

# Edgar Rice Burroughs

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## Edgar Rice Burroughs



**Born:** September 1, 1875  
Chicago, Illinois, USA

**Died:** March 19, 1950 (age 74)  
Encino, California, USA

**Occupation:** Novelist

**Nationality:** American

**Writing** 20th Century

**period:**

**Genres:** Adventure novel, Lost World, Sword and Planet, Planetary Romance, Soft science fiction, Westerns

**Debut works:** Under the Moons of Mars (1912)

**Influences:** H. Rider Haggard, Rudyard Kipling, Jules Verne, Arthur Conan Doyle, H.C Wells, Edwin Lester Linden Arnold

**Influenced:** Robert E. Howard, A. Merritt, Ray Bradbury, Robert A. Heinlein, Michael Moorcock, Lin Carter, Leigh Brackett, John Norman, Otis Adelbert Kline

**Website:** <http://www.tarzan.com/>

**Edgar Rice Burroughs** (September 1, 1875 – March 19, 1950) was an American author, best known for his creation of the jungle hero Tarzan, although he also produced works in many genres.

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## Biography

Burroughs was born on September 1, 1875 in Chicago, Illinois (although he later lived for many years in the neighboring suburb of Oak Park), the son of a businessman. He was educated at a number of local schools, and during the Chicago influenza epidemic in 1891 spent a half year on his brothers' ranch on the Raft River in Idaho. He then attended the Phillips Academy in Andover and then the Michigan Military Academy. Graduating in 1895, and failing the entrance exam for West Point, he ended up as an enlisted soldier with the 7th U.S. Cavalry in Fort Grant, Arizona Territory. After being diagnosed with a heart problem and

thus found ineligible for promotion to officer class, he was discharged in 1897.

What followed was a string of seemingly unrelated and short stint jobs. Following a period of drifting and ranch work in Idaho, Burroughs found work at his father's firm in 1899. He married Emma Centennia Hulbert in 1900. In 1904 he left his job and found less regular work, initially in Idaho but soon back in Chicago.

By 1911, after seven years of low wages, he was working as a pencil sharpener wholesaler and began to write fiction. By this time Burroughs and Emma had two children, Joan and Hulbert. During this period, he had copious spare time and he began reading many pulp fiction magazines and has since claimed:

"...if people were paid for writing rot such as I read in some of those magazines that I could write stories just as rotten. As a matter of fact, although I had never written a story, I knew absolutely that I could write stories just as entertaining and probably a whole lot more so than any I chanced to read in those magazines."

Aiming his work at the 'pulp' magazines then in circulation, his first story "Under the Moons of Mars" was serialized in *All-Story* magazine in 1912 and earned Burroughs US\$400 (roughly the equivalent of US\$7600 in 2004).

Burroughs soon took up writing full-time and by the time the run of *Under the Moons of Mars* had finished he had completed two novels, including *Tarzan of the Apes*, which was published from October 1912 and went on to become his most successful brand. In 1913, Burroughs and Emma had their third and last child, John Coleman.

Burroughs also wrote popular science fiction/fantasy stories involving Earthly adventurers transported to various planets (notably Barsoom, Burroughs' fictional name for Mars), lost islands, and into the interior of the hollow earth in his *Pellucidar* stories, as well as westerns and historical romances. Along with *All-Story*, many of his stories were published in the *Argosy Magazine*.

Tarzan was a cultural sensation when introduced. Burroughs was determined to capitalize on Tarzan's popularity in every way possible. He

planned to exploit Tarzan through several different media including a syndicated Tarzan comic strip, movies and merchandise. Experts in the field advised against this course of action, stating that the different media would just end up competing against each other. Burroughs went ahead, however, and proved the experts wrong—the public wanted Tarzan in whatever fashion he was offered. Tarzan remains one of the most successful fictional characters to this day and is a cultural icon.

In 1923 Burroughs set up his own company, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc., and began printing his own books through the 1930s. He divorced Emma in 1934 and married former actress Florence Gilbert Dearholt in 1935, ex-wife of his friend, Ashton Dearholt, adopting the Dearholts' two children. They divorced in 1942.

At the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor he was a resident of Hawaii and, despite being in his late sixties, he asked for permission to be a war correspondent. This permission was granted and so he became the oldest war correspondent for the U.S. during World War II. After the war ended, Burroughs moved back to Encino, California, where, after many health problems, he died of a

heart attack on March 19, 1950, having written almost seventy novels.

The town of Tarzana, California was named after Tarzan. In 1919 Burroughs purchased a large ranch north of Los Angeles, California which he named "Tarzana". The citizens of the community that sprang up around the ranch voted to adopt that name when their town was incorporated in 1928.

The Burroughs crater on Mars is named in Burroughs' honor.

## **Selected bibliography**

### **Barsoom series**

- *A Princess of Mars* (1912) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [1]) (LibriVox MP3 recording [2])
- *The Gods of Mars* (1914) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[3]) (LibriVox MP3 recording [4])
- *The Warlord of Mars* (1918) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[5]) (LibriVox MP3 recording in progress)
- *Thuvia, Maid of Mars* (1920) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[6])
- *The Chessmen of Mars* (1922) (Project

- Gutenberg Entry:[7])
- *The Master Mind of Mars* (1928) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[8])
- *A Fighting Man of Mars* (1931) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[9])
- *Swords of Mars* (1936) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[10])
- *Synthetic Men of Mars* (1940) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[11])
- *Llana of Gathol* (1948) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[12])
- *John Carter of Mars* (1964)
  - "John Carter and the Giant of Mars" (1940) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[13])
  - "Skeleton Men of Jupiter" (1942) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[14])

## **Tarzan series**

- *Tarzan of the Apes* (1912) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[15])
- *The Return of Tarzan* (1913) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[16])
- *The Beasts of Tarzan* (1914) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[17])
- *The Son of Tarzan* (1914) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[18])
- *Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar* (1916)

(Project Gutenberg Entry:[19])

- *Jungle Tales of Tarzan* (1916, 1917) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[20])
- *Tarzan the Untamed* (1919, 1921) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[21])
- *Tarzan the Terrible* (1921) (Project Gutenberg Entry:[22])
- *Tarzan and the Golden Lion* (1922, 1923)
- *Tarzan and the Ant Men* (1924)
- *Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle* (1927, 1928)
- *Tarzan and the Lost Empire* (1928)
- *Tarzan at the Earth's Core* (1929)
- *Tarzan the Invincible* (1930, 1931)
- *Tarzan Triumphant* (1931)
- *Tarzan and the City of Gold* (1932)
- *Tarzan and the Lion Man* (1933, 1934)
- *Tarzan and the Leopard Men* (1935)
- *Tarzan's Quest* (1935, 1936)
- *Tarzan and the Forbidden City* (1938)
- *Tarzan the Magnificent* (1936, 1937)
- *Tarzan and the Foreign Legion* (1947)
- *Tarzan and the Madman* (1964)
- *Tarzan and the Castaways* (1940, 1941, 1965)
- with Joe R. Lansdale
  - *Tarzan: the Lost Adventure* (1995)
- for younger readers
  - *Tarzan and the Tarzan Twins* (1927, 1936, 1963)

## Pellucidar series

- *At the Earth's Core* (1914) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [23])
- *Pellucidar* (1923) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [24])
- *Tanar of Pellucidar* (1928)
- *Tarzan at the Earth's Core* (1929)
- *Back to the Stone Age* (1937)
- *Land of Terror* (1944)
- *Savage Pellucidar* (1963)

## Venus series

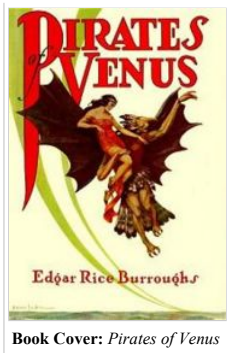
- *Pirates of Venus* (1934)
- *Lost on Venus* (1935)
- *Carson of Venus* (1939)
- *Escape on Venus* (1946)
- *The Wizard of Venus* (1970)
- *The Wizard Of Venus and Pirate Blood* (1984)

## Caspak series

- *The Land That Time Forgot* (1918) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [25]) see also *Lost World*

literary  
genre.

- *The People That Time Forgot* (1918) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [26]) [mislabeled as "People Out of Time"]
- *Out of Time's Abyss* (1918) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [27])



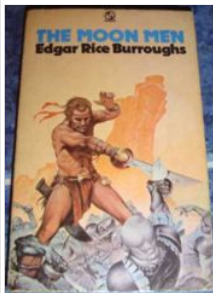
**Book Cover:** *Pirates of Venus*

## **Moon series**

- *The Moon Maid* (1926)
- *The Moon Men* (1926)
- *The Red Hawk*

## **Other science fiction**

- *Beyond the Farthest Star* (1941)
- *The Lost Continent* (1916) (aka *Beyond Thirty*) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [28])
- *The Monster Men* (1929) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [29])
- *The Resurrection of Jimber-Jaw* (1937) Story of unfrozen caveman. Project Gutenberg Entry: [30]



The Moon Men - 1975  
Tandem paperback edition.  
219 pages

## Jungle adventure novels

- *The Cave Girl* (1925)
- *The Eternal Savage* (1925) (aka *The Eternal Lover*)
- *The Lad and the Lion* (1938)
- *The Land of Hidden Men* (1932) (aka *Jungle*)

- Girl*
- *The Man Eater* (1935)

## **Western novels**

- *Apache Devil* (1933)
- *The Bandit of Hell's Bend* (1926)
- *The Deputy Sheriff of Comanche County* (1940)
- *The War Chief* (1927)

## **Historical novels**

- *I am a Barbarian* (1967)
- *The Outlaw of Torn* (1927) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [31])

## **Other works**

- *The Efficiency Expert* (1921) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [32])
- *Forgotten Tales of Love and Murder* (2001)
- *The Girl from Farris's* (1916)
- *The Girl from Hollywood* (1923)
- *The Mad King* (1926) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [33])
- *Marcia of the Doorstep* (1999)
- *Minidoka: 937th Earl of One Mile Series M* (1998)

- *The Mucker* (1921; sometimes published in two parts as *The Mucker* and *The Return of the Mucker*) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [34])
- *The Oakdale Affair* (1917) (Project Gutenberg Entry: [35])
- *Pirate Blood* (1970)
- *The Rider* (1937)
- *You Lucky Girl!* (1999)

## In Popular Culture

- In the video game *Jurassic Park: Trespasser* there is a statue of E. R. Burroughs, possibly as a reference to his novel *The Land That Time Forgot*.
- In chapter 16 of Stephen King's novel *Desperation* can be found the line "*The Farting Buzzards of Desperation*. Sounds like a goddam Edgar Rice Burroughs novel, doesn't it?" (No Edgar Rice Burroughs work has a title remotely like this.)
- In the Mars Trilogy novels of Kim Stanley Robinson the original capitol city on Mars is named Burroughs as a sort of tribute. It is later flooded.

## See also

- Mars in fiction
- Otis Adelbert Kline
- Sword and planet
- *John Carter of Mars* film
- Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

## External links

- Tarzan.com
- Edgar Rice Burroughs Web Museum and Weekly Online Fanzine
- Works by Edgar Rice Burroughs at Project Gutenberg
- Official biography of Burroughs
- Bibliography on SciFan
- LibriVox Audiobook Recordings
- Edgar Rice Burroughs at the Internet Speculative Fiction Database

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Illinois | United States Army soldiers

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