

23 September 2005

To the Editor of *The Wellsian*

Sir

In his review of *H. G. Wells's The Time Machine: A Reference Guide*, in *Wellsian*, 28, John S. Partington accuses John Hammond of failing to give due credit for a number of his ideas, and,

especially, of failing to credit Leon Stover. According to Partington, Stover ‘provides plenty of material in his edition [of *The Time Machine*] [...] which Hammond makes use of himself’. This is quite a serious charge, but I believe it is unfounded. Partington observes that Hammond fails to mention Stover’s republication of a number of documents that had already been reprinted by other Wells scholars – surely a trivial omission. More importantly, Partington claims that Hammond ‘follows Stover’s lead in equating the narrator of *The Time Machine* with the character called Hillyer. The truth is that this identification had been proposed several years earlier by Harry M. Geduld in *The Definitive Time Machine* (which Hammond does acknowledge), and earlier still by Frank McConnell in his 1977 edition of *The Time Machine*. It is McConnell and Geduld, not Stover, who are responsible for questioning the common assumption that Hillyer is the Time Traveller’s manservant. For the record, even though John Hammond now takes the same line as McConnell, Geduld, and Stover I remain unconvinced. If Wells had intended us to identify the narrator with Hillyer I suspect he would have done so himself.

Patrick Parrinder