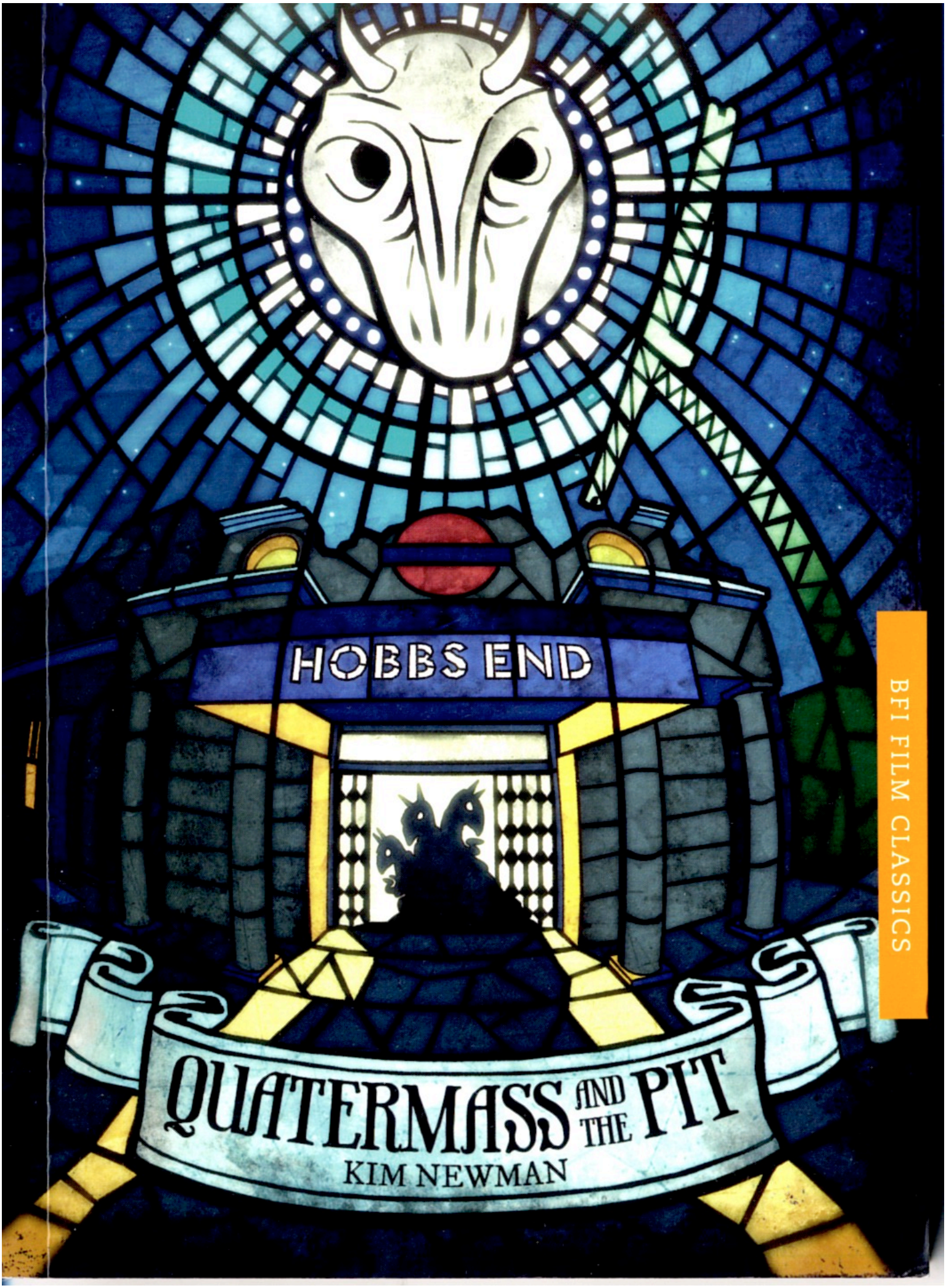
HOBBS END
QUATERMASS AND THE PIT
KIM NEWMAN
BFI FILM CLASSICS

Quatermass and the Pit

While digging an extension to the London Underground Railway, workmen discover an object which might be an ancient Martian spaceship – and Professor Quatermass of the British Rocket Group investigates a mystery which prompts frightening revelations about the origins of humanity itself.

Before *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *Doctor Who*, Quatermass was the paramount British science fiction saga in film and television. Kim Newman's fascinating study focuses on Roy Ward Baker's *Quatermass and the Pit* (1967), written by Quatermass creator Nigel Kneale for Hammer Films, but also looks at the origins of Quatermass in the 1950s BBC serials and Hammer Films adaptations.

Exploring the production and reception of this landmark franchise, Newman assesses the lasting importance of the series in general – and *Quatermass and the Pit* in particular.

This special edition features original cover artwork by Nathanael Marsh.

KIM NEWMAN is a novelist, film critic and broadcaster. He is the editor of *The BFI Companion to Horror* (1997), *Science Fiction/Horror: A Sight and Sound Reader* (2002), and author of the BFI TV Classic on *Doctor Who* (2005) and the BFI Film Classic on *Cat People* (1999; 2013).

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Kim Newman

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For Julian Petley

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Introduction

BBC-TV broadcast *Quatermass and the Pit* in six parts from 22 December 1958 to 26 January 1959.[1] The serial was written by Nigel Kneale and produced – which, in the BBC terminology of the time, also means directed – by Rudolph Cartier. Professor Quatermass had previously saved humanity in *The Quatermass Experiment* (BBC, 1953) and *Quatermass II* (BBC, 1955).[2] Val Guest had directed big-screen versions for Hammer Films, *The Quatermass Xperiment* (1955) and *Quatermass 2* (1957); in America, where the British television hero had no name recognition, the films were luridly retitled *The Creeping Unknown* and *Enemy from Space*.

In 1959, it seemed likely Hammer would deliver a third Quatermass film in short order, presumably with series star Brian Donlevy, but the project was delayed for the best part of a decade. *Quatermass and the Pit*, directed by Roy Ward Baker,[3] was released in the UK on 9 November 1967. Two months later, it appeared in America as *Five Million Years to Earth*.

In late 1959, well before he was required to adapt his six-part *Quatermass and the Pit* teleplay into a ninety-seven-minute film script, Kneale supervised the editing of the BBC version into two feature-length episodes for a repeat broadcast. In 1989, he had another go at it, trimming the 207-minute serial into a 178-minute omnibus for release on video cassette, mostly losing comic relief.

Nigel Kneale was never one to go easy on his output: he was critical of what others did with his scripts, but as critical of his own work. For him, everything could be better with more time and another draft.[4] Many small (and some large) differences between the published Quatermass scripts and the surviving episodes[5] suggest Cartier involved Kneale in considerable rewriting during rehearsals and pre-production. Camera scripts of episodes three to six of

The Quatermass Experiment, included on the DVD release of *The Quatermass Collection*, vary from the published teleplays.

From 1973 to 1974, owing to the energy crisis and the three-day week, UK TV shut down at 10.30 pm. The regulation was relaxed for holidays. On Christmas Day, the BBC telecast Hammer's *Quatermass and the Pit* as a late-night treat.[6] As with so much of Kneale's work, the depiction of London descending into anarchy at the climax seems eerily like an extension of the news headlines. Whenever shown and in whatever form, *Quatermass and the Pit* feels contemporary.

The remit of this series is to study film classics, so this is a book about *Quatermass and the Pit* (1967); but it could as easily have been slotted into the parallel TV Classics series and been about *Quatermass and the Pit* (1959). Since both are entries in an evolving canon, the first section will examine the franchise as a whole, before the second focuses on the *Pit* in particular.

1 Contact Has Been Established

At 8.15 pm on Saturday, 18 July 1953, BBC-TV – the only channel available to members of the British public who owned what were still known as receiving sets – broadcast the first instalment of a new drama serial. Accompanied by the ominous opening of Holst's 'Mars, the Bringer of War', seemingly handwritten titles emerged from chemical fog,[7] letters oozing unpleasantly. *The Quatermass Experiment* … 'a thriller for television in six parts by Nigel Kneale' … Episode One 'Contact Has Been Established'.

'One morning, two hours after dawn, the first manned rocket in the history of the world takes off from the Tarooma range in Australia', intones a narrator (Stewart Mortimer), as a missile rises vertically. This is stock footage of a captured German V-2 rocket launched from White Sands, New Mexico, in 1946; it returned the first film of the Earth from space.[8] The episode was seen by 3.4 million viewers. Over the run, the audience increased. On 22 August, 5 million watched the finale, 'State of Emergency', holding their breaths during a tense four-and-a-half minute transmission break caused by a technical fault at the story's moment of direst peril. By then, Quatermass had become a national institution.

Nigel Kneale was considerably more involved in the production than most TV writers then or now – to the extent of making and manipulating the tendril-covered garden glove that represents the monster in the climax. Rudolph Cartier recalled Kneale approached him with three Quatermass ideas. They settled on the back-from-space story as being most achievable within the limitations of live broadcast and a BBC budget.[9] The teaming of a mystically inclined Briton with literary instincts and a cultivated Austro-Hungarian refugee was not without precedent. A certain Michael Powell-and-Emeric Pressburger vibe resonates throughout the Quatermass saga.

The portrayal of problem-solving science yoked to political bureaucracy and military impatience in *The Small Back Room* (1949) is a precedent for the Professor's official status. The feud between haunted, alcoholic bomb-disposal expert Sammy Rice (David Farrar) and a particularly tricky Nazi infernal device seems a specific influence on the V-weapon subplot ('it could be a "Satan"') of *Quatermass and the Pit* .[10]

The Quatermass Experiment was a quickly written fill-in for an unpromising summer slot; when the first episode aired, Kneale hadn't yet finished writing the serial. In interviews, Kneale liked to portray the endeavour as more casual than it must have been. The easy option would have been to adapt someone else's novel. Instead, he took the opportunity to write his first original teleplay.[11] He initially knew little, if anything, about rocketry, but must have at least talked with experts to authenticate the jargon. Occasional infodumps, reflecting the BBC's Reithian educational remit, go into how pressure suits are put together or what 'stage separation' means. Some of this was done between writing and broadcast; the scripted flight is supposed to be 'fifteen thousand miles' into space, modified to a more credible 'fifteen hundred' on screen. Hammer's *Quatermass 2* has a credit thanking the British Interplanetary Society, whose sometime chairman was Arthur C. Clarke. It's possible technical advice for the serials came from the BIS, which had been advocating space exploration since the 1930s; indeed, Quatermass's Rocket Group could well *be* the British Interplanetary Society given resources to put theory into practice.

The serial, whether original or adapted, was a British television staple from the start of the medium, carried over from radio. Advertising-financed US television favoured theoretically unending series over finite serials, so the format didn't really exist in America until the 'miniseries' was invented in the 1970s. In pre-production, Kneale's space story was called *The Unbegotten*, suggesting gothic horror; *Bring Something Back*, his preferred title, was abandoned as too flippant. Settling on *The Quatermass Experiment* fixed the

serial's genre as science fiction, though billing it as 'a thriller' was calculated so as not to put off viewers accustomed to usual Saturday evening fare.[12] Conjoining an odd, distinctive name with 'experiment' evokes mad scientists from Frankenstein to Dr Moreau[13] – foreshadowing, of course, that the outcome of Quatermass's dispassionate scientific enquiry will be the creation of monsters. When Bram Stoker crossed out 'Count Wampyr', the provisional name of his villain, and wrote in 'Dracula', he elevated his novel to pop-culture immortality. Similarly, when Kneale found a name in the thin Q section of the London phone book, his fill-in serial became destined to lodge in the collective memory. 'Quatermass' is perfect: as strange as Frankenstein, yet as English as Middlemarch. Real-life rocketry pioneers, being Russians like Konstantin Tsiolkovsky or Germans like Wernher von Braun, had sinister, melodramatic foreign names. Von Braun, name-checked in the serials, was among the German scientists who created V-weapons for the Nazis then worked for the American or Russian space (and ballistic missile) programmes. One of the missing astronauts in *The Quatermass Experiment* is German-accented, bearded Dr Ludwig Reichenheim (Christopher Rhodes). Quatermass's first name, Bernard, comes from Bernard Lovell, director of Jodrell Bank Observatory.

Quatermass is Director of the British Experimental Rocket Group (BERG). Against expectations, he is not an eccentric like Mr Cavor, creator of the anti-gravity spaceship in Wells's *The First Men in the Moon* (1901), or Sidney Stratton (Alec Guinness), whose dirt-and-wear-resistant fibre has unintended consequences in *The Man in the White Suit* (1951). Quatermass's sole affectation is a peculiarly natty spotted scarf worn with a regulation white laboratory coat. The era of lone researchers like Frankenstein (who creates a monster in his student digs) or Cavor (who builds a spaceship in his suburban workshop) is over; BERG is state-funded and committee-overseen. Reginald Tate, the first actor to take the part, sets the tone for subsequent portrayals: brusquely dedicated to his mission, yet

mindful of the human costs. He stands and issues curt orders to seated subordinates as the rocket is brought down to Earth, conveniently near Wimbledon Common. He is wearily patient with Blaker (W. Thorp Devereaux), a civil servant to whom technical details have to be explained for the benefit of the audience. Kneale insists 'my man was a creature with a conscience'[14] and Tate's Quatermass shows it early as he expresses self-doubt ('Am I a charlatan?'). He considers the feelings of his assistant Judith (Isabel Dean), wife of astronaut Victor Carroon (Duncan Lamont), seemingly the sole survivor of the three-man crew. He is even sensitive enough to notice the Carroon marriage isn't happy and understand the bind this puts her in when her husband becomes simultaneously a national hero, a murder suspect and a world-threatening alien menace.

Tate – who had a great many officers, editors and police inspectors on his CV – was cast in *Quatermass II*, but died suddenly while the second serial was in pre-production. His replacement was the glummer, pudding-faced John Robinson, who was reportedly unhappy with learning technical dialogue and stepping into someone else's signature role. Robinson wasn't available for the third serial.[15] His replacement was Andre Morell, who had been shortlisted for the original serial and played the suave torturer O'Brien in Kneale and Cartier's adaptation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (BBC, 1954). A subtler

The Quatermass Experiment (1953): Reginald Tate as Quatermass; *The Quatermass Xperiment* (1955): Brian Donlevy as Quatermass

actor than Tate or Robinson, Morell plays Quatermass with a bow-tie and occasional flashes of humanising warmth and wit. *The Quatermass Experiment* went out when the BBC had a UK television monopoly; *Quatermass II* aired when the first few ITV companies were up and running, but before there was another network. By 1958, the BBC had to think about competition and Morell was a stronger draw. With *Quatermass* (*The Quatermass Conclusion*) – written for the BBC in 1973, produced by Euston Films for ITV in 1979 – an 'international name' was required for the Professor's last hurrah. Sir John Mills's Quatermass is shabbier, initially retired to the sidelines and embittered about the perceived failure of his life's work. A footnote Quatermass is Jason Flemyng in *The Quatermass Experiment* (BBC4, 2005), directed by Sam Miller and adapted from Kneale's script by producer Richard Fell; besides redoing a six-part serial for a two-hour slot (which it underran), this took on the unnecessary added complication of being broadcast live.

The widowed Quatermass is a father figure to his colleagues at the BERG, which gets renamed the British Rocket Group after the events of *Experiment*. In *Quatermass II*, one of his assistants is his daughter, Paula (Monica Grey); his prime motivation in *Quatermass* is to reunite with his granddaughter Hettie (Rebecca Saire).[16] A problem with the 2005 remake is that a too-young Flemyng scarcely seems senior to his assistants (Mark Gatiss, David Tennant, Indira Varma) or lead astronaut (Andy Tiernan). Quatermass always has a touchy relationship with politicians, civil servants, military men and the media – though he gets on well with policemen. He needs others to facilitate his research, just as a television writer needs collaborators to turn a script into a programme, but worries about misappropriation and misrepresentation of his work. In *Experiment*, he has trouble within his team: second-in-command Paterson (Hugh Kelly) resents being passed over for the mission crew and takes his complaints to the press. It almost needn't be said that Kneale and Cartier identified with Quatermass because, like everyone creative in the film and television industry, they had career-long woes with BBC

(and ITV) bureaucrats, interfering politicians (questions were asked in the House about the horrors of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*), studio executives in the UK and Hollywood, budget-limiting accountants, actors who weren't their first (or fiftieth) choices, and technical facilities unable to realise their ambitious visions.

Quatermass is a recognisable British type – the boffin. Christopher Frayling notes

> the word 'boffin' caught on during the war of 1939–45, making scientists seem both friendly and effective, and it seems to have originated as a title conferred by RAF officers on a few radar scientists with whom they were working.[17]

The boffin became a film type thanks to the tweedy, donnish heroics of Leslie Howard in *The First of the Few* (1942) and Michael Redgrave in *The Dam Busters* (1955). After the war, the boffin seemed a less comforting figure. The Manhattan Project – another model for the title *The Quatermass Experiment* – made famous the troubled and troubling nuclear physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer. *The Beginning or the End* (1947) touches on the Breen-and-Quatermass-like clash of military overseer General Leslie Groves and Oppenheimer (Hume Cronyn). Groves is played as a bull-headed, get-the-job-done martinet by Brian Donlevy in a rough draft for the Quatermass performance Kneale was keen to disown. When Quatermass was created, boffins were under suspicion. It was believed the USSR would not have developed atomic weapons without intelligence leaked to them by spies within Western research programmes. Atom spy movies began at the tail-end of the war, with *Notorious* (1946) and *Cloak and Dagger* (1946), but proliferated in paranoid edge-of-doom noirs like Sam Fuller's *Pickup on South Street* (1953) and Robert Aldrich's *Kiss Me Deadly* (1954). In Britain, a run of drab films feature compromised researchers fleeing oppressive institutions to blab secrets to shady characters down the pub and bullying security officers ruthlessly ferreting out the traitors.

Anthony Asquith's *The Net* (1953), first of the cycle, casts James Donald, later of Hammer's *Quatermass and the Pit*, as the boffin developing supersonic aircraft. Novelist Nigel Balchin, source author for *The Small Back Room*, scripted the Boulting Brothers' similar *Suspect* (1960), about bacteriological warfare. A *Quatermass Experiment* subplot (trimmed from the film) references this boffin/spy subgenre as the mutating Carroon is kidnapped by representatives of an unfriendly power intent on getting space secrets out of him.

The Bomb and the Rocket were wed to produce the Missile, perceived from the first as a potential world-ending threat. The BERG's crashed rocket, embedded in a Wimbledon terrace, is taken for 'one of them things' by cockney housewife Mrs Matthews (Iris Ballard). 'They finally dropped one,' she shrieks at her husband Len (Van Boolen), 'it's going to go off!' Like many fictional super-vehicles of the 1950s, Quatermass's rocket has a nuclear motor.[18] In *Quatermass II*, his second design is so unstable it's only useful as an interplanetary ballistic missile. Oppenheimer, showing the conscience Kneale gave Quatermass, said of the military applications of his research: 'In some sort of crude sense which no vulgarity, no humour, no overstatement can quite extinguish, the physicists have known sin; and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose.' Never one to go easy on his characters, Kneale makes Quatermass also – in Oppenheimer's terms – sinful (he has more than a little Martian in him, it transpires), with the major redeeming trait that he feels obliged to clear up his own messes.

A rocket crashing on London was all too familiar. *The Quatermass Experiment* and *Quatermass and the Pit* repeatedly refer to the Blitz; *Quatermass and the Pit* even uses stock footage of bombed London. The Blitz spirit is represented in *The Quatermass Experiment* by Katie Johnson, later 'Mrs Lopsided' in *The Ladykillers* (1955), who is more concerned about her cat than the possible outbreak of World War III. Kneale was keen on Ealing-style comedy business; the Quatermass serials are peppered with portraits

of a clueless Great British Public ranging from fond indulgence to something very like contempt.[19] Strictly superfluous to the plots, these asides are mostly trimmed from the films, though Thora Hird (replacing Wilfred Brambell!) is priceless as a drunk in *The Quatermass Xperiment*, terrified when she realises the monster she thought she had hallucinated was really there.

Cartier said Kneale presented him with three story ideas, but in fact – even adding the later *Quatermass* – there is only one. In each serial, an alien incursion threatens all life on Earth and Quatermass and his colleagues rally to save the planet … with a major character sacrificing himself in the final episode, so victory always comes at a cost. The Quatermass formula even extends to subplots about bureaucracy, the military and the media. Though Quatermass has launched his rocket without issuing a press release, the serials all find the Professor alternately hindered and aided by media coverage, which extends from Fleet Street hacks to BBC television cameras (Kneale always pokes sly fun at his television peers). Newspaper columnist James Fullalove (Paul Whitsun-Jones in *The Quatermass Experiment*, Brian Worth in *Quatermass and the Pit*) is one of the few characters to recur from one serial to another;[20] and Hugh Conrad (Roger Delgado) in *Quatermass II* is a posher, less muckraking Fullalove, becoming more like the original when rewritten as Jimmy Hall (Syd James) in *Quatermass 2*. Each serial gives Quatermass a key colleague and ally: policeman Inspector Lomax (Ian Colin), mathematician Leo Pugh (Hugh Griffith), palaeontologist Matthew Roney (Cec Linder), radar astronomer Joe Kapp (Simon MacCorkindale). In *The Quatermass Xperiment*, Lomax is played by Jack Warner, the most iconic policeman in British film and TV thanks to *The Blue Lamp* (1950) and *Dixon of Dock Green* (BBC/BBC1, 1955–76); the character is mentioned but doesn't return in *Quatermass II* but does appear (played by John Longden) in *Quatermass 2*.

The serials vary their alien threats, but each opens with a space-related shock on Earth: the crash-landing of Quatermass's rocket,

alien-bearing meteorites infecting the unwary, the discovery of an ancient spaceship buried under London, a beam which destroys a US-Soviet space mission and vaporises a gathering of young folk in Brazil. Each serial ends with large-scale chaos (which the budget and the medium can't quite stretch to, even in 1979) and disaster averted at the last minute by drastic action. TV Quatermasses like to deliver speeches, a tendency muted in the films. *The Quatermass Experiment* ends with Quatermass appealing to the residual humanity of the mutating monster and persuading it to will its own destruction before its spores transform all life on Earth into an animal-vegetable-alien hybrid. *The Quatermass Xperiment* – the only Quatermass not scripted by Kneale until 2005 – cuts the appeal to humanity and instead electrocutes the eyeball-bearing blanket of tripe. The overly ambitious final episode of *Quatermass II* features space scientist Quatermass's only actual rocket trip, and another infected human willing himself free of alien control to thwart an invasion at the cost of his own life. Having overspent on earlier episodes, Cartier had to stage a space flight with little in the way of effects and lace-up leather spacesuits, but Griffith is affecting as Pugh recovers his soul by remembering an Emlyn Williams-like Welsh childhood as a valley-born genius nurtured by a schoolteacher who nevertheless made a performing freak of him. Adapting the serial for Hammer, Kneale saved the budget by cutting the space voyage and destroying the aliens' asteroid base with an unmanned missile. He deleted Pugh entirely since his plot purpose was now superfluous.[21] These changes weren't entirely down to a feeling that Donlevy wasn't up to delivering a world-saving speech. In Hammer's *Quatermass and the Pit*, Andrew Keir is similarly excused Morell's last-reel address. Upping the stakes, Quatermass's third appeal that someone should overcome evil alien instincts is directed not at individuals – Victor Carroon and his absorbed crew-mates or mind-controlled Leo Pugh – but to the entire human race, specifically those watching the TV show.

Humanity is always at stake in the Quatermass saga, in the sense of all mankind being doomed and the importance of believable,

complicated characters with emotional lives beyond the current crisis. It is a common criticism that science fiction neglects character in favour of ideas or, in its pulpier forms, spectacle. Kneale repeatedly stressed his lack of sympathy with most s-f.

> I don't see myself, and never have done, as a science fiction writer. I tumbled more or less accidentally into *The Quatermass Experiment*, and as much as anything, that was meant to be a critique of science fiction of the time – the terrible American science fiction films that were full of flag-waving, crude, dreadful dialogue, a singular lack of imagination and a total lack of interest in the human characters. I wanted to get away from that, to plant it very firmly on the characters and to get a bit of humour into it.[22]

At one point in the first serial, the mutating astronaut falls in with a boy (Anthony Green) in a toy space helmet, modelled after the gear worn by comic-book hero Captain Dallas.[23] The lad drags Carroon into a cinema showing an American 3D space opera, *Planet of the Dragons*. Kneale parodies 'flag-waving, crude, dreadful dialogue' as a space hero (Keith Herrington) makes a speech about how 'some day, maybe on this very planet of the dragons, kids'll be able to sit down in a corner drugstore, same as home. There'll be highways, motels and TV, same as back home.' It's hard to determine just what Kneale is sending up: *Cat Women of the Moon* (1953) and *Fire Maidens*

The Quatermass Experiment: Duncan Lamont as Carroon; *The Quatermass Xperiment*: Richard Wordsworth as Carroon

from Outer Space (1956) are silly enough, but were made after *The Quatermass Experiment*. The satire of crass American expansionism echoes Ray Bradbury's subtler 'The Off Season' (1948), in which a space pioneer opens a hotdog stand on Mars and sees nuclear war on Earth as a disaster for his business.[24] *Planet of the Dragons* can't risk parodying the most obviously ludicrous aspect of cheap 1950s s-f films – shoddy special effects – because *The Quatermass Experiment* had to create its monster with even fewer resources than space-helmet-on-a-gorilla quickies like *Robot Monster* (1953).

In interviews, Kneale tried to have it both ways – professing ignorance of previous written or filmed science fiction (outside of Wells and Orwell), but having enough familiarity to form a strong negative opinion. Certainly, he had a more indisputable influence on later s-f than predecessors had on him. He seems several times to have hit independently on ideas parallelling works he probably didn't know. David Pirie[25] notes *Quatermass II* is 'remarkably similar' to Don Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) but 'there can be no accusations of plagiarism on either side, for although Kneale wrote his script well before Siegel, it was not released in America until after *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*'. The situation is slightly complicated by Jack Finney's *The Body Snatchers*, not issued as a novel until 1955 but serialised in *Collier's* in 1954. Also in the idea stew is Robert A. Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters* (1951), whose parasitic aliens are closer to the hive-mind creatures of *Quatermass II* than Finney's pod-born duplicates.[26] In all probability – and I say this as someone who looked at Nigel Kneale's bookshelves – he hadn't read Finney or Heinlein. It's more credible that he was inspired by Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford's *The Inheritors* (1901), an ur-text of alien infiltration, which covers some of the same ground (the Inheritors take care to gain political influence) as *Quatermass II*. On the assumption that Kneale had seen a 3D s-f film before making up *Planet of the Dragons*, it was most likely Jack Arnold's *It Came from Outer Space* (1953),[27] which incidentally features aliens imitating human form.

Given that Kneale had avowedly seen *some* filmed science fiction before embarking upon *The Quatermass Experiment*, he most likely knew producer Howard Hawks and director Christian Nyby's *The Thing from Another World* (1951). The climactic 'keep watching the skies' speech could be construed as 'flag-waving', though the script is smartly written and has plenty of Kneale-like humour. Like the Quatermass stories, the American film pits a combined military-scientific group against an alien menace – a bipedal vegetable vampire tagged 'an intellectual carrot'. The creature of *The Quatermass Experiment* is at least part-vegetable: Carroon absorbs a cactus and sprouts spines. Hawks and Nyby have heroic, sensible, disciplined shoot-first soldiers arguing with impractical, untrustworthy, foolishly open-minded scientists. US Air Force Captain Pat Hendry (Kenneth Tobey) is a typical American movie hero: cocksure, patriotic, determined, swift to act, down-to-Earth, wise-cracking and practical. Hendry's nemesis Dr Carrington (Robert Cornthwaite) is rude, arrogant, inhumane and looks like a commie. In a Howard Hawks world, Colonel Breen would be a hero and Professor Quatermass a dangerous nut. Kneale saw himself in opposition to American s-f, but he was also addressing national differences in problem-solving, valorising British muddling-through against American overkill. In some American monster movies of the early 1950s, fussy old British actors (Cecil Kellaway in *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* [1953]; Edmund Gwenn in *Them!* [1954]) played scientists alongside straightforward American leading men cast as soldiers, cops or FBI agents (Kenneth Tobey and James Arness, from Hawks's cast, got those gigs). Robert Wise's *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), a rare liberal-leaning Hollywood s-f film from that period, gives its alien (Michael Rennie) a British accent and rates a 'foreign' scientist (Sam Jaffe's Einstein lookalike) above rigid American soldiers and pressmen (the heroes of *The Thing from Another World*). Nevertheless, the casting of Brian Donlevy as Quatermass especially irked Kneale because the actor was perceived as American.[28]

In *The Thing from Another World*, Carrington – who has a Russian beard but a British-sounding *name* – is more excited than terrified by first contact with an alien life-form. He tries to appeal to the Thing's superior intellect and is tossed aside. In *The Quatermass Experiment*, the insubordinate Paterson, a military-trained scientist, resorts to a flame-thrower in the build-up to the climax and dies. Like Carrington, Quatermass tries to talk to the monster – only, in Kneale's universe, the monster listens. *The Thing from Another World* upholds common sense over genius: the heroine (Margaret Sheridan) comes up with 'a woman's solution' to the vegetable monster – cooking it. The Thing (James Arness) is killed by electrocution – an option raised and dismissed in *The Quatermass Experiment* (where self-sacrifice trumps violence) but successfully used in *The Quatermass Xperiment* (which Kneale did not write). The Hawks-Nyby film is based on John W. Campbell's novella 'Who Goes There?' (1938), which contains more Quatermassy ideas: the possibility that a shapeshifting, all-absorbing alien will remake all life on Earth in its own likeness; the threat posed by unearthing a long-buried spaceship which crashed in prehistory. The mostly vegetable alien plague of *The Quatermass Experiment* has a more likely precursor in the red weed sown on Earth by the Martians in *The War of the Worlds* (1898).

The Quatermass Experiment can be construed as a British nationalist fantasy, though it is conflicted about 'flag-waving'. In the universe of the serial, Great Britain is at the forefront of rocketry. The first men in space are two Britons and a German who take off from the Australian outback.[29] Roney, in the television *Quatermass and the Pit*, is played by Canadian Cec Linder, though little is made of his nationality.[30] In creating a world where Russian and American achievements are bested or written out, the serial follows David Lean's *The Sound Barrier* (1952), in which a fictional British test pilot in a fictional British plane is first to break the sound barrier, rather than Chuck Yeager in the X-1. A comedy drunk (Denis Wyndham) shambles about the Wimbledon crash site with a football

rattle bigging up the achievement of the (horribly bungled) mission, insisting that the trouble with the English is that they are 'too modest'. The serial was produced in the wake of several events which inflated Britain's self-image in the years before the national shock of Suez and a sense of falling behind true superpowers cast a pall. The climax takes place in Westminster Abbey, where Elizabeth II had been crowned on 2 June – the most-watched event on television until that time. As a side-effect, almost every British TV viewer knew what the inside of the Abbey looked like and that the BBC could do an outside broadcast from there. The monster interrupts a programme about architecture, which introduces a frame-within-a-frame effect and incorporates the audience at home into a drama unfolding in real time (that break in transmission might have added to the verisimilitude). On Coronation Day, news came through to London that New Zealander Edmund Hillary had just become the first man to set foot on the summit of Mount Everest. In *The Quatermass Experiment*, it is suggested that a knighthood will be rushed through for Victor Carroon, which had just been done for Hillary, knighted on 6 June.[31] Also knighted was Colonel John Hunt, leader of the British Everest Expedition; his Quatermass-like role involved selecting the team who would try for the summit while he remained at base camp.

One clever touch in the television remake of *The Quatermass Experiment* is replacing Westminster Abbey with a power station that has been turned into an art gallery (i.e. the Tate Modern); here, Richard Fell's adaptation of Kneale's original script finds an aspect of 2005 with an equivalent resonance to its 1953 source. Not everyone who watched the Coronation was stirred to patriotic pride. The monster nestling among the Abbey's arches could be a gleeful projection of a desire to tear down the metaphorical and literal edifice of the monarchy. Similarly, Britain's contribution to modern art is as likely to inspire mockery as admiration. In 1953 and 2006, an institution representing British pride and self-image is shown to be riddled with a contagious corruption. Kneale was writing at the dawn

of a New Elizabethan Age, when Britons were supposed to feel cheerier (sweet rationing ended in February 1953). Nevertheless, working for the national broadcaster, Kneale sensed the fragility of the British bubble of confidence. The Quatermass serials are shot through with the possibility that a nightmare worse than the Blitz is on the way.

It isn't until *Quatermass*, when the long-retired Professor is reduced to being interviewed on a shambolic British television about a Soviet-American space project, that Kneale acknowledges who really made the running in rockets. Asked to comment on the 'Hands in Space' project, Quatermass regrets his entire career and fulminates against the waste of money at a time when Earthbound problems need solving. Kneale recognised his formulae and was willing to subvert them – Quatermass is always giving speeches, but the tone and context vary. The televised speech in *Quatermass* comes in the first episode not the climax; it is ill-timed, embittered, embarrassing and ignored, then retracted when the mission he's been railing against goes disastrously wrong. The 1979 critics who felt Quatermass had come back once too often and the squandered goodwill built up in earlier appearances might have been reacting to the fact that this is literally what the character does at the outset of his fourth and final

The Quatermass Experiment (2005): Jason Flemyng, Adrian Dunbar, Mark Gatiss

adventure. This time, Quatermass has colleagues in the real-world space programmes which thrived while the British Rocket Group withered – balding American Chuck Marshall (Tony Sibbald) and bearish Russian Pavel Gurov (Brewster Mason). Chuck dies uselessly in a space shuttle in an even more disastrous version of the trip Quatermass took in *Quatermass II*, but Gurov is among the few left standing at the end of the series. In another prophetic blip, he notes that the spirit of youth rebellion fostered by unimaginable alien influence has spread to the Soviet Union and threatens to bring down the regime.

Without consulting the salaried Kneale, the BBC sold the Quatermass rights to Hammer shortly after the first serial was broadcast.[32] After successfully distributing the American *Rocketship X-M* (1950), Hammer launched homegrown science-fiction projects. Terence Fisher's *Spaceways* (1953), a mystery based on a radio play by Charles Eric Maine, is a boffin/espionage movie on the pattern of *The Net*, with rocketry rather than jets. The bread and butter of Hammer's output, before it hit on the gothic horrors still associated with its name, were films noirs with imported, third-rank American stars (Dane Clark, Cesar Romero), which had some hopes of securing supporting feature releases in America. Howard Duff, star of *Spaceways*, is typical of the breed – nobody has ever been heard to utter the phrase 'Let's go and see the new Howard Duff movie.' Hammer also turned out cheapish adaptations of popular BBC radio shows which could recoup the budget from domestic audiences (*Dick Barton, Special Agent* [1948]; *The Man in Black* [1950]). With a Hollywood name in the lead *and* an established British property as source, Hammer's *The Quatermass Xperiment* – retitled to capitalise on the X rating in the UK[33] – was a prestige item. Producer Anthony Hinds seldom gets the credit for shaping Quatermass as a film property. A rare producer who was also a screenwriter (signing his scripts John Elder), he was also the man at Hammer most interested in the art as opposed to the commerce of horror. Hinds retained American screenwriter Richard H. Landau from *Spaceways* and

assigned the project to director Val Guest, who tended to be trusted with Hammer's 'bigger' productions (*Break in the Circle* [1954]; *Hell Is a City* [1960]).[34] In Landau's first pass at the script, Quatermass remains British and the secondary character of medical officer Gordon Briscoe (John Glen on TV)[35] is reimagined as 'American, formerly a Flight Surgeon with US Air Force'.[36] In the event, Brian Donlevy got the top job and co-billing status went to Jack Warner, a UK film, radio and TV star. Dr Briscoe became British again. Though his major role in the plot (as Judith Carroon's lover) is eliminated, David King-Wood makes him one of the film's many strong background characters. He looks a little like Tate's Quatermass and shows empathy with the human cost of the experiment to contrast with his brusque, ruthless boss.

Donlevy's casting was a source of lasting annoyance to Kneale, but the changes to the character start with Landau and Guest. The Professor of *The Quatermass Xperiment* is part of the problem, not the solution. Mrs Carroon (Margia Dean) – a stay-at-home housewife, rather than a scientist in her own right – has her husband abducted from hospital because she is determined to get her husband a life 'away from *him*!' Donlevy's blockish thug strides determinedly throughout, rude to everyone who tries to help or hinder and finally committed to repeat the experiment ('gonna start again'). In *Quatermass 2*, which Kneale *did* script, Donlevy is a warmer, self-doubting, intellectual Quatermass – which suggests he has learned something from the *Xperiment* even if the first performance insists he isn't capable of change.[37] Asked to be more than a scowling bully, Donlevy is fine. Quatermass being battered by a security-helmeted goon as his just-infected assistant is dragged off plays better in the film than on television. Kneale, who sometimes lamented that rewriting TV scripts for cinema meant leaving out 'all the good stuff',[38] took the opportunity of enforced revision to sharpen the situation. Marsh (Brian Forbes), the victim, is Quatermass's longtime associate rather than a soldier he's only recently met. Donlevy might not square up beside Tate – in the third of the Tate performance that

has survived – but he's more evenly matched with Robinson. It's easier to accept Donlevy as strong-willed enough to bulldoze his way through alien-controlled Whitehall or charismatic enough to persuade human workers in the alien-run factory to down tools and start a revolution. Being a Yank makes the Professor of *Quatermass 2* more of an outsider in the new town recreation centre. He is less likely to be believed when he spouts off about the alien-bearing meteorites which the workers have been told are 'overshots', harmless though alarming side-effects of an industrial process to create artificial food.[39] Following the clean-shaven Tate and Robinson, Donlevy influenced his successors by playing Quatermass with a moustache which Andre Morell and John Mills maintain; Andrew Keir goes for the full beard.

The Quatermass Xperiment opened on 26 August 1955; the first episode of *Quatermass II* went out on 22 October. The BBC wasn't above trading on Hammer's publicity to boost its sequel. Though a different creature from the serial, *The Quatermass Xperiment* works. The television version was necessarily studio-bound with very few film inserts, but Hammer makes use of streets, greens and wastelands within easy reach of its Bray studio base. Guest exploits the urban locale, alternating public places (like Westminster Abbey, which is mostly a studio recreation, and London Zoo, which is played by Chessington Zoo) with neglected, murkier corners of the city. Richard Wordsworth is startling as the pathetic/terrifying Carroon, especially in the James Whale-like scene with the well-spoken little girl (Jane Asher) who replaces the space-helmeted lad of the serial. With less dialogue than Duncan Lamont, Wordsworth is a more haunted presence. Carried over from television is an unusual emphasis on people in all walks of life – firemen, policemen, scientists, bureaucrats, film-lab techs, nurses, private detectives, zookeepers, chemists, TV producers[40] – doing their jobs, even if at cross-purposes. The canny casting of bit roles with reliable character actors makes the film credible and affecting, rendering Donlevy's stern fanatic even more inhuman and inhumane. Note

Thora Hird up on her umpeenth drunk and disorderly charge being treated kindly by Sam Kydd's police sergeant, Harold Lang as the smiling crooked private eye who spirits Carroon out of hospital, Gordon Jackson as an exasperated BBC OB producer, Lionel Jeffries as the fussy civil servant (name shortened to Blake) and Bartlett Mullins as the cheery keeper shocked and saddened by the loss of all the animals in his care. Kneale would have been first to point out that 1950s American science-fiction films generally lack this sense of being populated by real people – though *Them!* has a similar approach to its innocent bystanders, and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* is forced to include a range of real-seeming characters to contrast with what they become when 'taken over'.

Television drama evolved rapidly in the 1950s. Even with its sub-par space voyage, *Quatermass II* is much more sophisticated than *The Quatermass Experiment*. Besides two years of technical advances, BBC-TV might have been more committed to a sequel to a hit than it had been to the unheralded original. *Quatermass II* got a decent Autumn slot, when audiences were more likely to be indoors watching the box. Cartier now had resources to get away from Alexandra Palace and do more filming. From inception, this was a part of the package. 'I sketched an outline and then went out with the producer and designer to look at oil refineries for the alien base,' said Kneale.

Quatermass II (1955): John Robinson as Quatermass; *Quatermass 2* (1957): Syd James, Brian Donlevy

What we found was so juicy, so absolutely right as a location, that we immediately went to Shell to get permission to use it a great deal in the story. We also found a good deal of locations round about on the Thames estuary that were very atmospheric.[41]

Quatermass 2 reuses the key location, the Shell Haven Refinery in Essex, as the alien food plant at Winnerden Flats. Guest and cinematographer Gerald Gibbs[42] even restage several of Cartier's shots. Hammer also reused the BBC's 'zombie' costumes and John Rae became the only actor to recreate his TV Quatermass role in a Hammer film as doomed moderate trade unionist McLeod.[43] There was back-and-forth between the TV and film series, especially in casting; Michael Ripper went from Hammer's *Quatermass 2* to the BBC's *Quatermass and the Pit*.[44]

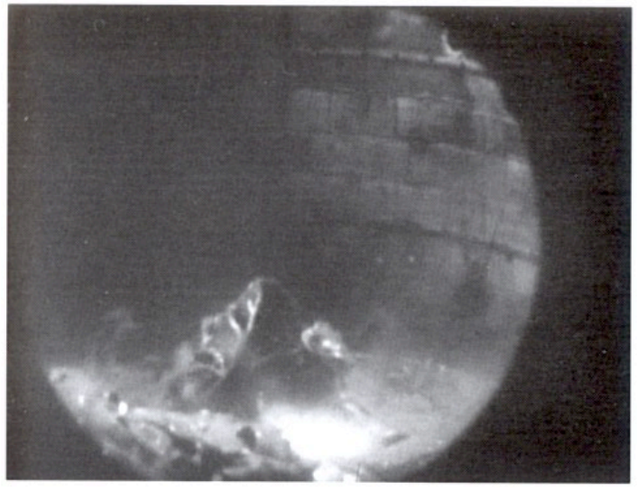
The major Hammer influence on Quatermass is in skewing the franchise from science fiction towards horror. Hammer Horror was not yet a brand, but *The Quatermass Xperiment* emphasises physical nastiness exceeding what was doable, or even allowable, on television. In the serial, Ramsay (Jack Rodney), the spy who kidnaps Carroon, is injured in a car crash and dies in hospital after blurting out clues. The chemist (Richard Cuthbert) imperilled in a cliffhanger at the end of Episode Four turns up alive if shaken the next week. The equivalent characters in the film (Toke Townley is the chemist)

The Quatermass Xperiment: Hammer Horror; the experimental rocket

are battered by Carroon's cactusoid hand and turned into shrivelled, distorted husks as the space vampire feeds off their flesh.[45] If the serial is a thriller, the film is a monster movie. *The Quatermass Experiment* delivers an accumulation of clues, theories and revelations over six weeks, with the audience (and Quatermass) only fully understanding what's happening (and what's at stake) in the final episode. *The Quatermass Xperiment* races through its story in seventy-eight minutes and assumes a percentage of its audience already saw it on TV and are ahead of the game; it's structured around Carroon's via dolorosa from shell-shocked crash survivor to huge pile of tentacular protoplasm. Like Boris Karloff in *Frankenstein* (1931) and Christopher Lee in *Dracula* (1958), Richard Wordsworth is buried down the cast list, but is the star of the film.[46]

Quatermass II picks up this *guignol* aspect and out-horrors Hammer. In a still-astonishing sequence, a deputation of striking factory workers is lured into negotiations with the alien management and used as wadding to prevent Quatermass pumping poisonous oxygen into the domes where the creatures thrive on ammonia. This is restaged even more horridly in *Quatermass 2*, with black blood dripping from a split pipe. Donlevy's line reading for the awful realisation is memorably disgusted … 'the pipe has been blocked with human pulp!' The Carroon creature acts on pure instinct,[47] but the hive-mind invaders are consciously cruel.[48] *Quatermass II* combines

Quatermass II: human pulp; *Quatermass 2*: synthetic food



science-fictional horrors (big shambling monsters!) with casual, practical brutalities evoking totalitarian states left and right. A riflebutt to the face remains a more immediate, horrifying prospect than any number of blobs from an unknown planet. Cartier and Kneale came to *Quatermass II* after *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Guest and Hammer would make *The Camp on Blood Island* (1958) and *Yesterday's Enemy* (1959), respectively lurid and considered films about war crimes. Guest's *Quatermass 2* is an impressively paranoid, panicky picture, urgent from its opening seconds to the finish. It has a peculiarly British sense of oppression, but also stresses its monsters – globular giant haystacks which resemble the comics' character the Heap. *Quatermass and the Pit* offers a spectral giant Martian. All three finales are intellectual, British takes on the *daikaiju* rampages endemic in Japanese cinema since *Gojira* (*Godzilla*, 1954).

After *The Thing from Another World*, almost all American s-f films follow Hawks's model, which derives from war and crime movies – the genres Kneale and Cartier draw on in the Quatermass serials. Touchstones include naturalistic talk, documentary asides about national defence or nuclear issues, a thriller pace, smart gal heroines with gender-ambiguous names, and an air of get-the-job-done determination even under atomic threat. Similarly, Quatermass – itself an 'answer' to *The Thing from Another World* – changed British s-f. Aside from the atypical *Things to Come* (1936) and a stray Boris

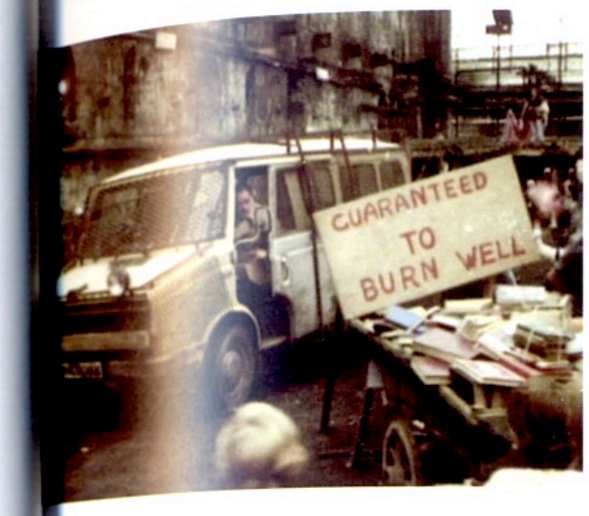
Quatermass II: BBC aliens; *Quatermass 2*: Hammer aliens

Karloff mad-scientist picture (*The Man Who Changed His Mind* [1936]),[49] pre-Quatermass British science-fiction cinema tended to satirical comedy (*The Perfect Woman* [1949]; *Stop Press Girl* [1949]) or spy/boffin thriller (*Q Planes* [1939]; *The Diamond* [1954]). After Quatermass, that changed – on film and television. Silly as it is, *Devil Girl from Mars* (1954) is at once pulp s-f (with its leather-clad Martian dominatrix, flying saucer and giant fridge-shaped robot) and typical British drama (much of it is set in a pub – a locale Kneale often uses for contrast with laboratories and control rooms).

Given that Quatermass was a television hit before transferring to the movies, it's unsurprising that the fledgling medium tried to repeat the success. For over sixty years, British science-fiction TV has been in the shadow of Quatermass. When commercial broadcasting began, ATV swiftly got Quatermass competitors on the air. *The Strange World of Planet X* (1956), written by Rene Ray, and *The Trollenberg Terror* (1956), written by Peter Kay, are six-part serials dealing with research establishments, scientific breakthroughs, alien invasions, telepathy and threats to humanity. In 1958, both became British movies with an imported American star (Forrest Tucker), alternative titles for America (*The Cosmic Monsters*, *The Crawling Eye*) and added monster effects. In the 1960s, the BBC scouted around for same-but-different properties. *A for Andromeda* (1961) and *The Andromeda Breakthrough* (1962), serials written by John Elliot and the astronomer Fred Hoyle, were the corporation's first attempt to create a non-Quatermass s-f franchise. Other Quatermass-influenced British-science fiction TV serials include *The Voodoo Factor* (ATV, 1959), *The Escape of R.D. 5* (BBC, 1961), *Plateau of Fear* (ABC, 1961), *The Monsters* (BBC, 1962), *The Big Pull* (BBC, 1962), *Dimension of Fear* (BBC, 1963) and *Undermind* (ABC/ITV, 1965). All these abound with revolving radar dishes, weird ancient forces in stone circles, dangerous mutations staggering across the countryside or through urban blight, hush-hush secret research establishments, banks of clunky computers with chattering printers and primitive monitors, military and police mobilisation, a conflation

of the scientific and the supernatural, aliens infiltrating the corridors of power, brink-of-doom scenarios and plague outbreaks. Quatermass was also an obvious inspiration for several series featuring boffins of various degrees of eccentricity tackling scientific problems. N. J. Crisp created *R3* (BBC1, 1964–5), with ex-Quatermass John Robinson as Sir Michael Gerrard of the Ministry of Research, and *The Expert* (BBC2, 1968–76), with Marius Goring as Home Office pathologist Dr John Hardy. Slightly farther-out science featured in Kit Pedler and Gerry Davis's 'awful warning' show *Doomwatch* (BBC1, 1970–2). Dr Spencer Quist (John Paul), a guilt-ridden Manhattan Project mathematician whose name evokes Quatermass, heads up an oversight group monitoring abuses of science – some with apocalyptic potential.

A striking contrast between British and American television is that UK TV mounted something as ambitious and grown-up as *The Quatermass Experiment* while US TV only saw s-f as kids' stuff produced on a level which makes *Planet of the Dragons* look sophisticated (*Captain Video and His Video Rangers* [Dumont, 1949–55]). However, the Quatermass influence trickled down to children's programming. For ITV, Sydney Newman produced teatime serials about space exploration (*Target Luna* [1960]; *Pathfinders to Venus* [1961]). In 1963, Newman commissioned the BBC series which would eclipse Quatermass as the leading British science-fiction television franchise, *Doctor Who* (BBC1, 1963–89; 2005–). Disliking the programme, Kneale turned down the opportunity to write for *Doctor Who*;[50] though Verity Lambert, the show's first producer (and, essentially, co-creator), would produce the 1979 *Quatermass*. With its freewheeling 'adventures in space and time' premise and alien wizard hero, *Doctor Who* was at first not much like Quatermass. However, it has lasted so long that it seems (like Victor Carroon) capable of absorbing everything, from educational historical drama to Hammer Horror. When a 1970 format change marooned newly cast Jon Pertwee on Earth, the production team adopted a Quatermass template they had experimented with a couple



of times: robot or alien menaces overwhelm squaddies on London streets and insidious aliens infiltrate research stations. Like Quatermass, *Doctor Who* was such a pop-culture success that films were adapted from early serials, *Dr Who and the Daleks* (1964) and *Daleks' Invasion Earth 2150 AD* (1965). Peter Cushing, in rare terrible performances, is a poor replacement for William Hartnell. Newman, Lambert and Terry Nation complained far less about Cushing than Kneale did about Donlevy. Of course, none of them were sole creators of the character.

The influence of Quatermass on British science-fiction cinema is similarly marked. At first, it was felt mostly in-house at Hammer Films. When *The Quatermass Xperiment* succeeded, Hammer fast-tracked *Quatermass 2* and trusted Guest and Kneale with the trickier, unashamedly intellectual *The Abominable Snowman* (1957). The studio couldn't get *Quatermass 2* going quickly enough and commissioned Jimmy Sangster to write a sequel, asking Kneale's permission as an afterthought. 'Could we borrow Professor Quatermass?'[51] Kneale declined and Sangster's *X – the Unknown* (1958) script substituted nuclear physicist 'Professor Adam Royston' as lead boffin. Almost simultaneously, Kneale-like mysteries around research establishments were deployed in *The Gamma People* (1956), *Timeslip* (1956), *Escapement* (1957) and – most luridly – *Fiend without a Face* (1957). Robert Day's *First Man into Space* (1958) is

The Quatermass Conclusion (1979): guaranteed to burn well; John Mills and the Planet People

Quatermass and the Pit (TV, 1958–9): Martian, Andre Morell, Cec Linder; *Quatermass and the Pit*: Andrew Keir, James Donald, apeman

the most blatant *Quatermass* knock-off:[52] an astronaut returns to Earth as a weirdly encrusted, blood-drinking monster.[53]

In the 1960s, British science-fiction films still looked to Quatermass, though less immediately. Between the BBC and Hammer versions of *Quatermass and the Pit*, other influences entered the mix – notably, novelist John Wyndham, who might have influenced Kneale. *Village of the Damned* (1960), from *The Midwich Cuckoos* (1957), and *The Day of the Triffids* (1962), from the 1951 novel, are respectively excellent and poor Wyndham adaptations. Outside Hammer, Val Guest essayed the monster-free *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* (1961), which has Quatermass elements as the near-destruction of the Earth after ill-judged nuclear tests is observed from the viewpoint of a Fullalove-like journalist (Edward Judd). Large-scale, world-threatening crises were beyond the budget of most British films – *The Day of the Triffids*, for instance, makes a hash of its two dooms (mass blindness and killer plants). So, as with Kneale cutting his cloth to suit the BBC, smaller-scale stories were required, confined to isolated research stations (often on offshore islands) with invisible or seldom-seen aliens, single lone mutant menaces, elisions of s-f with crime/espionage, CND editorial messages, horror shocks and threats as bland as bad weather. Inherent in the Quatermass format and imprinted on British s-f cinema is that scientists not soldiers are the solution – even to problems they've caused. This may have as much to do with lower budgets, preferring a gizmo to mass firepower, as differing cultural imperatives – though a post-Suez lack of faith in military measures extends even to the giant monster movie *Gorgo* (1960). Another habit inherited from Kneale is an eccentric welding of pulp concepts to British realism: in *Unearthly Stranger* (1963), a sterile English marriage is anatomised when a space researcher (John Neville) realises his continental wife (Gabriella Licudi) is an alien spy; an alien seeking Earthwomen to abduct in *The Night Caller* (1965) advertises in *Bikini Girl* magazine.

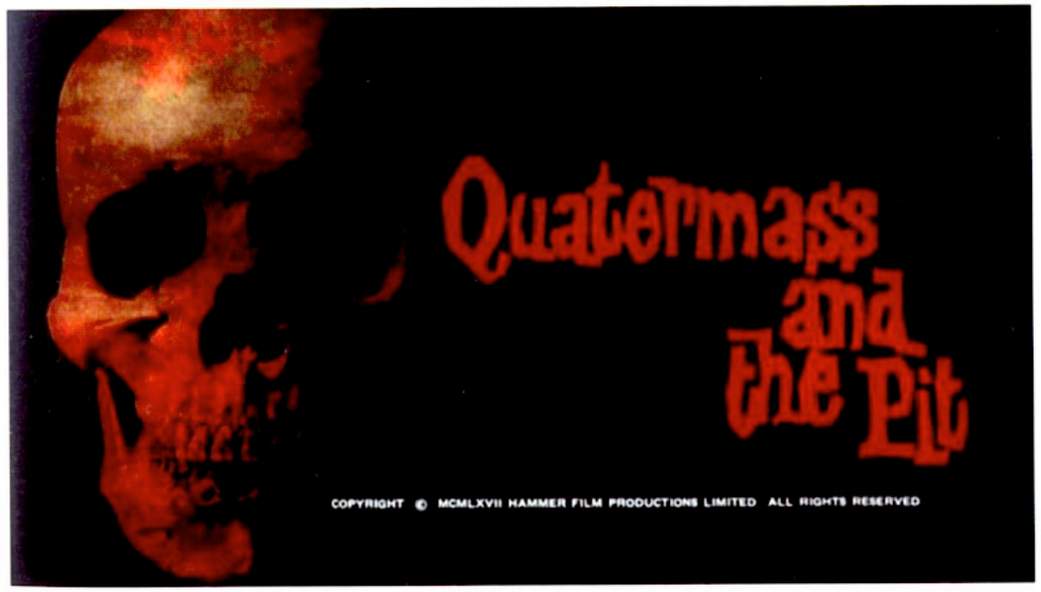
Science-fiction cinema (in Britain and America) was changed in 1968 by MGM's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, co-created by American

Stanley Kubrick (who produced and directed the film in England) and British Arthur C. Clarke (who wrote it in the Chelsea Hotel, New York). In the scale and technical perfection of its special effects, the scope of its ideas and imagery and the definitive shifting of s-f movies from the earthbound to Jupiter and beyond, *2001* eclipsed everything that had come before. But it is also a companion piece to *Quatermass and the Pit*.

2 'Hob'

The words 'Hammer Film Production' appear on a black background.[54] Successive jigsaw-piece cutaways reveal a slightly psychedelic skull. Swirling, infernal images are superimposed on bone – perhaps maps or landscapes – evoking both the red planet Mars and the fires of Hell. Beside this, the title appears in jagged red letters. *Quatermass and the Pit*. The skull could have come from a Dennis Wheatley paperback cover.[55] The opening of each TV episode went with the title engraved on the white material of the alien spacecraft. As the object rises, loose earth falls off the lettering, revealing the words individually. *Quatermass. And. The Pit*. Then the familiar 'a serial in six parts by Nigel Kneale'.

When the BBC commissioned something they assumed would be called *Quatermass III*, Kneale toyed with dropping the franchise name. His script drafts were simply headed *The Pit*. Mindful that the earlier films were renamed in America, Hammer also considered the



Quatermass and the Pit

shorter title. In the event, both versions went with *Quatermass and the Pit*. Second cleverest of the series' titles,[56] it references both a literal pit in which apemen and aliens are buried and the metaphorical bottomless pit of Hell. Edgar Allan Poe, another writer whose love of puns and wordplay belies a gloomy image, uses 'Pit' exactly as Kneale does in his *conte cruel* 'The Pit and the Pendulum' (1842). In America, the film became *Five Million Years to Earth*, vaguely echoing the Harryhausen monster movie *20 Million Miles to Earth* (1957). Less pulpy than *The Creeping Unknown* and less generic than *Enemy from Space*, *Five Million Years to Earth* is still a peculiar choice. Since retitling was necessary because overseas audiences didn't understand the original, it's odd that the replacement only makes sense after you've seen the movie. At a first glance, it seems a mistake – do they mean five million *light* years to Earth?

Juxtaposing *Quatermass* with *The Pit* yokes science fiction and horror, announcing that this will straddle both fantastical genres. The earlier stories offer s-f takes on vampirism and possession, but *Quatermass and the Pit* suggests all our supernatural ideas come from Mars. While Kneale was working on the third serial, Hammer was flush with the success of its first Frankenstein and Dracula films and had the Mummy, Jekyll and Hyde, a wolf man and a Phantom of the Opera in the works. Bloodier and sexier than earlier monster films and lushly coloured in contrast with the drab monochrome of most s-f, Hammer Horror was new and old, mod and square at the same time. Peter Cushing, Kneale's Winston Smith, became a film star (almost a matinee idol) as fussy, dandyish Baron Frankenstein and determined, dour Dr Van Helsing. Tall, available bit player Christopher Lee seized opportunities afforded by relatively small roles as Frankenstein's creation and Dracula and landed a career as a horror icon. Terence Fisher and Jimmy Sangster eclipsed Val Guest and Nigel Kneale as the studio's go-to director–writer team.[57] Andre Morell became television's Quatermass soon after playing Dr Watson in Fisher's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1959), with Cushing

inevitably cast as Holmes, a spot found for Lee as cursed Sir Henry and a general amping up of the shocking elements. By 1967, Hammer Horror had been a brand for ten years. The studio had branched out with exotic fantasies (*She* [1964]; *One Million Years BC* [1966]) and horror-tinged psycho-thrillers (*Taste of Fear* [1960]; *Paranoiac* [1963]), but mostly abandoned science fiction. *Quatermass and the Pit* was scheduled for 1964 as a Columbia-financed project to be directed by Freddie Francis, but the Hollywood major went cold on the prospect of Hammer s-f after after Joseph Losey's brilliant, yet troubled *The Damned* (1963).

A simple credit block lists four actors, 'James Donald Andrew Keir Barbara Shelley Julian Glover'. *Quatermass and the Pit* is the only Quatermass project in any medium in which the actor playing Quatermass does not get top billing. Donald and Keir are you-know-the-face useful British character actors. Both were Scots-born; in scenes together, Keir's pronounced burr prompts Donald, usually cast convincingly as Englishmen, to let his own natural accent slip through. Donald presumably nudged ahead of Keir in the credits because his CV included important supporting roles in major films (Van Gogh's brother in *Lust for Life* [1956]; officer POWs in *The Bridge on the River Kwai* [1957] and *The Great Escape* [1963]). Keir only had bit parts in epics (*Cleopatra* [1963]; *The Fall of the Roman Empire* [1964]). He had a tiny, waterlogged moment as the Second Engineer in Baker's *A Night to Remember* (1958), but was a regular in Hammer's cut-price swashbucklers (*The Pirates of Blood River* [1962]; *The Devil-Ship Pirates* [1964]). Keir was in a group of character actors (Oliver Reed, Noel Willman, Ralph Bates and, ironically, Andre Morell) used on the principle that Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee couldn't topline *every* Hammer horror. Aside from a need for variety, Hammer liked to remind their stars' agents that they were replaceable if they made too heavy salary or script demands. Before Quatermass, Keir's most prominent horror role was Father Sandor, the rifle-toting, worldly monk who fills in for Cushing's Van Helsing opposite Lee's vampire in Terence Fisher's

sequel *Dracula – Prince of Darkness* (1966). Outside Hammer, Keir had science-fiction form as a dour resistance fighter in *Daleks' Invasion Earth 2150 AD*.

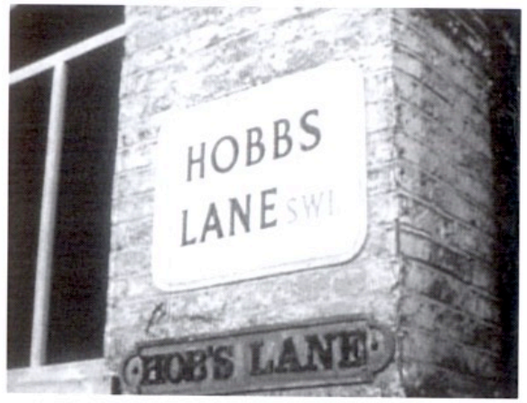
'The casting was done by [studio head] Jimmy Carreras, [producer] Tony Nelson-Keys and myself', said Baker.[58] 'I don't remember discussing any other name for that part than Andrew Keir.' Rumours persist that bigger stars (Kenneth More, Van Heflin, Peter Finch, Anthony Quayle, Jack Hawkins, Trevor Howard) were considered. Strangely, Hammer didn't ponder Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee as Quatermass and Roney.[59] Also out of the frame was future Quatermass John Mills, a Baker collaborator from the director's first feature, *The October Man* (1947) to his final TV movie, *The Masks of Death* (1984). In 1967, Mills might have been unwilling to work for a déclassé outfit like Hammer. To Kneale's relief, Brian Donlevy was no longer in the frame – though he might have been as late as 1964, when Kneale worked with producer Anthony Hinds on a draft entitled *Quatermass and 'The Pit'*. Quatermass gave Donlevy a limited cachet as a genre leading man; he made a last trip to England to star in Don Sharp's cheap and strange *Curse of the Fly* (1965), produced for Twentieth Century-Fox by Hammer's old US partner Lippert.

We zoom into the empty socket of the reddish skull. A thin stripe of image appears in the black, disclosing a policeman strolling past a red pillar box. The stripe widens to open up the frame on an empty early morning London street, wet from recent rain. The torch-wielding bobby on his beat notices a meowing cat in the corner doorway of an undertaker's chapel. He walks past a winking Belisha Beacon up to the chainlink doors of an underground station. The curious copper is only here to guide your eye through the set; he is followed by a high-angle camera on a crane, demonstrating how expansive the backlot street is.[60] A near-identical policeman serves the same purpose in the opening shot of 'An Unearthly Child' (1963), the first episode of *Doctor Who*. Drilling noise seeps out of the station. A London Transport notice announces 'Hobbs End

Re-Development Central Line Ext.' and 'apologises to passengers for any inconvenience caused by works at this station'. Since the early 1950s, Hammer had been based at its small studio in Bray (*The Quatermass Xperiment* was filmed there, though *Quatermass 2* ventured to Elstree) but it left at the end of 1966. Made as part of a new-struck deal with Seven Arts, Twentieth Century-Fox (which distributed in the US), Warner-Pathe (which distributed in the UK) and the Associated British Picture Corporation, *Quatermass and the Pit* was originally scheduled for Elstree Studios. However, no space was available so the production relocated to the MGM Studios in Borehamwood. Smaller than Elstree, it was less busy (though some of *2001* was being shot there); the remarkable Bernard Robinson, Hammer's art director, could for once construct on a larger scale. The 'London streets' might be familiar from episodes of the Borehamwood-shot *Danger Man* (1960–2; 1964–6) or films as diverse as *Children of the Damned* (1963) and *Blowup* (1966).

Watched at the end of a Hammer Quatermass marathon, *Quatermass and the Pit* is obviously different from its predecessors. 1950s black and white gives way to 1960s colour. In crowd scenes, swinging London fashions pop out: among tube travellers, an extra wears a distracting shiny red PVC hat and a sheepskin jacket over a purple dress. Cinematographer Arthur Grant had shot *The Abominable Snowman* and *The Damned* (one of Hammer's most visually imaginative movies) in high-contrast monochrome; both untypically use white, rather than black, to evoke terror. On *Quatermass and the Pit*, Grant employs the slightly muted tones (with the occasional shocking bright red bus or vile green slime) of his romantic-gothic work, which encompasses Roger Corman's *The Tomb of Ligeia* (1964) as well as Hammer's *The Reptile* (1966) and *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave* (1968). Like Robinson, Grant was a vital contributor to the look and quality of his Hammer horrors.

For all its colour and general added 'MGM' value, *Quatermass and the Pit* is more claustrophobic than Guest's Quatermass movies –



which get out on living locations. Apart from a few scenes shot in a real graveyard,[61] the film was made entirely on the backlot, and is mostly set underground. The BBC Pit is on a building site, theoretically in the open air (though Cartier can't pan up past a certain point – there's a studio roof instead of sky) rather than in an enclosed underground station. The serial establishes location with filmed exterior shots of a real building site before getting to designer Clifford Hatts's big set. Like Robinson, Hatts gets a lot out of limited resources – since much of the story takes place on one set, the Pit seems *huge*. Cartier often uses tracking shots through the set, catching characters posed *en tableau* when struck by horror or revelation. Kneale helps the art director with the serial structure: the set was redressed in the week between episodes, as the pit is dug deeper. 'The Halfmen', Episode One, opens on a shot of the 'Hobbs Lane SW1' street sign, bright and shiny above an older, rougher 'Hob's Lane' sign – a detail, indicative of the evolution of the city, the film saves for later.[62] The BBC's Hobbs Lane is in Knightsbridge, which the Westminster Abbey archives refer to as 'Hobbes Lane in the village of Knightesbrugge'.[63] Baldhoon House, the office block due to be built here, must be extremely high-end – it would overlook Buckingham Palace and Sloane Square. That a corporate development is replacing an abandoned working-class street suggests the ruthless gentrification addressed by Kneale's TV play 'Gentry' (1987). Hammer's Hobbs Lane is in slightly less salubrious W10, somewhere near North Kensington, Ladbroke Grove and Queen's Park. On the Central Line, it might be between Queensway and Notting Hill Gate. The Number 22 bus to Homerton passes nearby; its real-life route would take it past Hobbs Lane in SW1, but not Hobbs End Station in W10. In the

1960s, extensions to the London Underground were mostly underway at the extremities of the map, but perhaps a new fork of the line is being opened.

'In the Quatermass serials, I always used what was going on at the time as a basis for the stories, Kneale said.

> In the late 1950s London was being rebuilt after the war and so a number of huge cavities were being dug. Unexploded bombs were always being found and sometimes old Roman ruins would be exposed. And I thought – what if they found something else far beyond that? What if they uncovered a spaceship?[64]

Kneale credits Anthony Hinds with suggesting the change from a building site to the tube. Hinds picked up on a line in the serial which establishes that there were previous paranormal events in 1927 when the earth was disturbed by the construction of the underground railway. It's an inspired choice. Robinson's tube station is wonderfully detailed, complete with ads ('Choose English Cheese') and film posters (*My Fair Lady* [1964]; *Hotel* [1967] – even *The Witches* [1966]). Older London Transport signage indicates that the platform nearest the excavation has been out of use for a while. An exit 'for Hobbs End Market' hints that this section closed when the market did. The houses nearby were abandoned before the war, which would have had a knock-on effect on local businesses. This subliminal backstory shows just how much thought the production team – Robinson and his associate Ken Ryan – put in. After fossils have been discovered, we see commuters and journalists emerge from a cage-lift – one group head for the active platform and the others pursue the news story. That Hobbs End is among the relatively few London Underground stations with lifts establishes that it's deeper than those served by escalators. We only see the lift the once. Thereafter, folks nip in and out of the station at all hours, carrying heavy equipment or in states of distress, as if the platform were only a few easy steps from the entrance. Though there are London

Quatermass and the Pit: 'the find'; *Quatermass and the Pit* (TV): 'the find'

Underground stalking scenes in *Bulldog Jack* (1935) and *Man Hunt* (1941), *Quatermass and the Pit* was among the first movies to use the tube for terror.[65] For UK audiences, the Underground is a familiar location everyone is slightly uneasy about. Its lore extends to abandoned or lost stations and lines (the Hobbs End Market exit), crowds huddling on platforms to escape the Blitz (that stubborn wartime memory again), electrocutions on the third rail (evoked in *Quatermass and the Pit* when a technician is shocked to death in the spaceship) and cabbalist hidden meanings within the classic topographic route map

After the policeman has passed by, there's a smash cut to the Pit. A pneumatic drill slices into a wall of vividly brown wet clay and a pan follows clods of earth on a conveyer belt towards a hopper. A plank identifies Balfour Beatty, a firm that did extensive work on railways in Britain. The crane outside, which figures in the climax, is owned by McAlpine, another construction company. Along with the newspapers that carry apemen headlines (*Evening Standard*, *Evening News*) and namechecks for actual people (Jack Hobbs, the cricketer; Wernher von Braun), citing familiar businesses establishes that the film takes place in a world resembling the real one. Thanks to product placement, this is now a movie commonplace but it was relatively fresh in 1967. For the most part, the serial uses fake products, companies and newspapers (Fullalove is on the *Evening Gazette*) – though Hobbs still gets a mention. A workman sorting the clods calls halt and a subliminally fanged, muddy skull is found in the debris. It might be expected that this would be a shock, with the police called in to investigate a murder … but the workman tosses the skull off a shovel at one of his mates and a foreman advises caution because the fossil 'may be worth a fortune'. An Afro-Caribbean Briton – listed as 'coloured workman' (Lionel Ngakane) in 1958 and 'black workman' (Elroy Josephs) in 1967 – is the most cautious of the cheery crew. Ngakane plays the character (who has a name, Jack, on television) without Josephs's eye-rolling terror. On TV, the ominous note is provided by an older, white workman (George Dudley), who

mutters 'I don't like this place … haven't done since we started.' The serial references then-contemporary race riots in Notting Hill, nearer Hammer's Hobbs Lane than the BBC's, among the signs of lasting Martian influence.[66] Baker's *Flame in the Streets* (1961) features a fairly sanitised recreation of these. Kneale doesn't update the urban unrest for the film, which he could have done by referring to civil rights struggles in America or anti-Vietnam demos in London. Writing a script in 1964 which wouldn't get greenlit for three years, he might have been wary of topical material; he doesn't acknowledge significant advances in space exploration between 1958 and 1967.

Another workman – a young, unbilled Gareth Thomas[67] – swings a pickaxe at the mud wall and discloses a complete skeleton with a misshapen cranium. Music crashes and the camera zooms at the skull. Thomas's wide-eyed reaction shot expresses sheer terror. Cutting between skull and Thomas heightens a sense that the dead creature has fixed baleful, empty eye sockets on the living man. Kneale disliked this contrived early shock,[68] but the film subtly frightens the audience by showing how terrified its characters are. Thomas is a burly bloke on a building site, not a peignoir-clutching ingénue startled by the intrusion of a fanged Christopher Lee into her boudoir. If he's afraid, it must be even more serious than it seems. Sergeant Ellis (Grant Taylor), promoted from television's Constable Ellis (Victor Platt), sweats and shivers in the scratch-marked derelict house even as he pooh-poohs the local tales of hauntings. His fear is more appropriate for the child he used to be, growing up near this bad place, than the bluff, cheery, on-the-ball local copper he is now. That characters have extreme reactions is an effect of proximity to the Martian spaceship. Baker takes a chance by having some of his cast – notably, Hugh Futcher as Sapper West and Duncan Lamont as Sladden[69] but also Keir – contort their faces almost comically when the 'fluence is strongest. In *The Vampire Lovers* (1970), Baker has almost all the cast, male and female, overcome by eye-rolling lust at the sight of Ingrid Pitt.

Quatermass and the Pit: apeman, Sheila Steafel; *Quatermass and the Pit* (TV): apeman, Christine Finn, Cec Linder

From the skeleton discovery, the film cuts to a bustling Hobbs Lane (later that day?) and news placards about 'underground ape men'. The rapidly unfolding story is stressed by following a bright yellow *Evening News* van with an update headline ('more finds') on the side. A bespectacled brunette reporter (Sheila Steafel)[70] is late for Professor Roney's speech to the press, which she comes in on halfway. *Quatermass and the Pit* has an impressive *pace*. Forced to trim his original script to half its length, Kneale rushes through a complex, demanding story while trying not to lose anything important. Baker uses devices – moving objects to guide the eye, people arriving late and being forced to catch up – to get on with it. The serial is leisurely by comparison: those who come to it after knowing the film well appreciate the extra character and detail – and realise how much the film cast does with parts which have been pared to the bone. Danny Peary observes that the role of heroine Barbara Judd is 'so underwritten that it could have been played by a 60-year-old actress'.[71] Kneale preferred elfin Christine Finn (the voice of Tin-Tin on *Thunderbirds* [ATV, 1965–6]) over the more mature Barbara Shelley in terms which downplay his own writing and Barbara's importance ('our screaming girl was better than Hammer's screaming girl').[72] Finn's Barbara has more extracurricular emotional business: the beginnings of a relationship with Captain Potter (John Stratton) echo the curtailed romance between Paula Quatermass and Captain Dillon (John Stone) in *Quatermass II*. Bruce G. Hallenbeck notes that, in his rewrite, 'Kneale deferred to the sexual politics of the sixties' by giving Barbara 'lines to speak that had been uttered by others on television'.[73] Shelley, always alert and alive, creates a breathing character out of slender material. She conveys more in the wordless take under the end credits than many Hammer starlets do in their entire performances. Barbara gets an introductory shot to herself, turning to camera when Roney asks a trivial question just so the film can identify her by name. 'How is it, Miss Judd?'[74]

As in *Quatermass 2*, probably at the behest of Anthony Hinds, Kneale comes up with second draft concepts which strengthen

plotting. Roney's press conference melds several scenes from the serial: twice the information is conveyed in half the time, with character beats firmly sketched rather than elaborated. Matthew Roney, of the Nicklin Institute, is trying to get the media onside because he needs time to excavate the site properly before London Transport insist they get on with work. A typical bureaucrat (Peter Bennett) wants him to tone down the rhetoric. Tension is added by an unseen passing train, which makes the journalists jittery and throws Roney off his prepared script. Roney talks about the importance of the fossils, which establish that man-like creatures were around 5 million years ago, much earlier than was then supposed. He makes a show of unveiling a clay mock-up of a hominid. This was the cue for Linder to deliver a nice little speech: 'He wasn't very big. He had the face of an ape. But he had a big brain. And he walked like a man!' Donald says most of this, but our attention is drawn away. Barbara takes over from the journalist as the figure our eye follows in the frame: her orange-and-beige outfit stands out, like the reporter's red coat, among drably dressed men. A tweedy old lady volunteer, Miss Dobson (Bee Duffell)[75] digging a scapula out of the wall has hit what seems to be a water pipe. This is a puzzle: no pipe is listed on official charts. 'There is just one possibility', muses the bureaucrat. Cut to another sign: 'Police Notice – Unexploded Bomb – Keep Out'; this is battered, indicating it's been used before – unexploded bombs are not unusual. In double-quick time, the army arrive, led by youngish professional soldier Captain Potter (Bryan Marshall). They barge efficiently past the exasperated Roney ('That's right – tear it all up') and get to work on the unidentified UXB. 'I've never seen a Satan with *bumps*', says Sergeant Cleghorn (Maurice Good). Even more baffling, a magnetic microphone slides off the blueish object – it's not steel. Potter points out that the surface isn't corroded and Cleghorn puts his hand on it: Good's expression suggests it feels wrong to the touch. Potter decides to have the thing completely dug up, 'Let the dog see the rabbit.' A couple of squaddies with shovels snap to.

In the serial, we meet Quatermass as he walks up to the club bar and claps Roney on the shoulder. Roney is a heavy drinker, a detail dropped in the film. They compare problems and share comic business over sandwiches ('You know, Roney, for all your troubles, there's one thing to be thankful for – there's no military value in fossil apes'). The film introduces Quatermass – and his antagonist Colonel Breen (Julian Glover) – in an uncomfortable meeting at which the scientist is told his government-funded rocket group will now focus on defence and that Breen will be joining his team. Quatermass (and we) assumes this is a move towards getting rid of him and resolves to cling on. In 1958, the smoothly devious higher-up is the Minister for War (Robert Perceval). At that time, the post was officially Secretary of State for War (from 1960 to 1962, John Profumo). The film just identifies him as 'the Minister' (Edwin Richfield). By 1967, the post was Secretary of State for Defence (still, popularly the Minister of Defence). Fictional American Presidents tend not to represent identified political parties, but most fictional British governments are Conservative. From 1964 to 1970, with Labour in power and Harold Wilson as PM, the Minister of Defence was Denis Healey, who couldn't be mistaken for the lazy-eyed, plummy-voiced Richfield.[76] In *Quatermass II*/*Quatermass 2*, Quatermass joins a deputation led by opposition MP Vinnie Broadhead (Rupert Davies/Tom Chatto) to investigate the alien-controlled facility at Winnerden Flats. Broadhead's Northern accent and no-nonsense manner code him as a Labour politician.[77] Philip Strick noted the implicit message was that 'aliens could be expected to take over the Conservatives, may indeed already have done so'.[78] In *Quatermass*, the political spectrum in the series' UK has devolved to mutually destructive armed clashes between youth gangs descended from the Baader-Meinhof Group ('the Badders') and the Young Conservatives ('Blue Brigade'). The government making military moves in space in Hammer's *Quatermass and the Pit* is probably not led by Harold Wilson.

The militarisation of the British Rocket Group raises again the scientist–soldier opposition of *The Thing from Another World* and

The Quatermass Experiment, with more explicit discussion of philosophy and strategy. The Cold War subtext of the race to the moon was keenly felt. Breen takes it as a given that there will be military bases on the moon ('and probably Mars') within ten years and 'whoever plants them first will be able to police the Earth with ballistic missiles'. The Breen doctrine prefigures Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative ('Star Wars') of the 1980s. Quatermass, a truculent pacifist, believes 'we're on the edge of a new dimension of discovery – it's a great chance to leave our vices behind, war first of all'. Paradoxically, Quatermass sounds aggressive, while the army officer – blandly confident he's already won – tries to seem magnanimous. Morell's Quatermass is better-humoured and politically savvy, but passionate in insisting that his Rocket Group 'was intended for peaceful scientific research not to be perverted to fulfil such a monstrous conception as this … Dead Man's Deterrent'. Howell (hollow-cheeked Peter Copley), the Minister's righthand man, is another of the film's tiny, vivid characters. More intelligent than the inflexible Breen or the short-fused Minister, Howell warns Quatermass off when he says he'll fight this policy at top level ('I shouldn't – it came from there'). Later, Howell is almost Quatermass's ally in the enemy camp – though ignored when it should count. He persists in asking sensible scientific questions while the Minister is authorising a foolish press release. Howell is a synthesis of several unmemorable, unindividuated characters in the serial, mostly the Minister's PPS (Richard Dare). Cartier stages the meeting as a committee session around a conference-room table, but Hammer's version is more dynamic – extraneous characters are cut (we don't meet the Minister until later) and Quatermass is in a bright red hot seat as Howell suavely forces a *fait accompli* on him. At the end of the meeting, in both versions, Quatermass and Breen are stuck with each other and briefly resolve to make the best of it.

What Kneale needs to happen next is that the rocketry specialist and the soldier must go to the Pit to become involved in a storyline Roney has been carrying. In the serial, Roney collars his friend

Quatermass at the War Office, hoping for support in hurrying the bomb-disposal men along. Quatermass, slightly vindictively, presumes on his new colleague to come to Hobbs Lane and apply expert knowledge. Rethinking for the film, Kneale makes the hook more direct. Roney, impatient for this impediment to be out of his way, suggests Potter is too young to have experience of German bombs. The Captain resolves to get a second opinion and calls in his former mentor, Breen. Having one human connection makes Breen less a pantomime villain. Julian Glover, cast by Baker from 'The Living Dead' (*The Avengers*, 1967), recognised his role was 'the obligatory arsehole' who gets in the way of the hero[79] but Breen is sometimes almost admirable. 'This is a problem,' Bushell's Breen says of the mystery, 'and I enjoy problems.' When the drill operator Sladden mentions he once opened a bank vault in 'a secret job, just like this one', Breen comments 'then I'm glad you don't talk about it'. Bushell plays this line as impatient rudeness, but Glover is amused as well as superior; his Breen is smart, sardonic and initially has the respect of his men. Just as Breen and Quatermass are setting off for lunch, the call comes in from Hobbs End. 'Do you ever find your early career catching up with you?' Breen asks. Longtime viewers might think this a dig at a man who brought an alien virus to Earth. 'I never had a career,' says Quatermass, 'only work.' Quatermass invites himself into the investigation, partly to irritate Breen. A tiny bit in Hobbs Lane has the soldier briskly leaving his car, expecting Quatermass to wait inside. He tries to shut the door, only to find the Professor climbing out to follow him. Breen nearly shrugs, Quatermass nearly smiles. Play this scene back to appreciate the way Hammer's regular editor James Needs trims shots before the actors complete their expressions – the hints are enough. Keir's Quatermass, like Donlevy's, is a bruiser as well as a brain, but he can be amused by his own belligerence. Perhaps he ruefully understands it's been a career-long problem for him; later, he'll realise he carries the Martian taint. Here, he shows cunning in becoming at once Breen's colleague and competitor. That he can be distracted by a side-issue like the

Hobbs End finding suggests both his scientific curiosity and a waywardness which must annoy his projects' backers. Note that Quatermass hasn't been booted out of the BRG; even with Breen looking over his shoulder, he's vital to the British space programme.

When Breen and Quatermass get to the Pit, the supposed bomb is partially exposed. Potter tells Roney another skull has been found, *inside* the object, and the palaeontologist hurries to extract it safely. Breen hooks Roney's arm as he tries to get past, roughly questioning why a civilian is poking around. Unlike Breen, Quatermass pays attention to what's going on outside his field. 'Don't you know? Dr Roney's the Man of the Moment – this place is news.' Breen says Roney has 'no business being here now' but Quatermass's approval tips the balance: Roney is allowed to prise the skull out of the mud. The scientist's passion and professionalism has won over the soldiers: a fossil-digger has to be as careful as a bomb-disposal man, albeit with less fatal consequences if he makes a slip. Breen sees this as lax, and a crack in his authority. Potter, who has called in Breen, begins to side against him, though they have no on-screen argument. Relationships are established with expressions and gestures. It would be easy to cut extraneous character bits, but Baker and Kneale insist their people aren't just talking props. Potter and Cleghorn wryly note Roney's disregard for danger as he digs around an unexploded bomb, expressing childish enthusiasm for the new specimen ('Thank you – it's absolutely marvellous … oh, it's magnificent – better than anything we've got so far!'). When Barbara fusses that he might drop the slippery find, he responds with a po-faced 'not on your nellie'. People around Roney are amused by him, but he doesn't notice. The leading men meet while Roney is focused on the skull. When Quatermass introduces himself, Roney is almost as dismissive as Breen was of him, asking if he's 'one of these bomb experts' and foisting him on his assistant. The smiles exchanged by Barbara and Quatermass show they aren't offended by his rudeness.

Quatermass wonders aloud how the skull got inside the object. Breen airily supposes 'it was there in the clay … it got rammed

through'. 'Unbroken?' Quatermass asks, 'a fragile fossil?' Joining Roney and Barbara at the makeshift workspace where he is trowelling mud off the skull and she is preparing a tray, the physicist shows he's the big-picture scientist by asking the right questions. Roney admits this fossil is better preserved than the ones found earlier and mutters that it must have been protected by being inside the object. A music sting and a close-up of Roney seeing what Quatermass means prompts us to think it through too – if the skull was protected, then the bomb has been in the ground much longer than 1944. 'Good Lord, I was so concerned right now I didn't realise … it was *inside*. That's no bomb! Whatever is it?' Quatermass follows up by asking how old the skull is. 'About 5 million years,' Roney says, 'it could be more.' Having led us up to this point, Kneale doesn't come out and say it: the manufactured object comes from human prehistory.

Leaving the archaeologists with the skull, Quatermass tells Breen he is dealing with something stranger than a Nazi bomb. Potter and Breen are consulting the local police. Sergeant Ellis has brought civil-defence records which state that no V-weapons fell on the street above. Incendiaries only did damage because the houses were empty.[80] Quatermass senses another mystery which Breen fussily dismisses by insisting empty means 'evacuated'. After the soldiers have moved on, Ellis tells Quatermass 'That's not quite right. Those houses were all abandoned years before the War … . People just wouldn't live there, some kind of scare.' Ellis is conscientious, if wary: he didn't want to contradict a uniformed army officer in public; he talks to a civilian, but holds back how much he knows for fear of seeming ridiculous. The next chill comes when we realise this reassuringly solid George Dixon type is terrified of this street. 'Superstition,' Ellis tells Quatermass, unconvinced, 'lot of nonsense, I daresay.'

Quatermass and Ellis talk as they walk from the military area of the Pit back past the palaeontology space where Roney and Barbara have cleaned and 'fixed' the fossil. Again, Baker uses people in motion to draw our attention from one sphere to another and Kneale

rearranges and combines scenes to better pacing. In the film, plot overrides character. After the Episode One cliffhanger ('5 million years?'), the opening of Episode Two ('The Ghosts') has Quatermass rush to examine the object he now guesses is an alien spaceship. This is more plausible than the film, where the rocket scientist is sidetracked from his speciality by the haunting of Hobbs Lane.

Quatermass and the Pit: Grant Taylor; Barbara Shelley, Andrew Keir, Noel Howlett

Roney insists Barbara take a breather because 'the air's terrible down here', whereupon she attaches herself to the passing Quatermass as if she were *his* assistant. All Quatermass and Barbara had between them was a smile, again curtailed by a you-got-the-message-now-hurry-on edit. Now, they're bonded team-mates the way Quatermass and Breen aren't, respectful and fond.[81] This leads to a deepening connection between Quatermass and Roney, confirmed by Keir's quick grin (dour and sparkly at the same time) as Roney apologises for not taking to Breen because 'I'm afraid he's the type I loathe on sight.' Part of this is convenience: in rewriting a script that had Quatermass and Roney as old friends, Kneale keeps in lines which suggest they know each other. Now, they have a natural sympathy, in a story where coded-in-the-DNA instincts turn out to be the nub of the plot. That Roney *can* loathe someone on sight proves even he isn't entirely free of the Martian curse: if he's a rare human not descended from apes altered by aliens, he still has a bred-in-the-bone dislike of those who are.

In earlier appearances, Quatermass was (at least initially) surrounded and supported by peers, colleagues and assistants. Here, he's on his own and his authority is under threat. In the film, Jerry Watson (Robert Morris),[82] another Quatermass disciple, shows up to make the brain-reading machine slightly less unlikely. The Professor is still away from the facilities we saw in other stories. Mostly, Quatermass is a welcome visitor at the Institute, where Roney is his equivalent – in charge, seemingly worshipped by subordinates,[83] but restrained by money-men, cautious PR folk and bureaucrats. Roney could be got rid of if he makes too much trouble, either by holding up London Transport works or fundamentally questioning the origin of human intelligence. A recurrent theme in Kneale's work is the team of loosely affiliated specialists working on shared projects. In *The Quatermass Experiment*, the BERG works with police, military, the media, civil servants and others. In *Quatermass II*, unease develops as Quatermass learns he can't trust these connections, even as he forges new ones among the bolshie workers of Winnerden Flats. In

Quatermass and the Pit, 'The Road' (BBC, 1963) and *The Stone Tape* (BBC2, 1972), multidisciplinary groups conduct scientific studies of the supernatural. Usually, a Breen-like dangerous idiot is involved. Ryan Electronics executive Peter Brock (Michael Bryant), in *The Stone Tape*, is the worst of these. Having had a messy affair with sensitive (in the psychic and emotional meanings) computer programmer Jill Greeley (Jane Asher), he pushes her on in a project (investigating the phenomena in a haunted room in a country house being converted into a research station) which gets her killed. He's a Breen who has taken sexual advantage of a Barbara.[84] In *Quatermass and the Pit*, Quatermass's crew includes palaeontologists Roney and Barbara, bomb-disposal men Potter and Cleghorn, policeman Ellis, skilled workman Sladden,[85] an archive-keeper, thick-spectacled techie Jerry, sympathetic ears in the civil service and the media, and a vicar. Kneale shows how science, whether rocketry or palaeontology, gets done: theories are put forward and tested, literal spadework is handled by volunteers like the tweedy lady or grumbling squaddies, specialists are needed for particular tasks, findings are correlated and compared with precedents, friendships and enmities are established on the job, and discoveries are carefully conveyed to higher-ups but still leak out in sensationalised form to the press.

Outside the station, Ellis shows Quatermass and Barbara the derelict houses. In the serial, a few residents remain ('builders been trying to get rid of them for months – took a bomb to do it'). Chatty, highly strung Mrs Chilcot (Hilda Barry) and her silent husband (Howell Davies) are consulting a tealeaf-reading friend, the mannish Miss Groome (Madge Brindley). These are more of Kneale's quirky cockneys, like the home-owners inconvenienced by the crash in *The Quatermass Experiment* and the family summarily executed in *Quatermass II*.[86] Their function is to remember the hauntings of 1927 – a silly season poltergeist story. Even Mrs Chilcot is disenchanted with the press coverage ('They didn't believe us really, just made us look silly') and Miss Groome is aggressively suspicious of Quatermass ('I thought all you scientists was sceptics'). Dropping

this scene puts more emphasis on the sequence where Ellis shows Quatermass and Barbara inside the most haunted house. It has peculiar, fresh-looking scratches on the wall, echoing the chalked numbers at the pit site (someone has written 'Kilroy Was Here'). The policeman sweats profusely as he remembers what got this place a bad name ... 'noises ... bumps ... even things being seen'. Quatermass presses him 'You mean ghosts?' Ellis tries to sound sensible as mysterioso music builds. In an antique horror-movie touch, a creaking door swings open by itself to show more scratches. Progressive close-ups stress Ellis's fear and the others' concern. The policeman is compelled to run out of the house. 'Sorry about that, sir', he says, in the daylit street, 'must have been a bit warm inside.' The infernal heat of the pit is mentioned several times, as is the sulphurous subterranean atmosphere.

Breen tells Quatermass he's decided to stay on this case, 'if you're agreeable', and Quatermass responds that he'd like to also, 'if you're agreeable'. They almost become colleagues, though Breen sees the mystery as a challenge while Quatermass is excited by the implications of the conclusion he has already drawn. When the Colonel turns up next morning, he has swapped his smart dress uniform for combat gear. At the end of a working day with lighting changes to indicate evening shadows, Barbara draws attention to the two street signs above the chapel. Of the old one, she observes 'Hob was once a sort of nickname for the Devil.' The next day, Quatermass calls on the Institute. Roney's pet gizmo, the optic-encephalograph is shown in use. It is explained that meek-seeming experimental volunteer Johnson (Keith Marsh) shares 'some of his skull dimensions' with a gorilla-ish creature 'who died in the second ice age' ('I'm real primitive'). The comic moment, compensating for the loss of the Chilcots, foreshadows the theme of atavistic savagery. The point of Quatermass's visit is to ask whether the apemen were aliens. 'Roney, were they of this Earth?' It's an instance of the lead boffin's first idea being wrong, though he cannily consults an expert before he even frames a theory. 'I'm sorry to disappoint,' says Roney,

> ... they were earthly creatures as much as you or I. They were our remote ancestors, but they themselves had ancestors going back as far as thirty million years ... they fit into the known pattern of evolution. The only odd thing about them is the great size of the skull.

Leaving the Institute, Quatermass runs into Barbara, who has dug out 1927 newspaper items[87] about the 'Hobbs Lane spook' ('"the figure was small", said Mr Parker, "like a hideous dwarf"'). Barbara makes the significant connection that the haunting coincided with the construction of Hobbs End Station. This morning ('I've slept on it'), Quatermass is trying not to be carried away, 'My dear, we're both scientists – we simply can't pay regard to stuff like this – the *supernatural*!'

Meanwhile, back at the Pit ... as in the TV serial, there has been a gradual disclosure of the spaceship. Baker gives us a tour of the exterior as the bomb squad fuss around, panning across the busy soldiers and following the curves and curlicues of the Martian craft. Glover makes a meal of a reprise of the magnet-not-sticking business, tutting each time the thing doesn't behave. The grey-purplish object has been completely unearthed and washed clean. Water hoses and electric cables (a risky combination) snake around the site. Clifford Hatts's BBC spaceship is a bone-white cylinder which looks a little like a knocked-over Dalek (with roundels and dome) and a lot like a blunt dildo. Sigmund Freud lived long enough to appreciate that rockets even more than Zeppelins were so ridiculously phallic they barely even qualify as symbols. David Pirie notes that the spaceship in *The Quatermass Xperiment*, which crashes into a field where a young couple have been canoodling, 'looks less like an aircraft than an enormous and grotesque phallus'.[88] The serial's ship is a 'cigar-shaped object', another Freudian phrase which was (and still is) used frequently by UFO witnesses. Less common in film/TV than round flying saucers, cigar-shaped craft persist in the lore of alien encounters.[89] Kneale paid more attention to literature than ufology: the precedent for *Quatermass and the Pit* is *The War of the Worlds*.

Wells's Martians arrive in a cylinder and crawl out of a pit. Bernard Robinson's Hammer spaceship is less blatantly penile, and has a sleeker, aerodynamic 1960s look which is as much aquatic as spacefaring, like the miniaturised submarine of *Fantastic Voyage* (1966) or a Spectrum Pursuit Vehicle from *Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons* (ATV, 1967–8).[90] When activated, the Hammer ship pulses with white light and has throbbing blue veins. The BBC's cylinder melts (in a miniature by Jack Kline and Bernard Wilkie) to provide substance for the ghostly 'Hob'; the fate of the film's ship is undetermined.

Quatermass arrives and catches up. Barbara is with him: her presence isn't questioned, though Roney said Breen banned *him* from the site. The non-magnetic (ceramic?) hull is harder than diamond. A chamber inside the ship has been cleared out, but a bulkhead suggests a sealed compartment as yet inaccessible. Breen thinks it contains a warhead, but it will prove to be a metaphorical bombshell. Unusual features are observed. Potter plays a blowtorch on the hull for minutes; not only doesn't he cut through, but the material doesn't even get warm. Everyone wears gloves because touching the hull produces an irritation like frostbite, though it isn't cold either. In the slippery-as-glass interior, Quatermass notices marks on the bulkhead which 'form a pentacle … one of the cabbalistic signs used in ancient magic'.[91] Quatermass is more excited by the ship than warned off by bad omens. 'Resistant to heat of more than three thousand degrees, harder than diamond,' he muses, 'why it's the material every rocket engineer's been looking for … the Germans didn't make this and then lose the secret. You ask von Braun.' Breen, resistant to any explanation other than that this is a lost V-weapon, goes along with Quatermass's suggestion of bringing in a specialised drill ('try borazon … it's a lot harder than diamond') even if it means using a civilian operator.

So far, it's all been academic; even the poltergeist activity was back in 1927. Now, in what was the Episode Two cliffhanger, it is demonstrated that the spaceship can still hurt people, at least psychologically. Sapper West, inside the capsule to clear a hose,

starts screaming. Face contorted, he struggles to speak 'It was a figure – it went straight through the wall!' There's a risk of panic spreading ('West has got the horrors') but Breen dismisses his breakdown as due to confined space and huffs that a claustrophobic should never have been on this detail.[92] Quatermass and Barbara quiz West, while giving him a nip from a hipflask (which is now Barbara's since Roney no longer tipples). He elaborates that the figure was 'sort of crooked'. Barbara, leading the paranormal investigation at this stage, makes a connection with the 'hideous dwarf'. Cleghorn tries to joke ('with its head tucked underneath its arm?') but Quatermass shuts him up. Futcher (like John Walker on television) works hard on gibbering terror while Kneale keeps the haunting ambiguous: we are told about the hideous figure, but it isn't shown.[93] The reveal of the Martians is kept for the cliffhanger of Episode Three and Kneale doesn't ask for a phantom alien until the climax. We never see the hideous dwarf. Val Guest, who added X-certificate moments to his Quatermass films, might have provided an on-screen ghost, though he might also have melted West's face off. Justly celebrated for its literacy, *Quatermass and the Pit* is occasionally prissy about 'the horrors'. Baker signed up almost on the condition that this *not* be a Hammer horror. He could have staged a 'hideous dwarf' encounter as eerie as the prologue of *The Vampire Lovers* if he'd wanted. Ironically, he would be responsible for one of Hammer's nastiest (and weakest) films, *The Scars of Dracula* (1970). *Quatermass and the Pit* ran into little trouble with the British Board of Film Censors (BBFC). Wayne Kinsey quotes board examiner Frank Crofts: 'this combines, archaeology, science, black magic and space fiction and is even sillier than most of this type of story. Hammer expect an X and that is the right category.'[94] Given that little in the film hadn't been done on television in 1959, it's likely the BBFC bestowed an X mostly because the studio wanted one. *Daleks' Invasion Earth 2150 AD* has almost as much horror, and that was classified U.

Aside from West, the person most shaken by the incident is Quatermass. He also needs a pull from the flask ('normally, I don't

before noon') and wants to do more research. He literally takes Barbara's findings (the folder he had earlier rebuffed) and runs with them. Consistent with other versions of Quatermass, Keir is paternalist, even bullying, when taking command. Barbara doesn't complain that he makes himself primary investigator – even after she made the early headway, working overnight. The evidence-gathering is an extended use of a favourite device from the ghost stories of M. R. James:[95] a scholarly protagonist examines historical documents and perceives hitherto-unnoticed connections which give an insight into the haunting. This recurs in horror cinema: Jacques Tourneur's *Night of the Demon* (1958), from James's 'Casting the Runes', traipses from Stonehenge to the British Museum Reading Room as its haunted hero tries to understand and evade a curse. Like *Quatermass and the Pit*, *The Stone Tape* brings on still-terrified witnesses to events from their childhood, then digs up progressively older documents to reveal the backstory, which leads back to a stark, primordial evil. Quatermass and Barbara pull pamphlets out of a filing cabinet. She reads from *True Hiftorie of the Hobs Lane Gofties*, 'alarming noises and spectral appearances, September 1763' while he peers through a magnifying glass at a document which claims 'grievous sounds emanating from the very Earth have so affrighted certain fellows employed in the digging of a well that one is like to die mad'. She is still open to supernatural explanations ('they believed in those days') while he struggles, musing 'I suppose it's possible for … for *ghosts* – let's use the word – to be phenomena that were badly observed and wrongly explained.' Barbara finds testimony of a resident who 'hath oft espied the apparition of a hideous goblin – *and, once, several*'. With three words, the stakes are raised: the haunting is not down to just the one ghost – they are a breed.

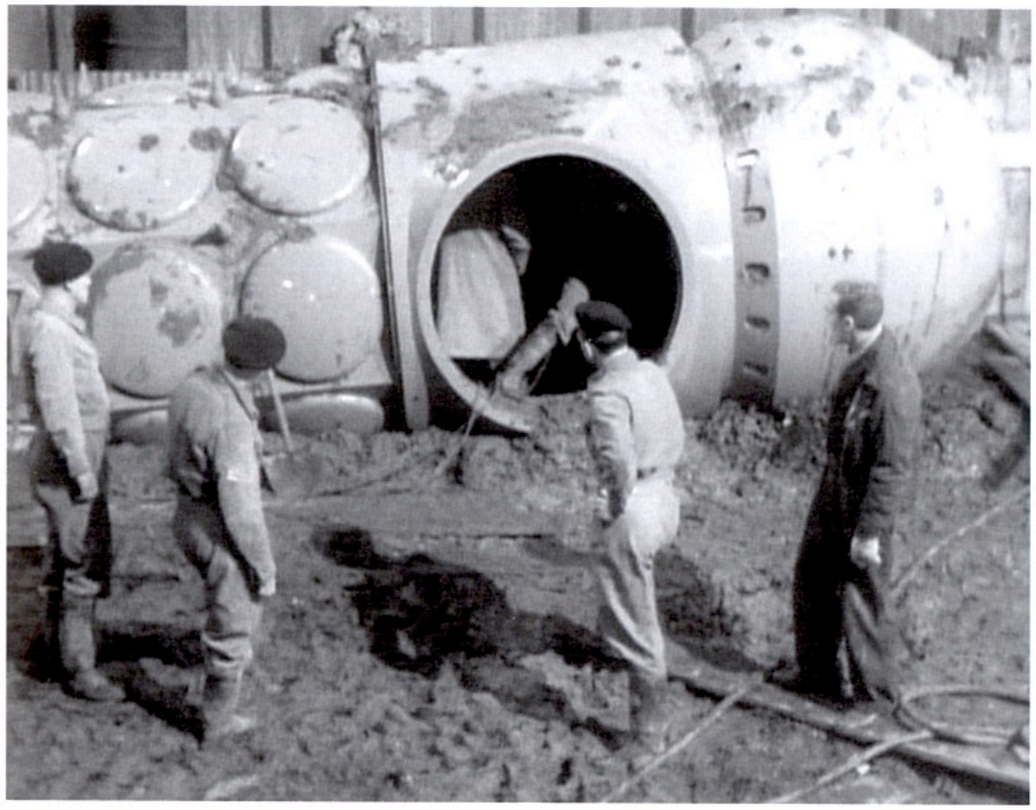
Quatermass hurries to the Abbey archives. As he leaves the frame, Barbara smiles at his back. She likes seeing him enthused and so do we: these scenes are fun and fascinating. A comic archivist (Noel Howlett) at Westminster Abbey makes even Keir crack a smile

as he shows off translating Latin script from a huge, illuminated mediaeval ledger. Momentarily, the characters forget to be scared. James's title 'A Warning to the Curious' is relevant: his academics rush towards horrid fates when carried away by scholarly enthusiasm for delving into library catalogues or the Earth itself. This device remains a horror-film commonplace, though contemporary directors struggle to make looking things up on the internet dramatically interesting. Just as the physical Pit is dug deeper throughout the mid-section of the story, information is unearthed which sets the haunting further back in time. Having established a poltergeist in 1927 and goblins in 1763, historical records disclose that

> in the winter of the year 1341, the religious of that region did strive against an outbreak of evil at Hob's Lane … imps and demons did appear, foul noises sent by the Devil did sorely afflict the charcoal burners that had lately come there.

Quatermass lists the relevant data: charcoal burners felling trees ('big, heavy ones') in 1341, the well of 1763, the underground station of 1927 'and now the extension'. Barbara makes the connection, 'all

Quatermass and the Pit: Andrew Keir, Julian Glover, Duncan Lamont



disturbances of the ground'. The ledger notes that even in 1341, Hobbs Lane had a troubled reputation, hinting at more stories 'in the time of the Romans'.

Leaving Barbara to hear more ghost stories, Quatermass tells her to bring Roney to the site when she's finished ('I think he should be in on this'). He arrives back at Hobbs End by taxi and has to barge past Potter to be present when Sladden, the cheery chappie with the borazon bit, tries to drill through the bulkhead. Breen has barred everyone else from the site, 'in case it blows up' – which Quatermass sneers is 'very considerate of him'. With Potter supervising a noisy generator, Breen is eager to go ahead with the drilling. Quatermass advises against it, but insists on being in the ship with the operator – he's as interested as Breen in getting on with the experiment, damn the consequences. 'Are you insured?' Sladden asks. 'I'm insured. It's a good thing to be insured. At least it cheers you up.' Even on first viewing, we know the object *isn't* a bomb so it's easy to

Quatermass and the Pit (TV): not a Satan

miss that Breen and Sladden, tampering with a possible explosive device, are extraordinarily courageous. We remember the climax of *The Small Back Room* in which civilian Sammy Rice dissects a fiendish, cylindrical bomb after an identical specimen has blown up his army officer friend/rival Captain Stuart (Michael Gough).[96] Breen and Sladden are the characters in the film most susceptible to Martian influence: it's possible they are unnaturally compelled to open Pandora's Box. What does it say about Quatermass that he horns in on the danger? Sladden starts his drill, but the bit skitters on the surface without making a mark. The whining equipment sets off vibrations which rattle the three men – all get sweaty, face-contorted close-ups. Baker cuts to Barbara bringing Roney to the site in another taxi.[97] By the time they're in the Pit, Breen is vomiting tastefully out of shot. In 1967, people tended not to throw up in movies. Did Cartier and Kneale get notes about this from the BBC in 1959? Though shaken by the freak acoustics, Breen wants to damp the polished surface with sandbags and try again. Sladden is willing, but Roney – who has climbed into the ship to inspect the pentacle – reports that it's not necessary. There's a hole, but 'it doesn't look like it was drilled at all … more like, *melted*'. In a slightly trippy optical

Quatermass and the Pit: Martians!

effect, lightning ripples across the bulkhead, which cracks and dissipates, like the black jigsaw pieces removed from the skull in the opening titles, disclosing a fragile crystalline honeycomb containing three mummified creatures.[98]

On television this provided the shock at the end of Episode Three, with spindly Martians hung in decaying webbing. Viewers must have expected the creatures to come to life and rampage like the defrosted 'Thing from Another World' or the prehistoric monsters revived in *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* and *Gojira*. There's a feint as crumbling crystal makes one of the creatures lurch forward, but Quatermass knows at once that they're dead. Kneale, as ever, is contrary in his storytelling. He always thinks what *ought* to happen and does something else. After the reveal, it's a twist that the 'demons' are dead rather than hibernating. Then it emerges that not only are they still dangerous, but the worst thing they can do they did 5 million years ago and it's too late to stop them. Quatermass and

Quatermass and the Pit (TV): Martian!

Breen are revolted by the smell ('like rotting fish') but Roney knows urgent science is required. Undisturbed in their cabin for 5 million years – not a vacuum, surely, since internal body pressure would have made them explode, but … what? … sterile ancient Martian atmosphere? – the aliens are exposed to 'filthy London air' and begin decomposing rapidly. Roney enlists the bomb squad to ready the specimens for transport to the Institute. Potter is deadpan as he arranges this ('explanations later, Sergeant'). Like Barbara Shelley, Bryan Marshall keeps finding telling little things to do with a thinly scripted character. Here, Potter's reaction to mind-expanding findings is to get on with the business of scrounging planks and empty sandbags. Roney supervises the removal of the corpses, which bleed singularly revolting bright green ichor – more unpleasant than the alien blobs of *The Green Slime* (1968), close in hue and consistency to the demon vomit of *The Exorcist* (1973). Breen is sweatily disgusted but keeps his own counsel as a jumped-up civvy orders reluctant soldiers about ('hold it level – it's leaking!'). Barbara is horror-struck at the sight of the Martians, but professional. Roney, who has most cause to be afraid, is earnest about the job at hand. 'If I can just save the shells and some body fluids for analysis …'.

Quatermass and the Pit: Julian Glover, James Donald, Andrew Keir

Inside the hull, Quatermass examines crystal detritus, theorising about the works of the spaceship. In one of the film's best exchanges, Breen patronisingly comments 'Your imagination is running wild' and Quatermass pertinently responds 'Isn't yours?' A problem with gothic science fiction from *Frankenstein* on is that an author enthused by fantastic projects needs them to go wrong. The experiment must have disastrous consequences or else there's no story. Unbidden conservatism creeps in: atheists like Mary Shelley and H. G. Wells seem to endorse the old saw that man should not usurp the role of God. The genre is often Luddite, as if the examples of bad people like Victor Frankenstein and Dr Moreau prove good scientists should abandon researches in, say, anaesthesia or antibiotics. *Quatermass and the Pit* links spaceships and spiritual evil. Kneale, who often said he wasn't interested in s-f, makes character points in the exchange between unimaginative Breen and open-minded Quatermass. Kneale is excited by *ideas*. A strength of his work is that he compounds

Quatermass and the Pit (TV): Christine Finn, Cec Linder

concepts, piling them up steadily, with method and logic, taking the story from the mundane (a building site) to the extraordinary ('nothing less than the origin of the human race and its darkest superstitions').[99] Quatermass wonders 'if there were any external propulsion units, I don't see how they were controlled … unless the missile itself did some of the thinking'. Breen is appalled and angry, 'You're mad!' Quatermass stresses 'This substance isn't inert', hinting it could be as deadly as Breen's unexploded Nazi bomb. Breen is impatient and ticked-off – is he annoyed that even the other soldiers have been co-opted by Roney and Quatermass's vision? – and childishly insists he has another explanation but will only share it 'when I choose'.

At the Institute, Roney's team work on the decaying bodies: legs detach, slime wells from incisions, disgusting chunks are dropped into beakers and labelled. Quatermass slices membrane from a green jelly compound eye (Les Bowie's physical effects are nicely gruesome). The Professor's first thought was to identify the insect-like aliens with locusts (one of the plagues of Egypt). Roney plays it safe by classifying them as arthropods, 'nice general term – covers all the crabs and spiders too'. However, no Earthly arthropod has 'ever had

Quatermass and the Pit: Bryan Marshall, Barbara Shelley

that tripod leg arrangement'. Baker frames Quatermass's specimen to emphasise its prominent horns, which make it resemble 'the horned demons in those old prints'. The BBC's more insect-like Martians have antennae and mandibles, whereas Hammer's sport devil horns and proboscis ridges like jagged grins. Quatermass elaborates that the alien is 'like a gargoyle … haven't you seen it carved in walls in a dozen countries? Is it in the depths of all our minds?' This raises the issue of race memory, which will become central. Thinking along the same lines, Roney pages through *The Larousse Encyclopedia of Prehistoric and Ancient Art* – bending the cover back in a manner sure to outrage bibliophiles – to find an illustration of a cave painting of a shaman in a ritual mask which purportedly resembles the creature. Actually, it doesn't much. 'You know,' he muses, 'I think these are old friends we haven't seen for a time.'

The notion that aliens (or extra-dimensional beings) might have interacted with ancient humanity and given rise to our myths of demons (or angels) goes back at least to H. P. Lovecraft ('The Call of Cthulhu' [1928]; *At the Mountains of Madness* [1931]). Erich von Däniken's paperback bestseller *Chariots of the Gods* (1968) popularised this concept in a supposed non-fiction context, using

Quatermass and the Pit: Andrew Keir

Roney's method of examining artefacts from ancient civilisations and interpreting images as aliens or spaceships. Von Däniken's notions seeped into science fiction, popping up in Hergé's *Tintin* album *Flight 714* (1966–7) and Steven Spielberg's *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008). A key *Chariots of the Gods* claim is that Stonehenge, the Pyramids and other ancient structures were built in homage to or with the help of aliens. This figures in *Quatermass*, where prehistoric circles like Ringstone Round have a sinister purpose, though Kneale wittily extends this to Wembley Stadium, 'the sacred turf'. Given that *Quatermass and the Pit* and *2001: A Space Odyssey* both suggest human evolution has been shaped by alien influence, it's worth noting that Arthur C. Clarke's novel *Childhood's End* (1954) is a precedent for Kneale's arthropod gargoyles. Clarke's Overlords don't show themselves to modern humans until after they've established their trustworthiness because their appearance (horns, leathery batwings) has shaped our image of the Devil. The ancient alien of 'The Dæmons' (*Doctor Who* [1971]), which draws extensively on *Quatermass and the Pit*, is a horned, goat-legged giant very like Clarke's Overlords.[100]

Turning from demonology, the boffins fall back on science. Analysis suggests 'weight and structure point to low-gravity environment … a thin atmosphere'. Roney ventures 'perhaps a world that's dead now but a few million years ago could have been teeming with life'. Quatermass takes up the thought: 'I wonder … a name that's been nearly worn out before anything turned up to claim it. Was this really *a Martian*?' Thanks to longterm fallout from Orson Welles's 1938 radio dramatisation of *The War of the Worlds*, 'Martian' was a synonym for hoax. *The Thing from Another World* doesn't specify its alien's planet of origin, but characters joke-tag it 'a man from Mars'. *Invaders from Mars* (1953) is the nightmare of a child overdosing on pulp s-f. Chuck Jones's cartoon Marvin the Martian is impossible to take seriously; even Porky Pig isn't impressed ('take that, you th-th-thing from another world, you!'). The sitcom *My Favorite Martian* (CBS, 1963–6) had Ray Walston

hiding antennae as magic lodger Uncle Martin. Even into the 1960s, Planet X – of *The Man from Planet X* (1951) and *The Strange World of Planet X* – had a more terrifying reputation than Mars. Byron Haskin's *The War of the Worlds* (1953) began to redeem Martians as scary aliens, replacing Wells's tripods with sleek flying machines. Wells, as ever, is a Kneale touchstone. The Martians in the Pit have three legs because Wells's vampire squid got about in three-legged contraptions. Martian hive society echoes *The First Men in the Moon*; Hammer's arthropods even seem related to the Ray Harryhausen-animated Selenites of the 1964 film which Kneale co-scripted. Harryhausen's creatures were designed by Kneale's artist brother Bryan.[101] Wells depicts Mars as dying; Kneale, writing after a half-century or so of astronomical discoveries, shows it as long-dead.

Like Wells's Martians, Kneale's have left their doomed planet to perpetuate their race on Earth – though not through simple conquest. Quatermass now links the alien spaceship with the unusual craniums of the Hobbs End apemen. 'Some faculties have developed in them or *have been* developed.' The scientist sees the big picture: 'The will to survive, it's an odd phenomenon … if we found our Earth was doomed – say, by climatic changes – what would we do about it?' Roney, in one of Kneale's most brilliant throwaway lines, answers 'nothing – just go on squabbling as usual'. Quatermass agrees, then speculates 'but if we weren't *men* …'. Kneale may be drawing on Wells's late novel *Star Begotten* (1937), which modifies his depiction of Mars to keep pace with contemporary findings and posits that now-extinct Martians tinkered with humanity to fashion us as a successor species. The motives of the aliens in *2001: A Space Odyssey* are unfathomable, though Clarke spelled them out in sequel novels. The Black Monolith intervenes to help us evolve, enabling the human race to spread 'beyond the infinite'. The first thing an apeman does when gifted with the brainpower to use a tool is bludgeon an enemy to death with a bone.[102] Creativity and aggression are linked, but Kubrick and Clarke have no patience with spiritual evil. The *2001* aliens are remote, while Kneale's Martians are as inherently flawed as

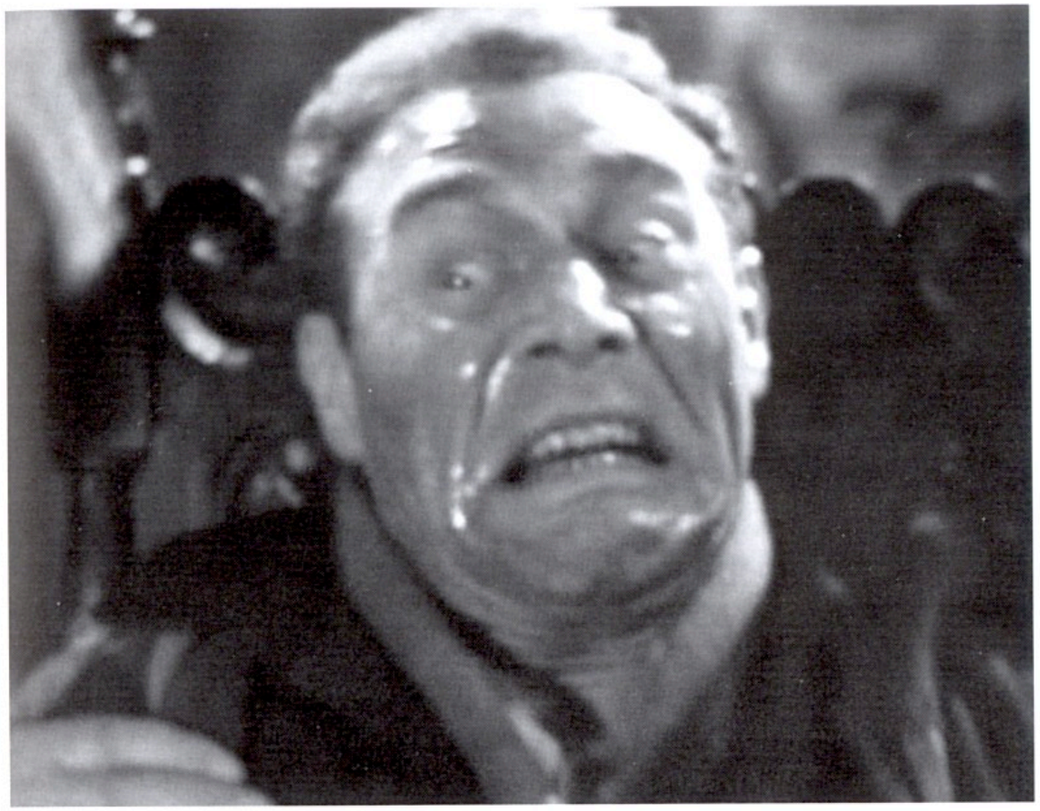
humans. Unlike us, they can co-operate on a species level to perpetuate their society, but they pass on violence, intolerance and capacity for self-destruction. In purging aberrants, they achieve an evolutionary stasis which confines them to a doomed world. The *Quatermass II* invaders are more advanced. A hive-mind as opposed to a hive-dwelling species, they can alter Earth's atmosphere to suit them. If the Martians had xenoforming technology, they could wipe out the apemen and become masters of Earth.

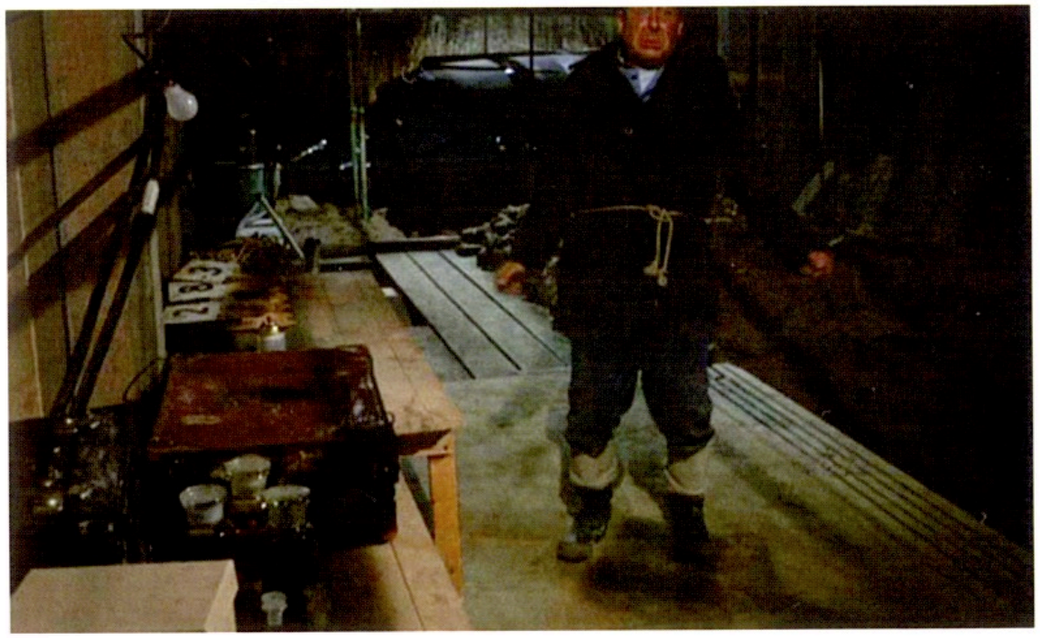
Roney and Quatermass hastily go public with Earth-shaking revelations because two uniformed commissionaires (Alastair Hunter, David Crane) grumble about the inconvenient crowd of reporters outside the Institute. No other screenwriter would dare this development, which is so credibly British it takes many viewings to catch Kneale chuckling. Under the circumstances, the headlines ('Space Machine Found') aren't even that sensational. Showing strange priorities, the noon edition of the *Evening News* prints a picture of Roney's plaster mock-up apeman at *twice the size* of two photos of actual extraterrestrials. In Whitehall, Quatermass is hauled over the coals for spreading panic. 'Professor, what you've done appals me,' fumes the Minister, whom we now meet. 'Mars is dead', Breen insists, 'nothing there but a few scraps of lichen.'[103] Earlier, he was first to mention the Red Planet, evoking the God of War by planning military bases there.[104] In talking theory with Roney, Quatermass assumes the other scientist will follow his reasoning. Dealing with idiots, he has to spell it out. First-time viewers might have found the ideas too big to comprehend at once (the next year, almost no one would fully 'get' *2001*) so it's clever storytelling to put the Professor in a position where he has to explain for the audience as well as the politician. The ancient Martians undertook a mass programme of altering proto-humans by selective breeding, surgery and (it is implied) genetic tinkering. The Hobbs End ship, one of a fleet, crashed in the swamp which would become the Thames Valley. Howell, second brightest spark in the room, understands and is even intrigued, seeing the project in political terms ('in effect, a

colonisation'). The Minister, however, is outraged: 'You realise what you're implying, that we owe our human condition here to the intervention of *insects*?'

Breen, as promised, has an alternative explanation. After letting Quatermass explain the far-fetched truth, the Minister prompts the officer to trot it out. Boasting that 'military propaganda' is among his fields of expertise, he delivers a smug speech, superficially ticking off all the points. 'I think that when the Germans were losing the war they tried a propaganda scare. They sent over an experimental V-weapon in order to produce exactly the effect it has produced … though a little late for their purposes.' The arthropods are 'fakes put there as a circumstantial touch, like fairground mermaids made up of old scraps of skin and bone. It's the oldest trick in the business.' The Minister likes this Scooby-Doo rationalisation. 'It has that black Wagnerian imagination,' he says in the serial. 'Methodical people, the Hun.' Waving away any suggestion that he should listen to the experts, the Minister takes the eternal politician's line of ignoring inconvenient facts. Quatermass splutters, like any academic or scientist who presents meticulously researched findings to a political body which would have preferred different results and now intends

Quatermass and the Pit: Edwin Richfield, Julian Glover, Andrew Keir





Quatermass and the Pit (TV): Richard Shaw as possessed Sladden; *Quatermass and the Pit*: Duncan Lamont as possessed Sladden

to bury his work. The Minister, who has been dodging phone calls from the Prime Minister's private secretary, can now report that this affair is 'nothing but a gigantic false alarm'. A police car cruises down Hobbs Lane, tannoy blaring. 'In spite of incorrect news stories published earlier,' the crowds are told, 'the missile found here is believed to be a German propaganda weapon of the last war.' Having said the thing in the Pit is harmless, the authorities are now obliged to let the press at it … a police inspector (John Graham) tells reporters they will be let into the station tomorrow.

The army quit the site, complaining as they carry out sandbags they carried in this morning. Sladden, in a good mood, notices the bomb squad cheekily loading his toolbox into their lorry and snatches it back. He goes underground to disassemble his gear. As he enters the pit, the generators cut off and the rigged-up lamps dim. 'Where was Moses when the lights went out?' he asks. 'In the flipping dark.'[105] Official denial universally accepted, curiosity seekers have disappeared from Hobbs Lane. There isn't even a token police or military presence, just a little fellow in a bowler hat (John Rutland), locking up the station when Barbara comes to collect 'a microscope and a box of slides'. The official lets her in and promises to wait – she touches his chest in thanks, probably the highlight of his year. She reaches the pit just as Sladden is overcome by Martian influence inside the spaceship: poltergeist activity, face-pulling, weird electronic music.[106] He staggers out into a storm of flying tools and cables, adopting an odd, jerky gait. Lamont plays this more broadly than Richard Shaw on television, making Sladden's freak-out less disturbing. The drill operator's insect dance is even funny, though reaction shots of Barbara beset by a wind machine stamp on unintentional comedy. Shaw holds his arms like the forefeet of a praying mantis – a creepy, disturbing touch which ought to carry over to other Martian possessees, but doesn't. Compared with telekinetic blood-letting frenzies in *Carrie* (1976) or *Scanners* (1981), this sequence is a little tame. Barbara's nice green overcoat gets dusty, but she isn't harmed by flying implements. It's skilfully done in that you

mostly can't see strings,[107] though objects bob in a manner unique to items suspended from wires. The possessed Sladden careers across the road, waste paper blowing up a storm around him, like victims pursued by supernatural entities in *Night of the Demon*. On her way out of the station, Barbara practically faints in the arms of the little man in the bowler hat. Sladden passes a prosaic refreshments stand, which rocks as paper plates fly off. He flees to a churchyard, drawn to seek sanctuary by the calming sound of Evensong performed by an off-screen choir. Sladden collapses on a gravel path, which ripples under him; here, Baker uses exactly the same simple effect (rollers under gravel) which provided a cliffhanger for the BBC.

Barbara brings Quatermass to the church, where the vicar calms Sladden with a nice cup of tea. The workman is slumped in a chair, momentarily free of possession, as if safe from demonic influence on consecrated ground. The bare set seems dressed with leftovers from Hammer's occult-themed films. The clergyman is sure Sladden has 'been in contact with spiritual evil'. Quatermass insists on interrogating the exhausted workman, overriding the vicar's objections. In the serial, Noel Howlett's Reverend Gilpin is a frail, elderly eccentric.[108] Baker casts tough-looking Thomas Heathcote[109]

Quatermass and the Pit: Duncan Lamont, Thomas Heathcote

against type, making the vicar's clash of wills with Quatermass more two-sided. Keir again gets his way by force in the Donlevy manner. Fixed in his chair and pulling faces in a scene which echoes the unhelmeting of Lamont's Carroon in *The Quatermass Experiment*, Sladden tries to explain what happened. He saw creatures like those found in the Pit, only 'they were alive' and 'I knew I was one!' He describes them 'jumping, *leaping* ... in and out of them big places ... huge, right up into the sky!' Quatermass asks a rocket scientist's question – 'What colour is the sky? Blue?' 'No, dark ... dark *purple*.' The memory stirs Sladden's latent Martian abilities and the room is beset by winds which threaten to topple a candelabrum and riffle a rack of surplices. The vicar exclaims 'You should have left him alone. He isn't free of it yet!' Quatermass has another frightening thought, that Sladden isn't possessed by something that can be got rid of the way killing the aliens at the end of *Quatermass II* exorcises those marked by exploding overshots. 'Perhaps it was always in him ... in *all of us*. An inheritance of dormant faculties, clairvoyance, telekinesis.'

The clergyman bristles, 'scientific terms to explain it all away?' Quatermass takes the film further into horror by agreeing with the modern descendant of the Pit's old foe, 'the religious of that region'. 'What's been discovered is *evil*,' the scientist diagnoses, 'as ancient and diabolic as anything on record.' This is the Hammer Films morality of titles like *Kiss of Evil* (1964, an alternate for *The Kiss of the Vampire*), *The Evil of Frankenstein* (1964) and *Twins of Evil* (1971). In Terence Fisher's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1958), even arch-rationalist Sherlock Holmes declares 'There is more *evil* around us here than I have ever encountered before.' Awareness of 'spiritual evil' is imposed on crime drama, science fiction or the swashbuckler by Hammer titles like *Hell Is a City*, *The Damned* and *The Devil-Ship Pirates*. Van Helsing's combination of science with muscular Christianity is a leap for Quatermass. He treated the organism of *The Quatermass Experiment* dispassionately as if it were a disease or a weed, and didn't even make a moral judgment about

the cunning, malicious beings of *Quatermass II*. In *Quatermass*, faced by godlike aliens, he sends a message with an atom bomb.[110] Possibly, the detour into the spiritual is another symptom of lingering Martian influence: it's something he *feels*, rather than thinks. The *2001* aliens instil curiosity and intellect into a mankind which is already aggressive; the Martians intend to make humanity logical, communal and industrious, like bees or ants, but instead we are vicious, competitive and cannibalistic, like locusts.[111] Our Martian heritage is irrational and self-destructive – arthropod behaviour forced on mammals.

In an unusual reading, Greil Marcus suggests that the Martians' longterm intent was that mankind should destroy itself as they had done. 'They meant to perpetuate themselves on Earth by making its history – by coding its end in its beginning. A passion for prophecy, it seems, is also a Martian trait: they loved drama as much as death.'[112] Interpreting Sladden's account, Quatermass concludes

> I think what he gave us just now was a vision of life on Mars 5 million years ago. That and the unconscious ability to cause movement ... they're old powers that can be awakened by the thing in the pit.

Finally, the boffin's instinct for scientific enquiry has been overridden by a realisation that the Martian ship is extremely dangerous. Barbara asks the practical question, 'Shouldn't we tell the Ministry?' Quatermass knows, after the last meeting, that he needs more convincing proof.

Kneale cobbles together an incidental gadget to further the plot. In the serial, Matthew Roney, a dedicated palaeontological anthropologist with an incipient drink problem has – in his spare time and with no funding – invented a mind-recording machine equivalent to technological breakthroughs which drive whole plots in *The Sorcerers* (1967), *Brainstorm* (1983) and *Strange Days* (1995).[113] Roney's machine doesn't do what he wants, but malfunctions just the way the story needs, like the *Quatermass 2*

rocket which is useless for manned exploration but effective as an atomic weapon. In the film, Roney and Quatermass are working independently on bits of tech ('your apparatus to locate the brain centres, ours to translate signals'), which get cobbled together with an early videotape recorder to create what the Minister, in a wonderful understatement, calls a 'truly amazing apparatus'.

Quatermass and the Pit: Andrew Keir; Barbara Shelley

Quatermass has Jerry from the BRG haul 'the special video signal stuff' to the Institute. The new-made device is tested on the dozing Roney, who dreams of a fuzzy, black and white cottage.[114] Barbara is concerned that Quatermass is going 'to repeat what Sladden went through'. 'Experimentally,' he insists – though the word is loaded in the context of his career. He still thinks in terms of scientific explanations, and wonders what mysteries Martian influence might solve. 'Poltergeist outbreaks, second sight, they've been reported the world over throughout the ages – myths, magic, even witchcraft. Perhaps they all came from there?'[115] Barbara, in one of her significant close-ups, has a key line, appropriated from the missing Fullalove. 'So as far as anybody is, we're the Martians now.'

Setting up at Hobbs End Station – has Barbara lifted the keys from the little man with the bowler hat? – the scientists connect their jury-rigged contraption to the army generator, which has established a peculiar sympathy with the Martian ship. Quatermass, wearing the electrode-studded helmet, climbs into the capsule, intent on raising the Devil with a humble spanner. Almost instantly, wires are waving and Quatermass sweats and gurns, but he transmits no images from his 'unconscious vision centres'. Throughout preparations for this experiment, Quatermass and Roney take Barbara for granted and manage to be patronising, protective and dismissive of her at the same time. She offers to take photographs, but Roney escorts her out of the Pit, treating her almost as high-handedly as Breen treated him. Baker underlines the mistake the men are making by giving Shelley wordless close-ups in which she expresses concern, curiosity, fear and temptation. More sensitive to Martian influence than Quatermass, she has the visions which overwhelmed Sladden ('I can see!') and the helmet is switched to her head as Roney and Quatermass hold her steady. She telekinetically lifts heavy items like a wheelbarrow. The power coursing through her shakes the Pit – disgusting brown mud oozes through wooden slats and tiles pop off walls. David Pirie notes the character played by Janet Munro in *The Trollenberg Terror*, 'a telepathic young girl who becomes a kind of medium for the

monsters',[116] is a precedent for Barbara's connection with the Martians. Shelley, often cast as woman-who-turns-into-a-monster (*Cat Girl* [1959]; *The Gorgon* [1964]), is remarkably subtle and affecting. Barbara handles being a conduit to ancient Mars far better than Sladden and Shelley plays the possession more subtly than Lamont. She manages to be terrified and terrifying at once. She also snaps out of it after her vision has been recorded. In the television serial, other characters (Potter, Gilpin, even Breen) disapprove of Quatermass's willingness to let Barbara risk her mental health by being a test subject, harking back to the concerns of *The Quatermass Experiment*.

The next day, before the scheduled evening press conference, Quatermass somehow persuades the Minister, Breen, Potter, Howell and other suits to convene at the Institute, where he screens what he claims is a recording of 'a race purge, a cleansing of the Martian hives'. The blurry images of the full-sized Martian mock-ups and stiff miniatures in motion are curiously less effective than the equivalent sequence managed with fewer resources by the BBC (which includes a graphic exploding head). It's no wonder the assembled officials have little idea what they've seen. Kneale lamented, a little harshly, that

Quatermass and the Pit: an ancient Martian purge

'the special effects in Hammer Films were always diabolical';[117] in *Quatermass and the Pit*, individual physical and optical effects range from excellent to clumsy. Supervised by Hammer regular Les Bowie (assisted by Roy Field, Ian Scoones, Bill Warrington and Kit West), the effects are at least finished, unlike some temp shots in the comparably budgeted *The Devil Rides Out* which got through to release prints and weren't corrected until a controversial 2012 BluRay. Danny Peary suggests the talk of an unexploded German bomb and Breen's Nazi propaganda theory are in the script because Kneale

> wants to make us think of imperialistic Nazi Germany. When we see Barbara's visions of the Martians of five million years ago, they are marching en masse, recalling faceless, machine-like German soldiers on the move. We see, Quatermass points out, the ancient Martians 'kill and being killed'; he could be describing the Nazis in Germany when he explains what took place on Mars: 'ritual slaughter to preserve a fixed society, to rid it of mutations'. As the Nazis did in countries they conquered, the Martians wanted to rule Earth by proxy.[118]

Quatermass concludes 'That's the way they lived and it's the way they intended their substitutes on Earth to live.'

Breen sighs 'not again' and Quatermass presses the point. 'My concern is, sir, that this stored memory of killing should be coupled with another power that thing in the Pit seems to possess, the power to redirect human energy into force beyond control.' Potter has no lines in this scene, but Marshall – simply by looking at Shelley's horrified reactions – conveys the character's growing affiliation to the boffins and even the potential romance cut out of the script. Now, the Minister takes over Breen's role of pooh-poohing findings and – like all men in the film – patronises Barbara. He suggests the machine has recorded hallucinations ('this young lady certainly has an imagination and she's overwrought') and that the German propaganda theory still stands. Howell, again, is open to the

scientists' conclusions, but his boss is angrily resistant. Before storming out, the Minister speechifies:

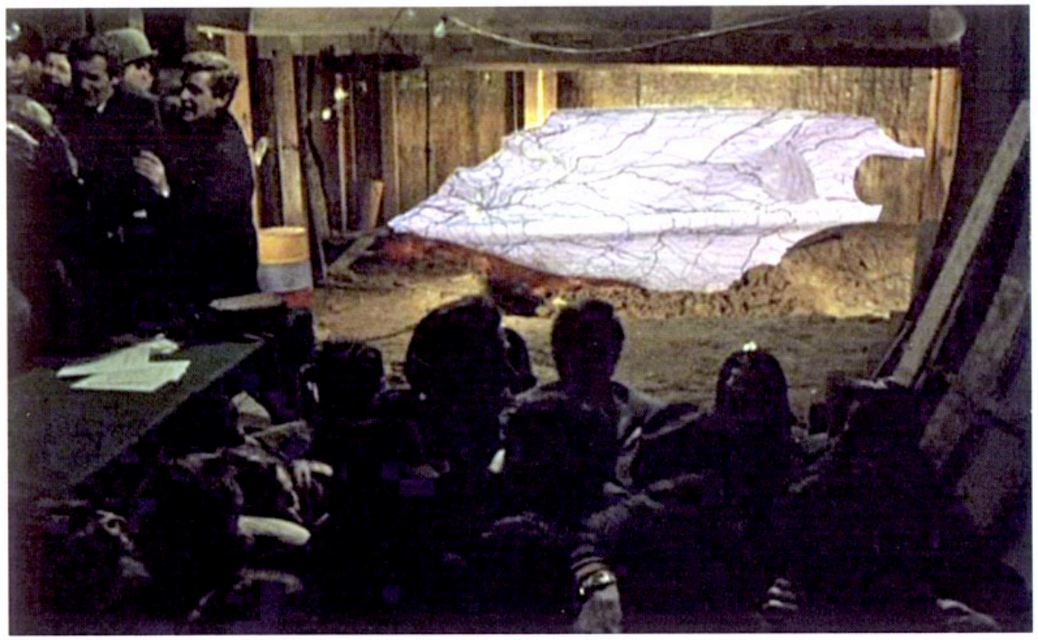
> Professor Quatermass, I don't believe you're right in this matter – *you are ridiculously wrong* ... My duty now is to quieten public alarm ... and you – up till now a government officer with the same duty – *you'll keep your damn paws out of things*!

Hobbs Lane is crowded again, as the media arrive to look at the thing in the Pit and listen to Breen's rational explanation. Why an evening press conference? For atmosphere – so it can be dark outside, also so television coverage can be live. Quatermass barges through, as usual. Howell, standing in for the Minister, asks for questions. A junior reporter (William Ellis) nervously asks 'Are you sure it's safe?' Quatermass heckles 'I've got a question ... is Colonel Breen just a fool or a coward?' An argument starts, but there's a distraction. An electrician stringing up lights so TV cameras can shoot the inside of the capsule is shocked to death. This is less gruesome than the melted faces of *The Quatermass Xperiment* and *X – the Unknown* and the coated-in-corrosive-slime MP of *Quatermass 2*. Though Hammer was known for sensationalism, there's little blood (or sex) in *Quatermass and the Pit*. Its physical horrors are muted by the pastels; sometimes, monochrome can be nastier. Breen, who has quietly gone utterly mad, wants to continue the press briefing but everyone is rattled. Quatermass insists there's more danger. Barbara, in red sweater and tartan skirt, is drawn to the hull, which seems to her to be 'coming alive ... it's glowing'. Has it absorbed the lifeforce of the electrician as well as the increased voltage of the broadcasters' power supply? Conceived for television, the Quatermass stories often rope in the medium as a bystander or conduit; the ATV cameras of *Quatermass and the Pit* follow the BBC OB unit of *The Quatermass Xperiment*. A subplot of *Quatermass* features the crass, shambolic BTV station, still putting out a softcore variety show – in the spirit of Kneale's *The Year of the Sex Olympics* (BBC2, 1968) – as society

collapses. Kneale knows enough about the medium to be sympathetic with the professionals who keep it going, but his frustrations with the BBC and ITV inform the evolving depiction of television in his work.[119] Here, TV coverage nearly unleashes the apocalypse, as it would in his script for *Halloween III: Season of the Witch* (1983).

If Kneale has a jaded view of TV production, he is even more cynical – perilously, given his chosen profession – about the audience. Just as the climax is about to get going, the action moves to a pub where customers are following the story on a wall-mounted colour set.[120] 'Three streets away and we got to see it on the telly,' drones a bore (Joseph Greig). 'People don't believe nothing these days unless they've seen it on the telly.' The bore and a pal (Hugh Manning) are drinking with a middle-aged blonde (June Ellis). 'Do you believe in these Martians?' she asks, only to be told 'Be your age, kiddy'. These are familiar types from the novels of Patrick Hamilton or any number of dowdy, downbeat British films and TV plays. Ellis is a barmaid in Alfred Hitchcock's *Frenzy* (1971), which shows Covent Garden as a boozy, petty, tobacco-stained Hobbs Lane-like hinterland of pubs, caffs and markets. The serial gives the boozers (Bernard Spear, Louise Gainsborough, Arthur Brander) more screen time, though the purpose of their scenes is to establish the set on which Quatermass and Roney later have a vital conversation. Kneale's pub patrons are the lower middle-class equivalent of his comical cockneys and posh twits; another example is the barmaid (Hilda Fenemore), who waxes nostalgic about being a 1940s 'good-time girl' in *The Stone Tape*. When the broadcast is interrupted by the escalating crisis, customers grumble and the bore mouths platitudes about 'vision on sound'. The blonde hears strange noises (which we don't), over the television or from three streets away.

At Hobbs End, Quatermass is still trying to warn the reporters. One idiot (stuntman Eddie Powell), crouched on a flange of the ship taking notes, gets zapped when another electric discharge powers up the hull. The crowds go into a frenzy, orchestrated by second-unit director Bert Batt. Neither the television nor film versions have extras



hopping and leaping like Sladden, so it seems like a regular panic-fuelled riot. Telekinetic effects include a poignant shot of a newsreel camera[121] spilling film. Breen issues a general order to 'stop panicking'[122] as people surge around. Some find Kneale's walk-on characters patronising – the very premise of *Quatermass and the Pit* is undeniably misanthropic – but he often gives minor players grace

Quatermass and the Pit: the ship pulsates; panic

moments. We don't learn what happens to prominent characters (the Minister, Potter, Sladden, Jerry Watson) in the chaos of the climax, but Howell gets a death scene. A TV camera falls on him. Quatermass takes a moment to try and free the civil servant, but Howell dies, muttering 'Got to make a report'. Breen, human antagonist of the film, falls under the spell of the Martian machine. It throbs with an inner

Quatermass and the Pit: the death of Howell: Andrew Keir, Peter Copley; the death of Breen: Julian Glover

white light which shows an organic tracery of blue veins – hinting at techno-organic processes far beyond human science. Breen won't be pulled away by Potter and stands transfixed before the spaceship. Later, we cut back to find him mangled or scorched or partially melted by its power. He tumbles dead into the pit. Why is he punished? Of all the humans in the film, he seems most purely Martian.

The riot spreads along Hobbs Lane, with added telekinesis. An extra falls into a spilled strew of hot coals and cooked chestnuts. The pub ceiling falls in. Quatermass, separated from Barbara, is possessed with the rest. The frenzy is heightened as the camera is buffeted by crowds. Quatermass is saved from being swept away when Roney hauls him into the now-abandoned, wrecked pub and gives him a generous measure in a tankard ('no way to serve decent whisky but we're a bit low on glasses'). Quatermass comes to his senses, but has a pressing question: 'Were they people?' Roney is taken aback: 'What? Of course they were.' The Professor, still surprised Roney can't feel Martian presence in his skull, concludes 'perhaps some are immune, some few'. Members of *The Stone Tape* research team have different sensitivities. Stew (Philip Trewinnard) is unmoved by phenomena which astonish or terrify others; his condition is equivalent to being colour-blind or tone-deaf. It's typical of Kneale not to give his hero all the virtues. Quatermass, the rocket scientist with an eye on the future, carries the Martian curse, but Roney, the palaeontologist who sifts through the past, is free of it. Like Linder, Donald doesn't play Roney as a saint, but his donnish, slightly detached manner contrasts with the earthier, tougher Keir. Like the astronauts and mission planners of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Quatermass may have benefited from his alien heritage. He has needed single-mindedness and aggression to survive. Real-life analogues like Oppenheimer, Barnes Wallis and von Braun dedicated themselves to experiments which yielded much intentional and collateral damage. The Quatermass stories all require arguably better men (and one woman) to give their lives in the climaxes; in all but one, Quatermass walks away shaken, resolved to carry on.

Roney quizzes Quatermass about what has just happened. 'It was what I was afraid of,' admits the Professor. 'The thing got a huge intake of energy, the very substance of it seemed to be coming alive, and then you can't see this world any longer.' Like Sladden and Barbara, Quatermass has experienced a Martian purge. Another director might have insisted on presenting this *subjectively*, or at least superimposing alien carnage over the riot. As with the Martian call heard by the blonde but not the audience, this is withheld. On television, such a sequence might have been beyond Cartier's technical resources and a BBC budget – though 'Hob', the final episode, includes an incidental plane crash. Hammer could have pushed the boat out to satisfy audiences eager for more arthropod dismemberment. However, the effects would need to be significantly better than Barbara's video nightmare to sell the horror. Vignettes show people completely channelling the Martians, standing calmly as they mentally toss rubble at purely human victims. Here, Baker copies Cartier's staging. Again, one wonders why the Martian-influenced don't assume Shaw's insect-like pose. Wolf Rilla's *Village of the Damned* might have modelled the Midwich children's stare of death on the impassive malevolence of Cartier's alien-possessed Londoners. This became a convention: in *The Power* (1968), *Carrie*, *The Fury* (1978), *Scanners* and other films, telekinetics adopt the same combination of deadpan concentration and ramrod posture while unleashing deadly mind powers.[123]

Quatermass, nearly overcome by primal urges, tries to strangle Roney, who implores him to fight it ('Think man, think, use your brain, your memory, keep hold'). Keir conveys the internal struggle in close-up, as Quatermass clings to his identity. 'My name is Bernard Quatermass,' he says,[124] 'Professor of Physics, controller British Experimental Group.' He confesses to Roney, 'I wanted to kill you, which I could have done without moving … because you're different, I could feel that you had to be *destroyed*.' From off screen, we hear strangled cries. Roney assumes 'They're killing the animals' but Quatermass knows it's 'not only animals'. Now there are more than

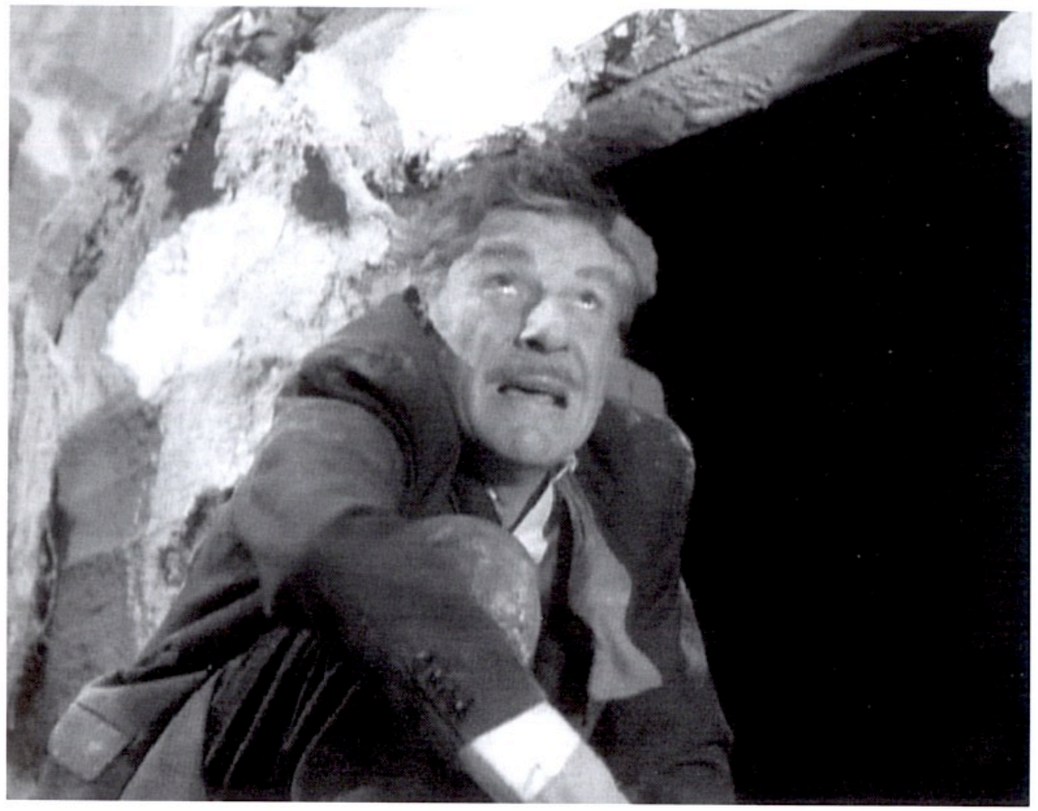
just one or two Martian-controlled bystanders. The majority of the crowd has been taken over. On reading the script, the BBFC pre-emptively insisted the fate of a 'clerkly man' (Fred Haggerty), who was to die screaming 'when a jagged mass of concrete lands on his back' not be too unpleasant.[125] In the finished version, the death is bloodless and scream-free: a far cry from the flesh-twisting, head-exploding business of later telekinetic terrors – and tamer than similar moments in *Village of the Damned* or *The Power*. Judging offence from reading scripts rather than watching films is perilous: the most horrific aspect of this sequence is the screeching of unseen perhaps-animal, perhaps-human victims, which the censors didn't imagine would be a problem. 'This is the image that was buried in the hull,' Quatermass realises, 'the compulsion to preserve their colony, destroy all that didn't belong to it, draining the whole energy of London to turn it into a Martian colony.' Kneale admits mankind *has* progressed in 5 million years, at least showing the potential to go beyond purges and wild hunts. The danger is that the unearthed, juiced-up Martian ship will reaffirm the influence and drag us back to the insect age. Roney is appalled but determined, 'Resist it, you must … come on, we've things to do maybe nobody else can.'

The effects of the unleashed psychic energy become larger in scale as the empty houses of Hobbs Lane crumble and collapse (decent miniature work) and masonry falls into the street (one or two bouncing chunks suggest polystyrene rather than concrete). Roney takes Quatermass by the hand and drags him towards the station. The asphalt cracks and glowing white stuff (lava?) shows through, while a broken water main gouts up at the two scientists. Over the Pit forms a giant phantasm Roney recognises. 'It's the Devil, the horned Devil … don't look at it.' This Martian spectre does look at once like the dead arthropods and a demon, though the shimmering form also resembles the sham Great and Powerful Oz of *The Wizard of Oz* (1939).[126] Roney and Quatermass go into the haunted house and observe the phenomenon through a rupture in the wall. 'Mass into energy,' Roney deduces. Quatermass realises it's 'the focus of all

that's happening, the cause' and exclaims 'oh God, God', falling back on religion even when given a scientific rationale for the demonic.[127] 'Roney, what can we do?' Here, at the crux – where Van Helsing, Sherlock Holmes, Doctor Who or Father Sandor would know exactly how to combat the evil – Quatermass is at a loss. Roney, still thinking straight, comes up with a solution, 'Mass into energy, the fundamental law … the Devil's enemy was iron. It might make sense. If it were possible to project a mass of metal into it, connect it to the ground.' Quatermass follows his reasoning that short-circuiting the giant ghost might 'discharge it to the Earth', but is sceptical. It's too simple a solution to a complex problem. Roney is sure 'it's what they'd never allow for – even that scrap of knowledge in minds that were free to use it'.

In the serial, Roney chucks a length of chain into Hob, dispelling it at the cost of his own life. The film makes his sacrifice more spectacular. He climbs the crane we were carefully shown in the film's first scene, and topples it into the apparition. Quatermass has to distract Barbara, stiff-limbed, blank-faced avatar of alien evil. She strides down Hobbs Lane, which is otherwise deserted, and directs her psychic energies at the scientists. There's a parallel with *Dracula* –

Quatermass and the Pit: Hob



Prince of Darkness, in which Shelley's character is turned into a vampire by the 'fountainhead of evil' and set loose to harry and delay the heroes – only to be pinned down and staked by Keir's monk. Baker, as often, uses close-ups of Shelley's face as punctuation. Her impassive look is a pointed contrast with her earlier expressiveness – it's also a *different* possessed act from her vampire hoyden in *Dracula – Prince of Darkness* or hypnotised love slave in *Rasputin – The Mad Monk* (1966). Keir would return to Hammer as an ineffectual savant in *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb* (1971), albeit as a last-minute replacement for Cushing, but this was Shelley's last work for the company that had hired her regularly since *Mantrap* (1953). Now in her mid-thirties, roles which might have been hers went to starlets who seldom matched her abilities. Kneale never worked for Hammer again, either.

The beneficiary of *Quatermass and the Pit* was Baker, returning to cinema after a four-year hiatus. He had established a solid career in

Quatermass and the Pit (TV): Andre Morell

the 1950s, with a sojourn in Hollywood and a run of respectable Rank pictures. However, the failure of *The Singer Not the Song* (1961) sidelined him. While peers like J. Lee Thompson, Guy Hamilton and Lewis Gilbert were handling international hits like *The Guns of Navarone* (1961) and the Bond films, Baker was shooting episodes of *The Saint* (ATV, 1962–9), *The Human Jungle* (ATV, 1963–4) and *The Avengers* (ATV, 1961–9). The man who made *A Night to Remember* was a 'get' for Hammer in 1967, but Baker might once have scorned the offer. In the late 1950s, he tried to get assigned to a novel Rank owned only for the company to read the property it had bought and deem it incompatible with its family image. If Baker had made *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* instead of *The Singer Not the Song*, his career might have taken a different course. Until 1967, he was credited as Roy Baker; confusion with a sound editor of the same name prompted him to change his billing on *Quatermass and the Pit* to Roy Ward Baker, reinforcing the impression that he was embarking on a new phase of his career. He stayed at Hammer for the Bette Davis vehicle *The Anniversary* (1968), inherited from the just-fired Alvin Rakoff, and the relatively lavish *Moon Zero Two* (1969). With Terence Fisher ailing, Baker became part of the Hammer

Quatermass and the Pit: Barbara Shelley, Andrew Keir

furniture, turning out gothic horrors of wildly varying quality (*Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde* [1971]; *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* [1973]). He was so identified with the form that rival horror specialists Amicus poached him for three 1972 films (*Asylum*, – *And Now the Screaming Starts!*, *The Vault of Horror*).

Quatermass and the Pit is a *conceptually* exciting film. Its orchestrated sense of rising chaos and desperation sets it among Baker's best, with *Inferno* (1953)[128] and *A Night to Remember*. However, it isn't remotely New Wave Horror. The film displays trace elements of changing times, but a 1950s Rank director working on a 1964 rewrite of a 1959 TV serial was never going to make something as formally daring and 'with-it' as Michael Reeves's *The Sorcerers*, Gordon Hessler's *Scream and Scream Again* (1967) or Gary Sherman's *Death Line* (1972). In the late 1960s, Hammer and Amicus (taking cues from the more downmarket, yet adventurous Tigon) started using younger, less traditionalist creatives (Christopher Wicking, Peter Sasdy, Peter Sykes, Stephen Weeks, Alan Gibson). If any of these auteurs had made *Quatermass and the Pit*, they might have overloaded an already complicated script with jazzier effects – and perhaps alienated Kneale.[129] Some (Julian Petley, Denis Meikle, David Pirie) feel the Technicolor, studio-shot *Quatermass and the Pit* doesn't hold up as well as the monochrome nerviness of the earlier films and TV serials. Cartier's epic-length production has more room to breathe, and tease with its gradual revelations: it remains a gripping television drama. Nevertheless, Baker's *Quatermass and the Pit* is what we have – and it forges its own identity, distinct from Cartier's television programmes and Guest's films, to qualify as a classic of British science-fiction cinema. Few movies of any year or genre take on as many ideas. The combination of Kneale's deep thoughts, Baker's professionalism, Hammer's craftsmanship and fine British non-star performances makes it an endlessly rewatchable, stubbornly chilling picture. It even, in moments, stretches to artfilm ambiguity – most obviously in the long, wordless closing shot. Of course, it could not help but be overshadowed. Budget, resources and

ambition put *2001: A Space Odyssey* in a different realm, beyond the infinite.

In the serial, Quatermass sets out to sacrifice himself but is overwhelmed by Hob and collapses … prompting Roney to pick up the chain and follow through. Barbara is out cold at the time and Potter looks after her. Kneale makes Keir's Quatermass stronger than Morell's, though it's possible to watch *Quatermass and the Pit* several times without realising that the titular hero plays a vital part in the defeat of the Martians. By knocking Barbara out with a strong right cross, Quatermass prevents her using telekinesis to stop Roney's ascent of the crane. Hob, the giant Martian, is actively defending itself as a mass of cold iron comes its way.[130] But it's Roney who dies to save humanity … just as astronauts Carroon, Reichenheim and Greene will themselves to death to prevent the conglomerate creature they have become from spreading over the planet … and Hugh Conway and Leo Pugh overcome alien parasites to defeat the invasion. In all three cases, Quatermass encourages the heroism of martyrs, but survives to tell the tale. In *Quatermass*, the astronomer Kapp – who seems set up to take on Roney's role – is casually machine-gunned to death just before the climax. The elderly Quatermass, finally stepping into the breach himself, suffers a stroke as he is about to press the detonator which will send an explosive message to the aliens who are harvesting humans via 'lovely lightning'. It falls to his granddaughter Hettie to assist him, ending his career and life with one final sacrifice play.

The serial cuts from Roney's death and the dispelling of Hob to Quatermass in a TV studio (backed by a panel which includes Barbara, Potter and Gilpin) delivering an address to the world which encapsulates the author's message.

Matthew Roney was a brave man and a friend. Much more – for it is with his kind that hope lies. For they have outgrown the Martian in us. If another of these things should ever be found, we are armed with knowledge. But we also have knowledge of ourselves … and of the ancient, destructive urges in us,

that grow more deadly as our populations increase and approach in size and complexity those of ancient Mars. Every war crisis, witch-hunt, race riot and purge … is a reminder and a warning. We are the Martians. If we cannot control the inheritance within us … this will be their second dead planet!

This stirring piece, well delivered by Morell, answers the well-remembered speech that closes *The Thing from Another World*. After the intellectual carrot has been fried, journalist Scotty (Douglas Spencer) gets on the radio to break the story. 'I bring you a warning … every one of you listening to my voice … tell the world – tell this to everybody, everybody wherever they are. Watch the skies. Everywhere. Keep looking. Keep watching the skies.'[131] The lesson Hawks and Nyby take from an alien encounter is that humanity should be *more* aggressive, violent, paranoid and intolerant if it is to survive; Kneale sees these traits as the curse we must overcome. We aren't supposed to look at the skies and shoot anything that moves, but into our own hearts and try to be better people.

The film ends on a different note, more despairing than inspirational. The final shot of *The Quatermass Xperiment* has a new rocket ready for launch, suggesting Quatermass remains undaunted

Quatermass and the Pit: exhaustion: Andrew Keir, Barbara Shelley

by failure – with no proof that the next venture will turn out any different. It's heroic, but ambiguous: we don't know whether Donlevy's Quatermass is Frankenstein or Galileo. *Quatermass 2* closes with an explosion and a mass liberation of the infected, which is essentially what happens in more focused, intense form in *Quatermass and the Pit*. These are not unadulterated triumphs, and the more Nigel Kneale has to do with it, the more provisional they seem; 'The Chopper' (*Out of the Unknown* [1971]), *The Stone Tape*, 'Murrain' (*Against the Crowd* [1975]), several of the *Beasts* plays (1976) and *The Woman in Black* (1983) end with screams and the perpetuation of supernatural evil. Whether through authorial second thought, the input of Anthony Hinds[132] or a sense that Hammer would dispense with editorial content anyway, Kneale cuts the 'We are the Martians' speech. After the sparking exorcism, an echo of the electrocution of *The Quatermass Xperiment*, numbed normality returns to blitzed Hobbs Lane. We hear sirens and bells, as the emergency services rally to cope with fires and casualties, but there are no reassuring cutaways to ambulances, fire engines and police cars. Bedraggled, bleeding and dusty, Quatermass mutters 'Roney' and staggers alone down the ruined street. He slumps against an alley wall opposite the crouching, no-longer-possessed Barbara. Between them is a tipped-over 'road closed' sign. They are completely spent, drained even of outrage and terror, and say nothing to each other as the credits roll between them and a mournful closing theme stresses the heavy cost of victory rather than the salvation of humanity.[133]

3 Ringstone Round

Hammer's *Quatermass and the Pit* was the end of the franchise as a film property, but – at least in the UK – Quatermass remained a name with associations. In 1972, Kneale scripted a fourth serial for the BBC, but the corporation dithered and let it slip to the competition. Informed by the 1960s concerns which didn't make it into the *Quatermass and the Pit* film script, *Quatermass* seemed a little antiquated when it finally appeared on ITV in 1979. The Planet People of the serial were rooted in flower power and the hippie movement when Kneale felt they should have been more punk.[134] Within a few years, New Age travellers, crystal-gazers and space-worshipping suicide cults put the show's vision back on the money. *Quatermass* was scripted as an exit for the character, with the hero fighting his last battle and dying at the end … unless those aliens have harvested him (along with huge numbers of other humans) as the bomb goes off and he's transformed into something like the Star Child of *2001*, which would keep open the option of him returning in some form.

Kneale considered writing *Young Quatermass*, which would find the scientist in Berlin in the 1930s at the compromised dawn of rocketry, mixed up with Nazi science and Teutonic mysticism. He put together an odd footnote in *The Quatermass Memoirs* (1996), a radio series produced by Paul Quinn, which brought back Andrew Keir as Quatermass. Sequences in which the scientist is interviewed by a journalist are intercut with archive material relating to the BBC serials and the 1950s events which shaped the stories; a peculiarity is that for consistency's sake none of the audio clips from the serials features Quatermass himself. A living theatre adaptation of *Quatermass and the Pit* was staged at a quarry in Nottinghamshire in 1997. The live remake of *The Quatermass Experiment* added to the

filmography but didn't lead to a revival, though remakes or reboots have been announced over the years. At the time of writing, a new Hammer Films has mooted the possibility of a Quatermass return. It's unlikely Kneale would have approved of any Quatermass stories he did not dream up himself – so perhaps it would make more sense to bring back the substitute Quatermass Adam Royston of *X – the Unknown*. Kneale was certainly leery of tributes paid him in films and TV shows.

Though original in all sorts of ways, *The Quatermass Experiment* and *Quatermass II* are entries in cycles they did not initiate. Properties like *The Nightmare Man* (1981) and *The Uninvited* (1997) are influenced by the first Quatermass stories but seem less specifically derivative than works which draw on *Quatermass and the Pit*.[135] Among the most indebted: 'The Dæmons' (*Doctor Who*), scripted by Barry Letts and Robert Sloman (using the name 'Guy Leopold'), which begins with an archaeologist finding a

The Quatermass Conclusion: the last of Quatermass: John Mills

spaceship in an ancient burrow and features the last of a race of diabolical aliens who have inspired earthly notions of black magic; Terry Nation's TV pilot *The Incredible Robert Baldick: Never Come Night* (1972), which combines Kneale's lost TV play 'The Road' and *Quatermass and the Pit* as a Victorian ghost-hunter (Robert Hardy) investigates a haunting which might have its origins in the future;[136] Tobe Hooper's film *Lifeforce* (1985), based on Colin Wilson's novel *The Space Vampires* (1976), which climaxes with a telekinetic storm in St Paul's Cathedral and an alien responsible for inspiring the myth of the vampire being impaled and short-circuited by cold iron; Stephen King's novel *The Tommyknockers* (1987), turned into a miniseries in 1993, which features a long-buried spaceship found in Maine woods which releases a gas that reshapes locals so that they physically and mentally resemble the clever-but-evil aliens; and John Carpenter's film *Prince of Darkness* (1987), scripted under the pseudonym 'Martin Quatermass', which has parapsychologists find a cylinder containing a liquid Anti-Christ from another dimension in the basement of a Catholic church.[137]

Nigel Kneale himself developed themes and plot elements from *Quatermass and the Pit* in 'The Road', *First Men in the Moon*, *The Stone Tape*, 'Baby' (*Beasts*) and others. However, he moved away from – even violently rejected – this strand of his work in *Kinvig* (1981) and his TV adaptation of Kingsley Amis's *Stanley and the Women* (1991). Here, characters who believe aliens are among us and pose a threat are depicted as delusional. For Kneale, the importance of the story was an exploration of humanity's capacity for cruelty and self-destruction. Quatermass's appeal that the Martians not be responsible for another dead planet is keenly personal. Hammer Films had less lofty aims, and hoped for a profitable monster movie. The success of the Quatermass series is that all its major manifestations deliver both the editorial and the terror.

Notes

1 Some sources mistakenly cite 1959–60. The confusion arises from a two-part repeat on 26 December 1959 and 2 January 1960.

2 Sequels using 'Part 2' date back to silent movies but Kneale seems to have invented the numeric sequel title. This only became Hollywood convention when the solemn likes of *The Godfather: Part II* (1974) gave way to the blunter commercial packaging of *Jaws 2* (1978). *Quatermass II*/2 refers to a second rocket as well as the story's sequel status, aligning it with standalone test-pilot pictures like X-15 (1961).

3 The Quatermass directors intersected at the beginnings and ends of their careers. In the 1930s, Baker was production assistant on Guest-penned Will Hay comedies. *Paper Orchid* (1949), one of Baker's earliest films as director, was written by Guest. In 1979–80, they both directed episodes of the little-seen *Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson*.

4 In 2000, Kneale urged the BFI to re-edit the opening of *The Stone Tape* for DVD release and had to be persuaded to let an accepted classic stand.

5 The first two episodes of *The Quatermass Experiment* were kinescoped (filmed off a monitor); the remaining four were not, because of in-house dissatisfaction with picture quality (not industrial action, as sometimes reported). *Quatermass II* and *Quatermass and the Pit* survive whole.

6 A year before, on Christmas Day 1972 the BBC broadcast Kneale's *The Stone Tape* in a similar slot. The only seasonal element is a discovered note from a terrified little boy to Santa 'What I want for Christmas is "please go away"'.

7 The effect is not unlike the reveal of the title *The Thing from Another World*, a moment so iconic it's recreated in both *The Thing* (1982) and *The Thing* (2011).

8 S-f writer Paul McAuley observed the use of this clip in *The Quatermass Experiment* was 'not the first time that kind of spaceship has caused problems for London'. Email to the author, 11 February 2014.

9 Interview with Lynda Myles and Julian Petley, *Sight and Sound* vol. 59 no. 2 (1990).

10 A glance down the cast lists suggests someone at the BBC was an admirer of *The Small Back Room*. Anthony Bushell, the simmering martinet Colonel Breen, is in *The Small Back Room*, playing calmer, tougher Colonel Strang. Even John Stratton, Captain Potter in *Quatermass and the Pit*, has an uncredited bit as 'young army Officer'.

11 'One day, they suddenly had a slot for a serial and nothing to fill it. It was a mid-summer slot, the worst one to have, and as no one had written anything for it, I wrote the serial myself. I was just wishing desperately to try something different.' 'Quatermass and the Pen', Nigel Kneale interviewed by Kim Newman and Julian Petley, *Video Watchdog* no. 47 (1998).

12 Serials which previously filled the slot included *The Broken Horseshoe* (BBC, 1952) and *Operation Diplomat* (BBC,1952) by mystery specialist Francis Durbridge. Both became cinema filmsin 1953,

serving as precedent for Quatermass's movie career. Mark Fenton, Durbridge's surgeon hero, was first played by John Robinson, the second Professor Quatermass.

13 Precedents in the field of weird science include Nathaniel Hawthorne's 'Dr Heidegger's Experiment' (1837), Arthur Conan Doyle's 'The Great Keinplatz Experiment' (1885), Saki's 'The Schartz-Metterklume Method' (1910) and Karel Čapek's *The Makropoulos Affair* (1922).

14 Commentary track, *Quatermass and the Pit*. Optimum BluRay, 2011.

15 This isn't a cover story: Robinson was in 'The Skin Game' for *Sunday Night Theatre* on 18 January 1959, in the middle of the original run of *Quatermass and the Pit*.

16 Dissatisfied with Monica Grey's performance, Kneale gleefully killed her character off stage in the fourth serial. Objectively, Grey (who was married to Val Gielgud, head of BBC Radio Drama) has less to do than Isabel Dean (or Margia Dean or Indira Varma) and Christine Finn (or Barbara Shelley) but does it reasonably well. *Quatermass II* and *Quatermass* were made by different companies decades apart, but the elfin Saire is credible as the daughter of the pixie-ish Grey. The least effective (by some distance) Quatermass heroine is Barbara Kellerman in *Quatermass*.

17 Christopher Frayling, *Mad, Bad and Dangerous?: The Scientist and the Cinema* (London: Reaktion Books, 2005), p. 179. Frayling goes on to quote Neville Shute's novel *No Highway* (1948) in which the question is put: 'Why are they called boffins?' 'Because they behave like boffins I suppose.'

18 The *Quatermass II* rocket is grounded because 'the international agreement on radioactive fallout made the design obsolete'. The Martian spaceship of *Quatermass and the Pit* is nuclear-powered too, and trace radiation at Hobbs Lane is an added symptom of lingering evil. The use of conventionally fuelled rockets in Soviet and US programmes sidelined the concept of a nuclear-powered spaceship.

19 In *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, Peter Nicholls – paying Kneale back for all those sneers at genre practitioners and fans – suggests 'With hindsight, there is a clear pattern in Kneale's work of ordinary people being seen as stupid and ignorant, and ready prey for the supernatural or science-fictional forces that will almost inevitably attempt to control them. There is a seigneurial, Edwardian element in this, a recoiling from the vulgar. It is worth labouring the point, because he was certainly a much better than average scriptwriter.' John Clute, Peter Nicholls (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (London: Granada, 1981; rev. edn, London: Orbit, 1993; further rev. online, http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/kneale_nigel).

20 Gordon Burn's novel *Fullalove* (1995) is about an ageing, disenchanted hack journalist in the James Fullalove mode – though the title refers to a toy dog.

21 In *Quatermass 2*, Kneale also cuts Paula Quatermass – again, presumably thanks to his distaste with the way the role was played on television – which means losing her soldier boyfriend, Captain Dillon (John Stone) too. Replacing Dillon as the story's first infectee is Peter Marsh (Brian Forbes), a Quatermass associate who wasn't in *Quatermass II* but had a role in the

earlier adventure – played by Moray Watson on television and Maurice Kaufmann in the film. The recasting of the lead actor along with turnover of the supporting cast means the Quatermass serials, though ensemble pieces, don't feel like a series; there's no continuing cast of characters, whether allies, family members or antagonists. Thanks to the reappearance of Lomax and Marsh, Hammer's *Quatermass 2* is more like a sequel to the BBC's *The Quatermass Experiment* than the TV version of the same story.

22 'Quatermass and the Pen', p. 35.

23 Presumably no relation to the Captain Dallas Tom Skerritt plays in *Alien* (1979). That Dallas was created (if not named) by Dan O'Bannon, who later drafted a putative American-set remake of *The Quatermass Experiment* which might have starred Sean Connery.

24 'The Off Season' is included in *The Martian Chronicles* (1950), a rare contemporary s-f book Kneale admired. *The Martian Chronicles* and *Quatermass and the Pit* both conclude that humanity are the Martians now, albeit in very different contexts.

25 David Pirie, *A Heritage of Horror* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1973); revised as *A Heritage of Horror: The English Gothic Cinema* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), p. 35.

26 *The Invasion* (2007), the fourth and least effective film of Finney's novel, ditches the duplicates and makes the mind-controlling virus much more like the *Quatermass II* aliens.

27 In the early 80s, Kneale scripted a remake of Arnold's *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954) which went unproduced.

28 Actually, Donlevy was born in Ireland, just as Kneale – who viewed himself as Manx – was born in Lancashire.

29 'Tarooma' is obviously supposed to represent the Woomera Rocket Range, home to the Anglo-Australian Joint Missile Testing Project from 1949 to 1980. Yet again, a Kneale throwaway is prophetic. The UK's Black Knight transatmospheric rocket programme was based at Woomera from 1958.

30 The published script describes Roney as a 'lean Canadian' and a scene not in that sets up his first appearance with chit-chat between reporters that specifies his nationality. Linder, a late cast addition, replaced roly-poly Englishman Miles Malleson. Wonderful as he was, it's hard to picture Malleson as any kind of action hero.

31 Tall, rangy, sharp-featured Richard Wordsworth, Carroon in *The Quatermass Xperiment*, looks like Hillary; dough-faced, sluggish Duncan Lamont, his television predecessor, doesn't. *The Abominable Snowman* features an Ed Hillary soundalike Himalayan explorer, Ed Shelley (Robert Brown).

32 Hammer pipped Sidney Gilliat for the rights. A prolific, eclectic writer, producer and director, Gilliat might have been a more congenial collaborator for Nigel Kneale. Gilliat would almost certainly have cast Alastair Sim as Quatermass.

33 *The Quatermass Xperiment* is now classified PG by the BBFC. Prints bearing the title *The Quatermass Experiment* have been around since the film's initial run.

34 Guest gets a co-script credit on *The Quatermass Xperiment*, *Quatermass 2* and *The Abominable Snowman*. Indeed, he does on most of his films as director, including those primarily written by Wolf Mankowitz (*The Day the Earth*

Caught Fire), J. G. Ballard (*When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth* [1970]) and Christopher Wood (*Confessions of a Window Cleaner* [1974]).

35 The character may be named after Desmond Briscoe, one of the boffins of the BBC Radiophonic workshop. He contributed eerie sound effects and electronic music cues to the BBC's *Quatermass and the Pit* and *The Stone Tape* and also worked on *The Haunting* (1963), *Phase IV* (1974) and *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976).

36 Cited in Jonathan Rigby and Marcus Hearn, Viewing Notes, *The Quatermass Experiment*, Region 2, DD Video, 2005.

37 Also at Hammer, Peter Cushing's Frankenstein wavers between films from all-out villain (*The Curse of Frankenstein* [1957]; *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* [1969]) to misunderstood hero (*The Evil of Frankenstein* [1964]; *Frankenstein Created Woman* [1967]).

38 'Quatermass and the Pen', p. 35.

39 Kneale is being satirical here – even the most complacent workforce would baulk at working in a factory which regularly lobbed mortar shells into their living quarters.

40 The TV serial also runs to a cinema manager, a projectionist, an usherette, specialised soldiers (a flame-thrower unit) and print, radio and television journalists – plus various nosy or unconcerned civilians.

41 'Quatermass and the Pen', p. 36.

42 Pirie, *A Heritage of Horror*, p. 38, stresses Gibbs's contribution to the film's success, citing 'the dim overcast skies (even the exterior of the House of Commons looks more like a gothic castle), the dark figures dominating each landscape, the vistas which lead away towards the enormous white domes.' Gibbs also shot *X – the Unknown*.

43 Rae also plays the wise old eyes of the yeti in the climax of *The Abominable Snowman* and the foreman in the first episode of *Quatermass and the Pit*.

44 In *Quatermass and the Pit*, Ripper repeats his army sergeant from *X – the Unknown*.

45 The effect is so pleasingly horrid that it's restaged more elaborately in *X–the Unknown*, where we see the flesh melt off a lab tech's face as the amorphous monster gets him.

46 Guest later cast Wordsworth as an emaciated, starved prisoner of war in *The Camp on Blood Island*.

47 Though the conglomerate draws on the intelligences it absorbs to further its ends. Carroon doesn't have the knowledge of chemistry necessary to whip up a mutagen catalyst, but one of the other astronauts does.

48 On television, Kneale amusingly plays the soothing voice that comes over the PA as the aliens try to coax the strikers out of the control room with cheery light music. He can also be glimpsed as the management representative in filmed sequences.

49 Roy Baker was a production assistant on this.

50 Kneale also turned down *Doomwatch* and *The X-Files* (Fox, 1993–2002), but did write episodes of *Sharpe* (ITV/Carlton, 1993–2008) and *Kavanagh Q.C.* (ITV/Central, 1995–2001). If you're reading this book, chances are you're a fan of Nigel Kneale's work – but he didn't like the same sort of TV shows you do.

51 'Quatermass and the Pen', p. 40.

52 Though Riccardo Freda's *Caltiki – il mostro immortale* (*Caltiki, the Immortal Monster*, 1959) comes close, scrambling

elements from Hammer's Quatermass films and *X–the Unknown*.

53 Stories like this mostly died out after Yuri Gagarin didn't turn into a monster, though there were mutant astronaut stragglers as late as *The Incredible Melting Man* (1978). The most lasting *Quatermass Experiment* influence in pop culture is that Stan Lee and Jack Kirby borrowed the premise – a pioneer space-crew mutated by cosmic rays – for the 1961 origin of *The Fantastic Four*.

54 Not 'A Hammer Film Production'. The *Five Million Years to Earth* titles read 'A Seven Arts-Hammer Production'; it looks as if the UK version is the US card with the first three words and the hyphen blanked.

55 Wheatley projects were in the works at Hammer. If *Quatermass and the Pit* was a last stab at an old franchise, the studio hoped Wheatley – in every way, a less modern writer than Kneale – would yield a new one.

56 The cleverest is *The Quatermass Conclusion*, used for the feature-length cut-down of *Quatermass* released theatrically overseas and on VHS in the UK.

57 Guest and Kneale moved to more prestigious projects for more respectable studios. For Woodfall Films (and director Tony Richardson), Kneale adapted John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* (1959), with Richard Burton, and *The Entertainer* (1960), with Laurence Olivier. For Columbia, he scripted Lewis Gilbert's *HMS Defiant* (aka *Damn the Defiant!*, 1962), with Dirk Bogarde and Alec Guinness, and *The First Men in the Moon*. Guest made *Expresso Bongo* (1960) and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, then was one of many directors mired in *Casino Royale* (1968) and handled the barely released s-f counterculture musical *Toomorrow* (1970). Kneale went back to Hammer for *The Witches*, Guest for *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth*.

58 Wayne Kinsey, *Hammer Films: The Elstree Studios Years* (Sheffield: Tomahawk Press, 2007), p. 21.

59 Three years earlier, Cushing and Lee were so associated with the studio that Hammer cast them together in the non-horror *She*. Either could have played Quatermass or Roney, as witness their teamings in *Horror Express* (1972) and *Nothing But the Night* (1973). While *Quatermass and the Pit* was in production, Cushing and Lee were in Terence Fisher's *Night of the Big Heat* (1967), at the tail end of a cycle of British s-f films inspired by the earlier Quatermass movies. In *Hammer Films: An Exhaustive Filmography* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1996), Tom Johnson and Deborah Del Vecchio write that *Quatermass and the Pit* was at one time due to be directed by Val Guest with Cushing as Quatermass but neither was available when production began.

60 The direction people walk on screen was important to Baker. Of *The One That Got Away* (1957), he revealed 'Remembering that, at least in Europe, people read from left to right, I staged everything so that Werra [the contrarian lead character] always moves in the opposite direction, from right to left; all other characters move more conventionally from left to right.' Roy Ward Baker, *The Director's Cut* (London: Reynolds & Hearn, 2000), p. 98.

61 St Nicholas, Chiswick Mall, London W4. See: http://www.reelstreets.com/index.php?option=com_films&task=view&id=1477&film_ref=quatermass_and_the_pit. William Hogarth and James

McNeill Whistler are buried there. Andrew Keir and Barbara Shelley approach the church along Powell's Walk.

62 David Rudkin's BBC play *Penda's Fen* (BBC1, 1974) uses a similar device. Signposts mark the transformation of the primal Penda's Fen into the modern village of Pinvin.

63 At the Abbey, no one reminds Quatermass what happened the last time he was there.

64 Interview by Paul Madden, National Film Theatre Programme Notes, 1977.

65 'The Web of Fear' (*Doctor Who*, 1968), *Death Line* (aka *Raw Meat*, 1973), *An American Werewolf in London* (1981) and *Creep* (2004) find the tunnels infested by monsters and mutants.

66 The serial reports racial violence in Birmingham, and keeps up a background chatter of news items we might relate to 'Martian influence': a deadlocked disarmament conference, terrorism in Nigeria, etc.

67 Best known for *Blakes 7* (BBC1, 1978–81), Thomas is also in the Kneale-influenced *Children of the Stones* (ITV/HTV, 1977).

68 He similarly complained about a beat director Peter Sasdy added to *The Stone Tape*: the heroine's panic attack/premonition in the first moments of the play. In the case of *Quatermass and the Pit*, the quick scare skeleton contradicts the script. The first fossils are said to be partial, to set up the undamaged skull found inside the spaceship.

69 Lamont had appeared in *The Quatermass Experiment* for the BBC and several Hammer films, including the Kneale-scripted *The Witches*. He had also been directed by Baker in *Passage Home* (1954).

70 Steafel looks rather like Judith Kerr, which is presumably a coincidence. Kneale's wife's name (or initials) crops up constantly in his scripts: Judith Carroon, Barbara Judd, Joe Kapp.

71 Danny Peary, *Cult Movies 3* (New York: Fireside Books, 1988), p. 91.

72 'Rocket Man', Interview with Marcus Hearn, *Hammer Horror* no. 7 (1997).

73 Bruce G. Hallenbeck, *British Cult Cinema: Hammer Fantasy & Sci-Fi* (Hailsham: Hemlock Books, 2011), p. 140.

74 Everyone calls her 'Miss Judd', but she wears a wedding ring.

75 Duffell was in *A Night to Remember* and has a memorable bit as a burned bibliophile in *Fahrenheit 451* (1966). She's another of *Quatermass and the Pit*'s vividly written, memorably played micro-characters.

76 Richfield had been in *Quatermass 2*, as BRG scientist Peterson. He was also a regular on *R3*.

77 Pirie, *A Heritage of Horror*, p. 37, suggests that Broadhead is supposed to evoke anti-monarchist Labour MP Willie Hamilton.

78 Philip Strick, *Science Fiction Movies* (London: Octopus, 1976), p. 18.

79 Interview on the *Quatermass and the Pit* BluRay.

80 This is unchanged from the serial, though it could have been amended. An unusually deep underground station, Hobbs End would have been a bomb shelter during the war.

81 Keir and Shelley know how to be instantly likeable. How we feel about other characters is guided by how Quatermass and Barbara react to them. Both can turn off the warmth when necessary; for Hammer, Keir had just played a brutal villain in *The Viking Queen* (1967) while Shelley had hissed through fangs in *Dracula – Prince of Darkness*. Keir said he was unhappy on set because he heard Baker wanted Kenneth More. The star felt the director didn't get the best out of him or Shelley; few viewers would agree.

82 Morris makes junior boffin Jerry a character, despite there being not a lot to go on in the script. He had just been the guillotined boyfriend/avenging spirit in *Frankenstein Created Woman*. In that, Duncan Lamont played his father and got beheaded in the prologue.

83 Missing from any of the films are characters like Paterson, the resentful and disloyal subordinate of *The Quatermass Experiment*.

84 In the film, Breen argues with Quatermass, physically confronts Roney and patronises Sladden, but treats Barbara as if she were invisible. He addresses not one line to her. Is he jealous of his protégé Potter's interest in the woman, resenting the fact that the younger officer breaks with him to join the scientists' coalition? Glover plays Breen as rigid, repressed and very slightly camp.

85 Kneale sometimes gets stick for his comical working-class folk, and Sladden is at once funny and susceptible to Martian influence – but this is a rare s-f film to admit that the white-coats' ground-breaking projects are impossible without blue-collar people getting their tool-using hands dirty. In the serial, a scene with a ridiculously posh lady interviewer (Janet Burrell) doing patronising vox pops at the Pit features a range of caricature Londoners of all classes – including a youth (Tony Lyons) described as 'teddy boy' in the script (though not dressed in that fashion) and his girlfriend (Anne Bushill), who defiantly owns up to liking 'the missing link'.

86 None of these makes it to the Hammer films.

87 In the twenty-first century, it's easy to miss the moment – carried over into the 1967 film from the 1958 script – when Quatermass appreciates (and envies?) Barbara's high-tech press cuttings. 'Photocopies?' As late as *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969), the humble photocopier was the sort of science-fiction-seeming gadget Q issued to James Bond.

88 Pirie, *A Heritage of Horror*, p. 29.

89 In 1952, Captain Edward J. Ruppelt, in charge of the USAF's Project Blue Book, coined the term Unidentified Flying Object to supplant 'flying saucer', in use since 1947, when pilot Kenneth Arnold reported a strange aerial shape moving 'like a saucer skipping across a lake'. The UFO designation was needed because not all 'saucers' were saucer-shaped. Popular culture failed to pay attention – no one greenlit a film called *Earth vs the Flying Cigars*.

90 'Storm at the End of the World' (2005), an episode of the CGI revival of *Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons*, has Captain Blue trying to remember the name of an old movie about a spaceship buried under London as he copes with a deep-buried Martian virus.

91 Hammer copies its pentacle from the BBC's, though the arrangement of seven interlocking circles only vaguely resembles the average pentacle – which tends to have a five-pointed star in the centre.

92 In the serial, it's suggested West's nerves are shot because he's 'spent too long clearing beaches'. Another echo of

The Small Back Room, which climaxes with bomb disposal on Chesil Beach.

93 In the equivalent scene in *The Stone Tape*, we see the ghost when it first manifests. By 1972, Kneale trusted the BBC with superimpositions. The relatively simple optical would have been an ask in 1958, though it could have been managed with a filmed insert – a spectre looms large in the final episode.

94 Kinsey, *Hammer Films*, p. 20. Doesn't the smug, superior tone make you want to go down to Soho Square and chuck stones through the BBFC's windows?

95 Kneale selected and wrote an introduction for *Ghost Stories of M. R. James* (London: Folio Society, 1973).

96 Hammer contributed to the small subgenre of bomb-disposal movies with Robert Aldrich's *Ten Seconds to Hell* (1959). The form was revived by Kathryn Bigelow in *The Hurt Locker* (2008).

97 Actually, it seems to be the *same* taxi Quatermass took earlier.

98 Assuming the sharper end of the object is the nose, these Martian pilots are in a forward compartment facing backwards; the television Martians are in a rear compartment facing forwards.

99 Bill Warren, *Keep Watching the Skies!: The 21st Century Edition* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010), p. 187.

100 In a parody of this theme, *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* (1988) features evil aliens who look like grotesque circus folk. Someone muses 'Maybe they're where our idea of clowns comes from' only to be asked 'Then why aren't they *funny*?'

101 Bryan Kneale also did the cover illustrations of the Penguin editions of *Quatermass II* and *Quatermass and the Pit*.

102 Clarke and Kubrick were influenced by Robert Ardrey's popular anthropological studies *African Genesis* (1961) and *The Territorial Imperative* (1966). *Quatermass and the Pit* predates these, though Roney might owe a little to screenwriter-turned-anthropologist Ardrey and paleoanthropologist Louis Leakey. They locate the Dawn of Man in Africa (Leakey's famous finds were at Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania) rather than the Thames Valley.

103 Lichen on Mars would be huge news now. In 1967, it would have disappointed a public conditioned to expect *Doctor Who*'s Ice Warriors or *Captain Scarlet*'s Mysterons.

104 The strategic implications of such a project are anyone's guess.

105 'Where Was Moses When the Lights Went Out?', an American music-hall song, has appropriately creepy lyrics about 'ghosts and goblins'. It was well enough known that the title question generally inspired the response quoted by Kneale (sometimes with more profanity).

106 The electro-acoustic thrumming is by Tristram Cary, who had scored *The Ladykillers* (1955) in more traditional mode. He also composed the music for Hammer's *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb*, several *Doctor Who* serials and Bob Godfrey's short *The Electron's Tale* (1971). Though Cary provided both electronic and orchestral score, music supervisor Philip Martell added several stock tracks. The television serial was scored by Trevor Duncan.

107 On the DVD, the wires are invisible. The added detail of the BluRay transfer exposes some effects.

108 Howlett is the only actor carried over from serial to film, though he changes roles. Hammer cast him as the dithery archivist at Westminster Abbey.

109 An underworld character in Baker's *Tiger in the Smoke* (1956) and a steward on the *Titanic* in *A Night to Remember*.

110 For a pacifist, Quatermass is surprisingly keen on the literal nuclear option – he makes unilateral use of atomic weaponry against aliens in *Quatermass II* and *Quatermass*.

111 Insects who might eat each other are a plot point in Baker's comedy boffin/spy thriller *Highly Dangerous* (1950).

112 Greil Marcus, *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1989), p. 86. Marcus also relates Hobbs End to the philosopher Hobbes, whose 'state of nature was "the war of all against all"'.

113 When pushed, Roney makes a fair fist of xenobiology too.

114 A stock shot from Hammer's *Four Sided Triangle*.

115 In *The Stone Tape*, the new recording medium discovered by the Ryan Electronics team is the stone 'most of medieval London was built of'. Excited, the research director guesses this 'might explain a lot of ghost stories'.

116 Pirie, *A Heritage of Horror*, p. 134.

117 Kinsey, *Hammer Films*, p. 27.

118 Peary, *Cult Movies 3*, p. 90.

119 *The Year of the Sex Olympics* is prescient about the rise of docusoap or 'reality' TV. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, informed by George Orwell's experiences at the BBC in wartime, is paranoid about omnipresent telescreens.

120 A single suggestion that the film is set in the future: Associated Television, which is covering the Hobbs End press conference, was not broadcasting in colour in 1967. In London, ATV never did; it lost its franchise to London Weekend Television in 1968.

121 A rare sight, by 1967.

122 This is almost swallowed by the sound mix, saving the film from unsought-for laughs at revival screenings. A military character shouting 'Don't panic don't panic' while panicking would remind British audiences of Corporal Jones (Clive Dunn) of *Dad's Army*, which didn't debut until 1968 (but ran until 1977).

123 Kneale's 'Special Offer' (*Beasts*, 1976) features a teenage telekinetic supermarket employee (Pauline Quirke) who is physically closer to the Carrie of Stephen King's novel than various film and TV takes on the character.

124 This is the only mention of Quatermass's first name in the Hammer film series.

125 Kinsey, *Hammer Films*, p. 21.

126 With its big eyes, shimmering penumbra and snarl, Hob seems related to the creatures of *The Outer Limits* (ABC, 1963–5).

127 Kneale tiptoes around one implication of *Quatermass and the Pit*: that the Martians are responsible not only for the concept of the Devil but for all religion.

128 *Inferno*, a desert-survival movie with Robert Ryan, is the best film from Baker's brief Hollywood phase. Like *Quatermass and the Pit*, its title is at once literal and a hellish metaphor.

129 Despite minor disagreements, Kneale was pleased with Sasdy's direction of *The Stone Tape* – which was made for television, where the writer gets more say than in the movies. Piers Haggard, director of *Quatermass*, had contributed to the New Wave Horror movement with *The Blood on Satan's*

Claw (1971) but came to Euston Films' attention for his handling of Dennis Potter's TV serial *Pennies from Heaven* (1978).

130 Presumably, Roney shifts the crane with his weight … but it falls because the concrete underneath its base crumbles – raising the possibility that it would have toppled and short-circuited Hob even without Roney's sacrifice.

131 There's a tiny, cynical note concealed in this sequence. While praising the defenders of the Earth, the supposedly honest newsman deliberately covers up the misguided behaviour of the scientist who wanted to collaborate with the alien by mentioning that Dr Carrington is 'recovering from wounds received in the battle'.

132 Hinds's scripts for *The Reptile* and *Frankenstein Created Woman* end on similar notes of exhaustion and understated despair.

133 Marcus, *Lipstick Traces*, pp. 87–8, notes 'In a long, silent shot, the movie ends – and because there is no freeze frame, no automatic irony, the movie doesn't seem to end at all … . Everything [Quatermass] has seen is in his eyes, and he is trying to forget what he has seen, but the shot – it goes on and on – doesn't last long enough for his assistant's eyes to focus … Quatermass' victory is the victory of rational humanity over irrational doubt; the doubt in his face at the end is not doubt that he has won, but doubt that he wanted to.' It's possible Marcus has seen some mutant print without the superimposed end credits.

134 Marcus, *Lipstick Traces*, p. 88, compares the sensation of a Sex Pistols performance in San Francisco in 1978 with the 'anarchy in London' climax of *Quatermass and the Pit*.

135 In the immediate wake of the TV serial, several parodies aired on the BBC: 'The Scarlet Capsule' (*The Goon Show* [The Home Service]) on the wireless and 'The Horror Serial' (*Hancock's Half Hour* [BBC]) on television. The memory lingered long enough for *The Two Ronnies* (BBC1) to do a parody as late as 1986.

136 This was an entry in a BBC slot called *Drama Playhouse* which carried try-outs for proposed shows. I'm still aggrieved we didn't get more Robert Baldick adventures whereas *Sutherland's Law* (BBC1, 1973–6), a dreary Scots-set crime show from the same run of pilots, went on to have three series.

137 Carpenter's *In the Mouth of Madness* (1994) features a sinister town called Hobbs End. However, typical of the pack-rat borrowings of 1990s horror cinema, this summons the tentacular alien deities of Lovecraft while appropriating much of its plot from Jonathan Carroll's novel *The Land of Laughs* (1980).

Credits

Quatermass and the Pit
Five Million Years to Earth (US title)

UK/USA 1967

Directed by
Roy Ward Baker
Produced by
Anthony Nelson Keys
Original Story and Screenplay by
Nigel Kneale
Director of Photography
Arthur Grant, B.S.C.
Supervising Editor
James Needs
Supervising Art Director
Bernard Robinson
Music Composed by
Tristram Cary

Production Companies
©Hammer Film Productions Limited
Associated British-Pathe Limited presents a Hammer film production a Seven Arts-Hammer Film production, distributed by Warner-Pathe Distributors Limited

Production Manager
Ian Lewis
Assistant Director
Bert Batt
Continuity
Doreen Dearnaley
Casting
Irene Lamb
Camera Operator
Moray Grant
Special Effects
Bowie Films Ltd.
Editor
Spencer Reeve
Art Director
Ken Ryan
Wardrobe Mistress
Rosemary Burrows
Make-up
Michael Morris
Hair Stylist
Pearl Tipaldi
Musical Supervisor
Philip Martell
Sound Recordist
Sash Fisher
Sound Editor
Roy Hyde
Colour by
DeLuxe

uncredited
Soundtrack
'Rejoice in the Lord Always' written by Joan Redford; 'Ultima ora' music by Armando Sciascia; 'Deserted Harbour' music by Dennis Farnon

CAST
James Donald
Dr Matthew Roney
Andrew Keir
Professor Bernard Quatermass
Barbara Shelley
Barbara Judd
Julian Glover
Colonel Breen
Duncan Lamont
Sladden
Bryan Marshall
Captain Potter
Peter Copley
Howell
Edwin Richfield
Minister of Defence
Maurice Good
Sergeant Cleghorn
Grant Taylor
Police Sergeant Ellis
Robert Morris
Jerry Watson
Sheila Steafel
journalist
Hugh Futcher
Sapper West
Hugh Morton
elderly journalist
Thomas Heathcote
vicar
Noel Howlett
Abbey librarian
Hugh Manning
pub customer
June Ellis
blonde
Keith Marsh
Johnson
James Culliford
Corporal Gibson
Bee Duffell
Miss Dobson
Roger Avon
electrician

Brian Peck
technical officer
John Graham
inspector
Charles Lamb
newsvendor

uncredited
Gareth Thomas
workman who finds skeleton
Anthony Rayner

Production Details
Filmed from 27 February to 25 April 1967 on location in London (England) and at M.G.M. British Studios (Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, England). Budget: £275,000. 35mm; 1.66:1; in colour (DeLuxe); sound (mono - RCA Sound Recording). MPAA: 21563.

Release Details
UK theatrical release by Warner-Pathe Distributors Limited on 9 November 1967. BBFC certificate: X (no cuts). Running time: 97 minutes 57 seconds / 8,815 feet
UK theatrical re-release by Independent Cinema Office on 3 July 2012. BBFC certificate: 12A (no cuts). Running time: 97 minutes 45 seconds / 8,797 feet +8 frames
US theatrical release by Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation on 16 February 1968. Running time: 98 minutes

Credits compiled by Julian Grainger