



0. ANTI-GRAVITY AND CAVORITE - Story Preface

1. ALLAN QUARTERMAIN

2. MEMBERS OF THE LEAGUE

**3. ANTI-GRAVITY AND CAVORITE**

4. CAPTAIN NEMO and the NAUTILUS

5. AMERICA IN 1898

6. 1898 ATTITUDES

7. JOHN BULL AND UNCLE SAM

8. AIR SHIPS OF WORLD WAR I

Long before Orville and Wilbur Wright first flew "Flyer 1" on December 17, 1903, people thought about flying. If birds could do it, why couldn't man?

In the real world, no one had successfully figured out how to power human flight before 1903. But in the fictional world, all kinds of ideas are possible. And at the end of the 19th century, many people, including adventure writers, were thinking about powered flight.

"Cavorite"—a fictitious anti-gravity substance that would allow flight—was "discovered" by an equally fictitious scientist, Dr. Cavor, in H.G. Wells' 1899 tale *The First Men in the Moon*. (It was also Wells who wrote about—and discussed—the concept of time travel.)

Anti-gravity cavorite, as envisioned by Wells, has the ability to repel mass in exactly the same way as like poles of a magnet repel one another. Applying such a theory, one could imagine a flying machine rising from the earth without the resistance of gravity.

Using cavorite, in the form of a mineral paste, Wells had his Dr. Cavor shield a space-traveling sphere (thereby allowing it, and the characters traveling inside, to escape the earth's gravitational pull and reach the moon). If Wells' theory worked in real life, it would be possible to create a propulsion system for a flying machine.

Until recently, however, few believed Wells' ideas could ever be more than fictional fantasy. But fiction sometimes anticipates reality.

Eugene Podkletnov (a Russian scientist experimenting with superconductivity) claims to have found what Wells had imagined. He asserts that anti-gravity is no longer a mere literary fiction. Podkletnov claims to have actually discovered the equivalent of cavorite.

NASA has tested whether such claims can be accurate since one's initial, dubious reaction is: How could gravity possibly be shielded? If true, however, the concept holds enormous potential.

At the end of the 19th century, before man could fly, people were also thinking about submarines. Allan Quartermain's fictional compatriot, Captain Nemo, had such a vessel.

Who was Captain Nemo? And what kind of submarine did he possess?

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/ANTI-GRAVITY-AND-CAVORITE-League-of-Extraordinary-Gentlemen>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/ANTI-GRAVITY-AND-CAVORITE-League-of-Extraordinary-Gentlemen>

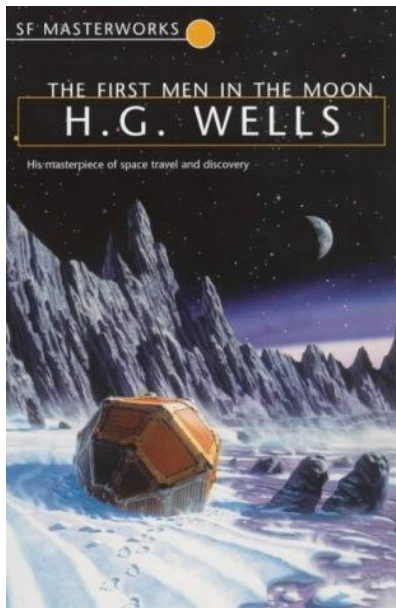


## H.G. Wells

Photo of H.G. Wells, by Frederick Hollyer, maintained by the Library of the London School of Economics and Political Science. Online, courtesy LSE, via Flickr.

PD

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/H.G.-Wells>

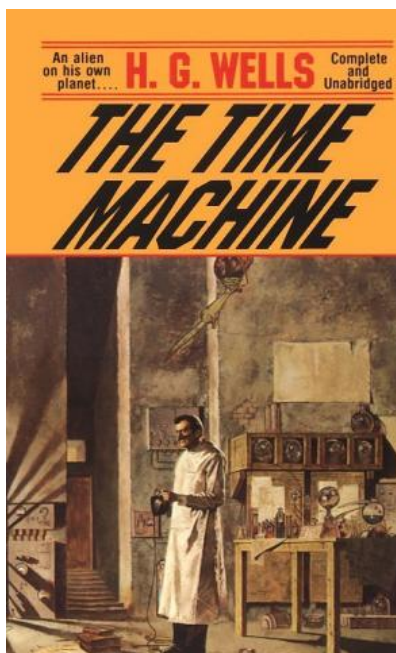


## The First Men in the Moon - by H.G.Wells

Image online, courtesy [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/The-First-Men-in-the-Moon-by-H.G.Wells>

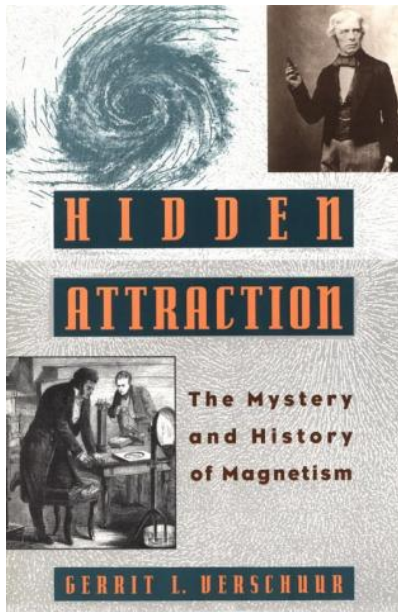


## The Time Machine - by H.G. Wells

Image online, courtesy [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/The-Time-Machine-by-H.G.-Wells>



## Hidden Attraction - by Gerrit L. Verschuur

Image online, courtesy [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Hidden-Attraction-by-Gerrit-L.-Verschuur>