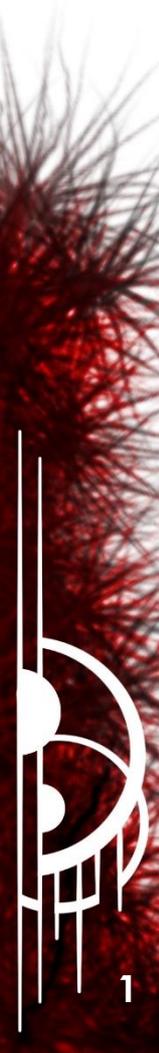
In October of the same year, the first of what had been previously described as asteroids began to fall on the countries of the Earth. As they fell through the atmosphere they were reported as being sleek silver tubes that slowed before they impacted on the surface. All over the world the strange missiles landed. At first they were looked upon with awe and excitement, visitors from Mars, proving that humanity was not alone in the great void of space. The world marvelled in their discovery and looked forward to a future of new culture and advancement. How wrong they were.

The Martians rose from the craters in engines of destruction, their weapons laying down death from towering war machines. Humanity attempted to fight back but the superior weapons that the enemy commanded were more than a match for the forces arrayed against them. The Great Martin War had begun. The petty wars between France and the rest of Europe and the uprisings in the colonies of America became a footnote as the whole planet found itself united against a common foe intent on their destruction.

For the next five years the world was assaulted by these aggressors. The Martians fought in strange suits that made them all the more terrifying. Tubes and wires surrounding the invaders in a shield of technology which made them hard to kill and deadly in battle. Alongside them fought two races that were assumed to be servants or slaves. A race of humanoid cat people and a reptilian species that fought at the whim of their Martian overlords. Later intelligence gleaned from prisoners captured in battle would uncover the name of the felines, the Hyrcanians. A race subjugated centuries ago and enslaved ever since. The Hyrcanians it was discovered, originally heralded from Mars that were conquered by the Martians. The reptilian species had always been a slave race to the technologically superior masters of the red planet. They had no name for themselves and were later to be known as Reptids by humanity and many other more undesirable names by the general populace...

Together, the forces of the Martian armada descended upon the world and brought a war the like that had never been seen by humanity before.

The forces of the combined continents put up a brave fight but inevitably they were pushed back to final strongholds that were still defensible against the enemy. In England the city of London was completely destroyed by a concerted Martian attack in which most of the monarchy and the leaders of the British Empire were wiped out. This act reverberated across the world, the consequences creating new political situations across the largest empire the world had ever seen. In the West the forces of America were decimated by the invaders and the north was all but destroyed by the machines of the enemy. The south continued to fight but it was a battle they knew they could not win. In the East, the Russian Empire retreated and dug in, trusting as always, in the motherland and its hostile



nature to protect them. All across the world, humankind prepared themselves for the final days and resolved to fight to the end.

With extinction imminent the dwindling populace of the planet looked to the heavens and prayed to their gods for a miracle. The weapons and defences of the combined armies of the world were still ineffective and the Martians were close to annihilating humanity as a species and claiming the earth for their own. No form of communication had been possible, no response having ever been given by the enemy. In the final days, the last vestiges of the human race huddled behind the walls of the last cities and their ruined homes in the wastelands, the remains of the great countries of pre-war earth. They waited for the end to come and their inevitable extinction.

It was at this juncture that the combined forces of Europe under the control of the once self-proclaimed Emperor of France, Napoleon Bonaparte, gathered at a field in Belgium to make a final stand against the forces arrayed against them. The stalwart lines of troops were a rainbow of red blue green and Black as British, French, Prussian and a myriad of smaller nations stood shoulder to shoulder, a last defence against the end they all expected.

The battle was bloody and fierce. The heat rays and infernal machines of the Martians and the combined cannon and musketry of the human forces was unrelenting. Hyrcanian and Reptid troopers lined up against musket and cavalry battalions in a final stand of defiance. General Bonaparte used his forces well and the fight was at least equal for a time. The losses were great but many a Martian Walker was seen broken and burning on the field that day. As night fell on the first day, it was clear that it was simply a matter of time until the resolve and strength of those brave souls would break and the Martian threat would overrun their lines, the end coming swiftly. The soldiers hunkered down in their dwindling regiments and prayed for their deaths to be quick and painless.

But the end never came...

As the dawn broke on a blasted earth on June 18th 1815, soldiers stood to behold the Martian advance at a standstill. Great war machines stood like solitary monuments of a terrible conflict, their weapons silenced and no life stirring within. As quickly as it had begun, the war was inexplicably over. At the brink of oblivion the human race had been saved by an unknown phenomenon. Some weakness or flaw in the Martians physiology had finally been their downfall and they died in their thousands, leaving a quiet eerie stillness in their wake. The ranks of servitor forces that remained alive looked at their broken and defeated masters and gladly surrendered to the remaining beleaguered human forces. They could taste freedom and would do anything to achieve it.

Humanity breathed a collective sigh of relief and rejoiced in the good fortune or divine intervention or even simple biological happenstance of their salvation.

In the years following the invasion, humanity began to pick up the pieces of a broken civilisation. The human race however, is nothing if not adaptable and it learned from the technology left behind in the wake of invasion and a new era of science and technology grew out of the devastation. Seven great nations survived the war with their civilisation intact; The Commonwealth of Britannia, The Federated American Union, the Imperial Eastern Union, the Prussian Hegemony, the Russian Imperial Conclave and later the mysterious Arctic Concord and Royal Australian Protectorate. These power blocks began research into many technologies left by the Martians and a new age of advancement began. The engineering allowed great leaps in science and the creation of new weapons and defences. The world had changed and with it the future.

The world had been changed by the Invaders during their attempted takeover. Vast tracts of land had been changed to accommodate them. New plant life and strange Martian vistas replaced huge areas of the Americas, Europe and Russia with other areas being blackened wastelands devoid of life.

The change to the environment started to change humanity as well, allowing certain individuals to access similar powers as the enemy. Able to manipulate them using strange new technology and implants, these individuals were able to harness parts of their mind that were up until now unavailable. These new humans were looked upon with differing views and opinions and persecution was common. They became known as Resonants.

The Hyrcanians and Reptids found a place in human society and although, looked upon as second class citizens they were certainly not slaves. Hyrcanians, the more acceptable looking race became popular as servants to nobility as well as being skilled in the ways of war. The Reptids, it was discovered, were gifted with a knack for crafting and engineering and were, it seems, used by the Martians as a workforce to create their war machines and technology. They were put to work on reverse engineering the Martian tech and creating the new science that drove the world's nations forward.

The chances of anything coming from Mars again were a million to one they said. They were wrong!

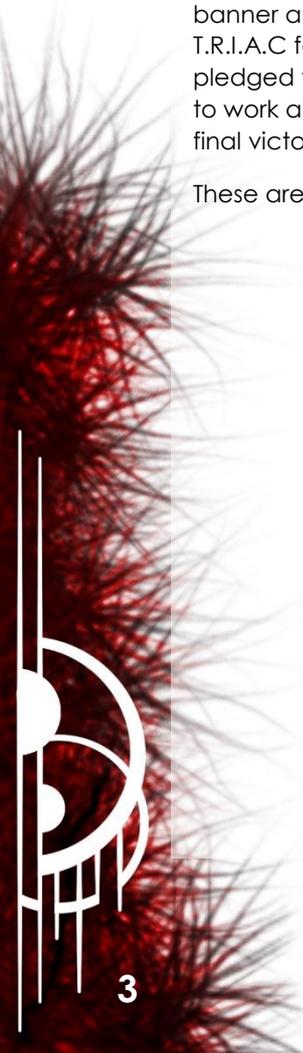
In the late years of the 19th century, the sleek tubes were observed leaving Mars once again. This time the world would be ready. Having learnt lessons from the past, the new technology that the new nations of Earth had created would be a match for the invaders. On the 28th July 1870 the Martians returned in force and the second Martian War began. The machines appeared out of the smoke of the craters once again. Old nightmares were remembered by veterans of the Great War. This time however there would be no miraculous virus or intervention that would save the planet. This time the aliens were resilient to whatever had previously affected them. They were ready to finish the job they had started approximately 60 years ago.

War was joined and the forces of Earth met the invaders with technology created using their own designs. The new science of Martian tech stood shoulder to shoulder with the experimental Aether tech and Gauss technology. Those newly attuned individuals that could manipulate the cosmic energy of the universe or aether utilised their powers to defend their homes. The nations of Earth fought back for the future of their planet and the fate of their species.

The Martians landed this time, in the areas of the world that had been changed by them during the first invasion. They built huge fortifications in the inhospitable wastelands from which they struck out to make war upon humanity. This would be no lightning war, no fast assault. This time they had come to stay. They carved out huge areas of the earth for themselves and sallied forth to once again assault the free lands of the planet.

Alongside the armies of the combined forces of the earth there was a group of extraordinary men and women who stepped forward in 1849 to fight the good fight for the sake of the world. These accomplished ladies and gentlemen from all nations of the globe gathered together under a single banner and formed what would become known as The Reputable Intrepid Adventurers Club or T.R.I.A.C for short. These highly trained and sometimes eccentric intelligence operatives and patriots pledged their services to a higher cause than simply nation or ruler. These noble few were committed to work alongside the forces of the world's military to work towards the downfall of the invaders and the final victory of mankind over the Alien menace.

These are the men and women of the T.R.I.A.C and this is their story...



1809 March - Astronomers first witness lights emanating from the planet Mars.

1809 September - Sleek silver tubes land in all parts of the world and the Martian invaders rise in their war machines to begin their conquest of the earth. The Martian war had begun.

1810 - The Martian forces continue to assault the forces of earth's nations. The British Empire led the fight in all of its colonies and for a brief time seemed to stem the tide

1810 July 15th - A Martian battle squadron approach London and destroy it utterly. In the process the majority of the royal family and leaders of the British forces are killed. The countries forces fall into disarray without their leaders.

1811 - Central Europe falls to the invaders and the Martians begin to change the world into a habitable environment for their species.

1812 - The battle of Chesapeake Bay sees the forces of North America mount a final stand against the forces arrayed against them. The last battalions of US troops make a stand on the banks and watched as the walkers and Martian battalions advanced. They were defeated within the day and by the evening, the army was broken and running. The North had fallen.

1813 - The continent of South America is conquered entirely by the Martian forces and they begin to Change the land. By the end of the year it is a Martian landscape solely in the hands of the invaders.

1814 - India falls to the aliens and is completely transformed. The red planets inhabitants begin to range out and attack Asia. Russia retreats behind its natural defences and begins to build the wall of iron that will separate it for decades to come. Japan falls silent and no news comes from the islands. It is feared that they have been lost to the Martians.

1815 - The final days of humanity draw near and the last active armies of the world are gathered in Western Europe for the last days and a resolute defence against the end. They fall under the leadership of Napoleon who begins a final defence to the bitter end.

1815 June 18th - With the armies of the world set for a final stand in a field in Belgium, the world hold its breath and waited for the end. It is an end that never comes. On the dawn of the second day, human soldiers looked out over the field of battle to see the forces of Mars quiet and still. It is not known what killed the enemy but it is thought that a disease or virus was their downfall. Humanity was saved and the first Martian war was over.

1816 - The remaining human nations began to rebuild in the wake of the invasion. In the West, America rose again as the Federated American Coalition. The forces of the South rose to power and began to rebuild their nation. The Commonwealth of Britannia rose again from the ashes and began to reassert itself as a power in the world but smaller than it was before, a shadow of its former self.

1817 - The Prussian Hegemony appears in Northern Europe and takes control of the lands devastated by their defeated enemy. In the East, the lands of China and its surrounding states are unified as the Imperial Eastern Union and quickly become the power in the region.

Over the next two years there is a rush to gather Martian equipment and technology by the four great nations. Conflicts erupted across the globe as nations attempted to secure the new science for themselves. Three distinct resources are identified as vital for the new research and development that is being conducted.

The strange reddish silver metal that the invaders tripods and war machines were made of was found to have incredible strength and durability and became a hotly contested item. It was nicknamed red steel by the Federated American Coalition due to the metallic red hue in the metal.

The discovery of a strange crystal that began to grow and radiate out from around Martian landing sites were discovered first by the Prussian Hegemony and they quickly put their scientist to work unlocking their secrets. It was soon apparent that these crystalline structures resonated with the same frequency that the new human mutants known as Resonants could detect and they were able to interact with the crystal and tap its power. It became known as Aether Crystal and was the beginning of a new area of technology known as Aether tech.

From the Martian landscapes that grow throughout the continents, a new type of plant begins to grow that is found to have incredible properties in the field of theoretical science as a source of bio energy and a vast amount of applications in medical and esoteric fields. It is found to have great resilience when a power source is passed through it and energy and defence technology takes massive jumps forward. It becomes known as Red Weed by the scientific community and its collection is highly contested.

When these resources are combined with rare earth elements the possibilities for advancement soar and many new roads of technology are opened and followed by the new nations of the Earth.

1820 - The nations called a truce to their petty squabbles in this year and the great race to unlock its secrets began. The great iron wall that now surrounded the new Russian Imperial Conclave remained impenetrable, its leaders refusing to interact with the outside world.

1823 - Sir Henry Fitzroy Lancing, a notable and highly placed British aether Scientist speaks up against the rampant advancement and development of Aether implants and the wanton production of weapons of mass destruction being created by all the world's nations. With his protests falling on deaf ears he gathers a coalition of likeminded scientists and they disappear from society taking their research with them. These blows to the advance of the new technology sets research back almost a decade.

1832 - Ten years of invention spawn new lines of technological thought and invention. The discovery of aether allows the creation of implants, outlandish contraptions and weapons that change the face of modern warfare. Alongside this, scientists reverse engineer the weapons of the enemy to create a type of advanced mechanical technology that is coined strangely and provides advances in weaponry and devices that allow for even more options for scientific and cultural advancement. Finally the most ambitious amongst the world's scientists begin to delve into the mysteries of pure Martian tech and attempt to plumb the depths of these alien devices. There is varying success in different nations with specialists arising in different part of the world. There is still no contact with the Russian Conclave at this time.

1833 - All across the globe a movement began to provide more rights to the Hyrcanian and Reptid refugees that were left on Earth after the Martian invasion ended. It was decided that these creatures, having proved themselves to be useful members of society and an asset to the new nations be given citizenship of their member states. They were still viewed as second class citizens but enjoyed a new found freedom amongst the communities of the world. It was also in this year that the Human Equality act came into force giving all humans regardless of colour, race or gender equal standing in the eyes of the law.

1834 - News arrives across the planet of battles between what seems to be forces of the Imperial Russian Coalition and a new power that becomes known as the Arctic Concord. Rumours abound as to where this new nation stems from and after much investigation it is discovered that this vast colony, located underneath the ice of the Arctic Circle, is the work of Sir Henry Fitzroy Lancing. For over ten year this independent state has been growing as a place for scientists and free thinkers to come, unshackled by the chains of nations and rulers. This causes great consternation amongst the other four nations, almost as much as the fact that the Russian Conclave seems to have emerged from behind its walls and taken an aggressive stance...

1837 - In the Prussian Hegemony, experiments into advanced uses for Aether finally unlock the secrets of what are now being called resonant humans. Implants are perfected that let these special individuals access the Aether within them to power weapons and devices without the need of aether batteries or other power sources. The technology is a closely guarded secret until it is allegedly stolen by spies of the Commonwealth of Britannia. Prussia cannot prove this but a state of unease grows between the two nations. Soon, this implant technology becomes widely available, not long after, the Commonwealth sees a healthy upturn in its financial portfolio...

1837 - It was in this year that the world saw the rise of the Royal Australian Protectorate. The last remnants of the British Royal family rested with a young princess Victoria. Victoria's mother had been touring the colony with her husband the old king during the first invasion and had been though killed when their passenger liner was sunk off the coast of the continent during the first war. Little is known as to how they survived the disaster and even less is known about the period where they were thought

lost. Suffice to say that one day her mother walked out of the interior with her infant daughter. In this year the young Victoria was proclaimed queen of the Australian Protectorate, proclaiming the royal line was once again alive. This did not however sit well with the new Britannia and the Admiralty renounced the claim stating that the Lord Protector now ruled in a new Commonwealth.

1838 - The nations begin to explore the parts of the planet that the Martians changed to suit their own physiology. These expeditions into so called "Red Zones" uncover dangers and peril that only the hardiest explorers return from. This age of exploration heralds a new burst of scientific research into protective armours and shields that keep these gallant pioneers safe in the hostile lands of a changed earth. Leading the charge in these technologies is the Imperial Eastern Union, the tech becoming somewhat of a speciality of theirs. This tech is sought after by all nations of the world and soon the IEU rises again with the influx of capital that this new equipment brings.

1843 - In the Federated American Coalition work on salvaged Martian tech continues to glean results. With no other nations to vie for the salvage of the downed machines and equipment in the states the FAC have a vast amount of resources at their disposal and research moves forward at an unprecedented rate. In March of this year the first heat ray weapons are crafted from reverse engineered Martian wreckage. They are huge affairs that require three men to use and carry the power sources in heavy backpacks. Nevertheless the results are effective and work continues apace. In August of this year, spies of an undisclosed nation infiltrate a Nevada research facility and steal the blueprints to the weaponry along with many other devices. It is suspected that the source of the espionage is the Imperial Eastern Union but this cannot be proved. Relations do however become very frosty between the two powers as the weapons begin to appear in all parts of the world. The FAC still retains the largest amount of Martian tech and throws themselves into the creation of smaller handheld weapons and advanced armours and propulsion devices.

1847 - Since the end of the resource wars in 1820 the Commonwealth of Britannia has been working on the implementation of a type of technology that uses current designs and marries them with both aether and new more esoteric power sources to create what is coined by the scientists as gauss technology. Many new types of weapon and device are created including a new type of weapon, the Gauss thrower and its variations. These weapons become the staple sidearm of elite brigades of Commonwealth soldiers in holding across the globe. Although not as powerful as the Martian tech coming out of the FAC, the energy requirements are much smaller and easier to mass produce. It is not long before this technology is acquired by the other nations of the world. Due to its far flung colonies, the Commonwealth is unable to retain exclusivity on its discoveries and this has caused a resentment to rise between it and the other nations.

1849 - With the growing unease between the new nations an enterprising group of highly placed individuals saw the need to stop the war heading for another war that could very well destroy it without the help of external forces. These men and women approached the countries of the world and proposed a neutral agency that had its membership open to any human of good standing and high morals that was prepared to stand for order and peace. The proposed organisation was to be called The Reputable Intrepid Adventurers Club or T.R.I.A.C and recruited extraordinary people to be the conscience the planet needed to move forward in peace. The club gained funding from an undisclosed source but was ratified by all nations except the Imperial Russian Coalition who at this time decline the invitation.

1850 - The introduction of the War Bond as a universal unit of currency is agreed. Fronted by the T.R.I.A.C this action unified the world's economy and allowed a more stable platform from which to advance. A world finance organisation is created and a Quartermaster General's position is given to a worthy individual for a period of 3 years which then passes to another nation to keep neutrality. The world leaps forward as all currency becomes standardised. It is named the War Bond to remind everyone involved how they arrived at this point and to keep the spectre of war from happening again. The Russian Coalition does not recognise the new currency at this time.

1851 to 1860 - For ten years the world sees a period of growth and peace between the five member nations. The decade is not without its problems however and during this time we see the Imperial Russian Collective becoming more active behind and beyond its wall of iron. Naval engagements with member states occur with varying degrees of severity and temperatures rise as territory is annexed by the secretive nation. War is avoided when members of the T.R.I.A.C step in to negotiate and a

demarcation line is set around the I.R.C delineating an official border that becomes recognised sovereign territory.

Also during this time the Arctic Concord are noted to be more active in the world. Primarily they are reported to be exploring the Martian landscapes and when approached are reticent to engage, retreating quickly and without comment. Little is gleaned about this mysterious state at the top of the world. What is determined is the level of technology utilised by this nation is like nothing that has been seen before.

1865 - Five years after the demarcation lines were set around the Russian Coalition, the first ambassadors emerged to open relations with the rest of the world. The negotiations did not go well with offence being given and taken on all sides. The delegation retreated behind their wall once again with new contempt for the nations of the world.

1869 April - T.R.I.A.C plays host to the first meeting between all member states and a delegation from the Arctic Concord. What is thought to be a meeting to open negotiations is soon realised to be something much more alarming. Sir Henry Fitzroy Lancing himself was at the meeting and explained that his scientists had observed, with their advanced telescopes similar craft launching once again from the surface of Mars. A second invasion was on its way and it would be here within the year.

The nations of the Earth mobilised and turned their attention to defence. This time they would be ready. Sir Henry explained that his nation would join the defence but would not openly take an offensive stance. The Concord was a nation of academics and would aid in funding and research as much as they could.

1869 July - The Russian Collective reluctantly request to join T.R.I.A.C. and as a result the Arctic Concord follow suit.

1870 February - On a cold February morning the first sleek silver tubes landed once again on the surface of the Earth. This time they landed in the Martian landscapes and did not attack at first. T.R.I.A.C agents reported that they were fortifying and building strongholds in the wastelands. This war would be fought differently than the first.

1872 [The Present] - After two years of war it was clear that the Martians were now immune to whatever disease killed them the first time. The world's armies met the forces of the invaders with weaponry and armour derived from their own technology and the battles were a very different story. It was clear that the war would continue for some time but at least this time the people of new nations had a fighting chance to survive and achieve victory.

At the proposal of Sir Henry Lancing, the T.R.I.A.C were given control of the world's covert war and became a place where extraordinary men and women took the fight to the enemy, behind enemy lines, gathering intelligence, disrupting communication, doing what needed to be done in the name of victory!

