

Hysteria Sweeps Nation When Radio Reports Mythical War

Purely Fictional Account of Conquerors From Mars Is Taken Seriously at Widely Scattered Points With People Fleeing From Homes

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fire," and said she and many others in her neighborhood were "getting out of here."

Minneapolis and St. Paul police switchboards were deluged with calls from frightened people.

In Atlanta, there was worry in some quarters that "the end of the world" had arrived.

Police Act

It finally got so bad in New Jersey that the state police put reassuring messages on the state teletype, instructing their officers what it was all about.

And all this despite the fact that the radio play was interrupted four times for the announcement: "This is purely a fictional play."

Newspaper switchboard operators quit saying "Hello." They merely plugged in and said: "It's just a radio show."

The Times-Dispatch in Richmond, Va., reported some of its telephone calls came from people who said they were "praying."

The Kansas City bureau of the Associated Press received queries on the "meteors" from Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, Beaumont, Tex., and St. Joseph, Mo., in addition to having its local switchboard flooded with calls.

People Flee

One telephone informant said he had loaded all his children into his car, had filled it with gasoline, and was going somewhere.

"Where is it safe?" he wanted to know.

Residents of Jersey City, N. J., telephoned their police frantically, asking where they could get gas masks. In both Jersey City and Newark, hundreds of citizens ran out into the streets.

Atlanta reported that listeners throughout the southeast "had it

that a planet struck in New Jersey, with monsters and almost everything, and anywhere from 40 to 7,000 people reported killed." Editors said responsible people, known to them, were among the anxious information-seekers.

Prayers Offered

In Birmingham, Ala., people gathered in groups and prayed, and Memphis had its full quota of weeping women calling in to learn the facts.

After an introductory explanation by Welles at 8 p. m., an announcer gave a commonplace weather forecast. Then, in standard fashion, came the words: "We take you now to the hotel, where we will hear the music, etc."

After a few bars of dance music there came "a bulletin from the Intercontinental Radio News bureau" saying there had been a gas explosion in New Jersey.

"Attack" Explained

After that the bulletins came more and more rapidly with "Professor Pierson," played by Welles, explaining about the attack by Mars and the little men who were pouring out of their meteor-like airplanes.

For some time in Mars, warriors drove everything before them. Mere armies and navies were wiped out right and left, and the real radio audience were as frightened as the actors pretended to be. Then the little men acquired a lot of germs to which we men-of-the-world are virtually impervious. So the little men died, and everybody lived happily ever after.

TUCSON CALLS ARE NUMEROUS

Beginning at 6:20 o'clock last

night, the switchboard of The Arizona Daily Star was kept busy for a half-hour period with calls from excited listeners to the radio dramatization of H. G. Wells' "War of the Worlds."

The first call was from a breathless woman who said she had just heard Secretary Ickes broadcast a statement that troops had surrounded a plane from Mars, which landed in New Jersey, and were keeping machine guns trained on the occupants.

Caught unawares, members of the newspaper's editorial department were unbelieving, but nonetheless took a quick look at the incoming Associated Press report for possible light on the subject before reassuring the woman and many who called in the next few minutes.

The Sunday night Orson Welles drama is regularly broadcast at 7 o'clock Monday by stations of the Arizona network. Officials of KGAR in Tucson said that so far as they knew, the men from Mars would stage a second invasion for Arizona listeners tonight.