

The Wellsian: The Journal of the H. G. Wells Society
No. 31 (2008)

Copyright 2008 © The H. G. Wells Society, ISSN 0263 1176

Editorial Address (from No. 32)

Dr Simon J. James, Editor, *The Wellsian*
Department of English Studies, Durham University
Hallgarth House, 77 Hallgarth Street, Durham DH1 3AY
E-mail: s.j.james@durham.ac.uk
(Please send submissions as email
attachments in Word or RTF)

Referee Panel

Dr John Hammond, English, Nottingham Trent University
Dr Sylvia Hardy, English, University of Northampton
Dr. Simon J. James, English, Durham University
Dr Richard Nate, English, University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
Prof. Patrick Parrinder, English, University of Reading
Dr John S. Partington, History, Network Rail
Prof. Elmar Schenkel, English, University of Leipzig

Printed by: **Higgs Printing and Design Centre**
50-52 Station Hill, Reading RG1 1NF, UK

Contents

Editorial , by John S. Partington	1
Notes on Contributors	3
Thomas Gangale and Marilyn Dudley-Rowley , 'Strategy and Tactics in the War of the Worlds'	4
José Manuel Mota , ' <i>Coming up for Air</i> and <i>The History of Mr Polly</i> : Utopian Yearnings, Triumphs and Defeats'	34
Yoonjung Choi , ' <i>The Wonderful Visit</i> and the Wilde Trial'	43
Book Review: <i>Modern Utopian Fictions</i> , by Peter Edgerley Firchow [Simon J. James]	55
Book Review: <i>H. G. Wells's Fin-de-Siècle</i> , ed. John S. Partington [Patrick Parrinder]	57
Book Review: <i>H. G. Wells, Modernism and the Movies</i> , by Keith Williams [John S. Partington]	59
Book Review: <i>Things to Come</i> , by H. G. Wells, ed. Leon Stover [John S. Partington]	66
Book Review: <i>H. G. Wells in 'Nature', 1893-1946</i> , ed. John S. Partington [Roslynn D. Haynes]	68
New Books and Articles on H. G. Wells [compiled by John S. Partington]	73

EDITORIAL

In this edition of *The Wellsian*, I am delighted to present a fine balance of critical articles about, and reviews of new works on H. G. Wells. Among the latter you will find a review of the final volume of the late Leon Stover's 'Annotated H. G. Wells' series. Stover, who passed away at the end of 2006, was a controversial figure in Wells studies, but as the review suggests, his works should provoke a more focussed critical approach to research on Wells – research that is sophisticated and wide-reaching, encompassing the breadth of Wells's canon rather than making do with random samples of seemingly relevant aspects of his work. Of the articles here presented, you will find the final instalment in Thomas Gangale and Marilyn Dudley-Rowley's trilogy of pieces on *The War of the Worlds* (see numbers 29 and 30 of *The Wellsian* for their earlier offerings), and, although both Yoonjung Choi and José Manuel Mota make their debuts as essayists for this journal, they represent, respectively, a new scholar and a seasoned one in the field of Wells studies. With an international cluster of essayists and reviewers, this year's journal continues to demonstrate the global appeal of Wells and his work.

As was announced at the Society's 2007 AGM, this volume of *The Wellsian* will be the last under my editorship. Having been editor for ten years, the longest serving in the history of the Society, it seemed an appropriate time to pass on the baton. My aim as editor over the years has been to raise the scholarly consistency of *The Wellsian*, and to internationalise (or should that be, 'cosmopolitanise') the contributions to it. The former has been achieved not only through my hard work in the early years at networking with scholars and inviting prominent Wellsians to contribute to the journal, but also through the creation of an editorial panel in 2003 and the insistence on every submitted essay being endorsed by one (and often two) members of that panel as well as by myself (usually following revisions by the essayists) before it was eligible for publication in the journal. As to the latter aim, the Society has always been international in nature, and as the standard of contributions to *The Wellsian* increased, and as my own reputation in Wells studies has been established, bringing that much more prestige to the journal, interest in publishing in the journal has become more and more global – a truly appropriate status for a journal promoting the greatest cosmopolitan of the twentieth century. So, from a state of affairs, in 1999, when the journal could only be published once I had persuaded enough authors to write for it, by 2008 we see a situation where I can turn down substandard essays with impunity in the knowledge that there will be more, high-quality submissions to fill the journal, generally carrying an essay or two over to the next year's edition. If one considers that, between 2002 and 2005, the 'other' *Wellsian*, *The Undying Fire* (the journal of the H. G. Wells Society, the Americas), published a string of strong essays, and both journals had articles enough to thrive upon, it is testament to the academic interest Wells provokes that scholarship is so strong.

This point brings me onto an issue which I believe should be seriously considered by the Society. With the H. G. Wells Society, the Americas, being

wound up in 2007 despite the ease with which it managed to produce a high-quality journal, it seems to me that there is scope for the Society to invest in a second journal, carrying on the title *The Undying Fire*, which could have an editor based in North America and which could aim to publish articles from that vast anonymous pool of North American Wells scholars. For while *The Wellsian*, of course, has always attracted American (and some Canadian) essayists, the appearance of *The Undying Fire* in 2002 immediately attracted scholars who were unknown in the United Kingdom and who had never offered submissions to *The Wellsian* (and have not done so since). Some thought would have to be given to ways of marketing a second journal. In any event, the Society should think seriously about such a proposal as it would achieve the dual goals of widening our reach to academics who are not currently involved with the Society whilst also providing more informative material for our general membership, in addition to *The Wellsian*, *The H. G. Wells Newsletter*, our other occasional publications and the Society's annual conference (though the last named, attracting only 20-30 attendees per year, not all of whom are Society members, barely scratches the surface of our membership in terms of providing value for the membership fee).

In closing this final editorial, I would like to thank those persons who have assisted me in producing *The Wellsian* since 1999; namely my predecessor, Sylvia Hardy, the members of my editorial board (Philip Coupland [2003-2006], John Hammond, Sylvia Hardy, Simon J. James, Steven McLean [2004-2006], Richard Nate, Patrick Parrinder and Elmar Schenkel), my book reviewers (Sylvia Hardy, Roslynn D. Haynes, Edward James, Simon J. James, Christian Morea, José Manuel Mota, Richard Nate, Patrick Parrinder, Elmar Schenkel, Michael Sherborne and David C. Smith), the editorial staff of *The Undying Fire* (Eric Cash, Charles Keller, Andrea Lynn, Robert Philmus, David C. Smith and the late W. Warren Wagar) and, of course, the many contributors to *The Wellsian* over the past ten years whose 48 essays I have had the privilege to publish. I would also like to thank Equilibris Publishing and Peter Lang GmbH for publishing the two anthologies of *Wellsian* essays under my editorship, in 2003 and 2007 respectively.

Last, but by no means least, I would like to wish my successor, Simon J. James, all the best in his role as editor. I know that more than one name was touted for this role among the Society's committee over the past year, but of those names only Simon has the breadth of knowledge, the fair-mindedness and the intellectual discipline to undertake the task with success. I am confident the journal will go from strength to strength under his guidance.