



# The Hundred Parishes

Introduction to a famous local person . . .

## HG WELLS (1866 – 1946)

---

Herbert George Wells was born in Bromley, Kent in 1866 in humble circumstances. He became famous as a writer, especially in the relatively new genre of science fiction. He was also well-known for his extra-marital affairs.

In early life he was a teacher and in 1895 he separated from his first wife and married one of his students, Jane Robbins. Between then and 1898 he wrote four of his most popular novels: *The Time Machine*, *The Island of Dr Moreau*, *The Invisible Man* and *The War of the Worlds*.

Wells believed that science afforded infinite possibilities for creating a better world and his handling of the new genre of science fiction brought fame and wealth. They in turn allowed him to mix with other wealthy socialites of his generation.



HG Wells entered the social circle of the Countess of Warwick at Easton Lodge, Little Easton, near Great Dunmow, Essex. The Countess was a socialist, like Wells, and hosted many events at her home for like-minded people.

Besides his home in London, Wells rented Easton Glebe, on the Easton Lodge estate, between 1910 and 1928. It was during this time that Wells had a 10-year affair with Rebecca West. They met in 1912 when Wells was 46 and West only 19. West was also a prolific writer, later being appointed a Dame for her service to English literature. Their son, Anthony West, born in 1914, grew up to become a well-known novelist.

Wells set at least one novel, *Mr Britling sees it through*, in the Little Easton area. When the rector of Little Easton, RL Gwynne, published a history of the parish in 1923, HG Wells contributed the preface.

Wells died in London in 1946 and his ashes were scattered at sea. A commemorative plaque was installed at his home in Regents Park, London.