

Wells visited the United States in 1906 and went to Niagara. From the evidence of *The War in the Air*, Wells must have spent a lot of time on Goat Island, and must have made careful notes of its topography. At about the time of his going there, he decided to dramatise a general warning of the consequences of a major war. One likely result of a war of this size was starvation. Wells hints at this by calling a minor character Grubb. The reader takes the point that a hero cannot be called Grubb, so this is a secondary personality, but may well miss the implication signalled by the fact that the word "grub" can be used as slang for "food". The name stresses the importance of food and the reader is prepared for the world starvation which comes later in the book.

The best central character for the dramatisation was a "little man", on the lines of Hoopdriver, Kipps or Lewisham. Thus the creation of Bert Smallways. The name, of course, hints at narrow thinking, but Bert's eventual success suggests that the little man has a greater potential than he realises. The technical problem was to project Bert into amazing situations, and then to develop him so that he can, by the end of the book, acquire quasi-heroic status. Getting Bert into a Zeppelin presented Wells with a plotting difficulty. This was solved by introducing Mr Butteridge and his balloon. The improbability of the incident is disguised by the funny writing, which distracts the reader. At Niagara, Wells noticed the melodramatic potential of Goat Island – once the bridge is down it is impossible to get off Goat Island, as in the case of an ordinary island in a river, by rowing or swimming, because the force of the torrents would sweep an oarsman or swimmer to instant death. The reader's attention, like Bert's, is on the aerial battle and he does not notice that, by going to Goat Island, Bert is taking a large risk. Bert then engages in a lethal and successful game, exciting in itself, of hide-and-seek with Prince Karl Albert and another German character. He gets off the island by repairing a damaged Asiatic flying machine, a primitive light aeroplane – not for nothing, as Wells has already suggested, has Bert been a bicycle mechanic, an individual who could be expected to know how to repair a simple aircraft.

The War in the Air is not a major work of science fiction, because no thrilling new scientific ideas are presented. It is still, however, readable, and analysis of its structure should serve to remind Wellsians of the technical competence of the author. Wells displays an alarming capacity to slip in the "plant" – the hint that will be developed later – and a mastery of inequality of emphasis, by which I mean stress on the really important elements of the story.

A COMPARISON OF THE REPRESENTATION OF ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE AND H.G. WELLS IN THE STRAND MAGAZINE, 1891-1901

By John Partington

By glancing through several issues of any one periodical of the late-Victorian period the wide number of contributors becomes immediately apparent. Through a closer analysis, however, it is discernible that, although journals always had many occasional contributors to their pages, they also maintained a number of regular contributors who were represented in ways different from their occasional counterparts. In relation to *The Strand Magazine*, Arthur Conan Doyle was one such regular contributor while H.G. Wells was an occasional contributor. Although Doyle's position at *The Strand* had its benefits for a writer, it also had its downsides. Whilst being committed to one magazine, and hence assured of regular publication, Doyle was very much targeted at one specific audience. His writing had to fit comfortably within the tone of *The Strand* and, thus, diversity was limited. The result of this was Doyle's restriction to "type" fiction, which centred around adventure and suspense. Although Doyle could shift from writing about Sherlock Holmes and Brigadier Gerard to composing autobiographical sketches, all his work, nonetheless, had to be full of daring and heroism, leaving the reader in awe of the central character.

Wells, on the other hand, was a contributor to several journals during the late-nineteenth century and, although he had his "favourites", he was never committed to any one journal for any length of time. This meant that Wells could diversify, targeting his articles at appropriate journals and reserving complete freedom of content at all times. By so doing, Wells could be writing educational essays for one journal, book reviews for another and short stories for a third without any fear of conflict of interest between them. In terms of publicity, one could say that Doyle worked from a narrow base, guaranteeing a constant readership, whilst Wells worked from a broad base, attracting a diverse readership (though Wells's ability as a writer assured his popularity in the late-Victorian period. These differing approaches to their careers by Doyle and Wells met with different responses from journals. By using these two contrasting literary figures as case-studies, I will reveal the different representations received by them as occasional and regular literary contributors to *The Strand*.

In order to justify my claim that Doyle was a regular, and Wells an occasional, contributor to *The Strand*, I will begin by focusing on their contribution-ratios to the journal. *The Strand* began publication in January 1891 and Arthur Conan Doyle made his first contribution to it in March of that year: an unsigned story entitled "The Voice of Science". Doyle had already made his literary debut with an article in 1879 in *Chambers Journal* and his reputation was secured through the publication of *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), featuring Sherlock Holmes for the first time, *Michah Clarke* (1887) and *The White Company* (1890). His work for *The Strand*, however, allowed him to become a full-time writer and abandon his career in medicine. Doyle contributed to *The Strand* from 1891 until his death in 1930 and beyond, with the publication of some posthumous articles. Through an analysis of Doyle's publication patterns with the magazine, it becomes clear that he was an extremely prolific contributor. There is no recognised matrix by which to assess regularity of contribution. For the purpose of this essay, therefore, I have decided simply to count contributions made and work out average annual representation. Throughout the forty years in which Doyle was contributing to *The Strand*, only twelve of those years saw him published in less than 50 percent of the editions. In three of the years – 1893, 1896 and 1906 – Doyle actually appeared in all twelve editions. Over the forty years of Doyle's association with *The Strand*, he averaged 6.9 articles a year. Proof that he was at his most prolific during the Victoria period, however, is shown by the fact that, between the years 1891 and 1901, inclusive, he averaged 7.5 contributions a year to the magazine (see Appendix). In light of these facts, it is indisputable that Doyle can be considered a regular contributor to *The Strand* throughout his career and, more relevant to this essay, particularly during the Victorian period.

H.G. Wells began his literary career in 1886, contributing articles to, and editing, *The Science Schools Journal* and his reputation was made by the publication of *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) and *The Invisible Man* (1897). Before making his debut for *The Strand* in 1898, Wells had contributed stories, social comment, scientific articles and reviews to many popular periodicals. He would have been considered quite a "catch" by the editor of *The Strand*, George Newnes. However, by applying the same formula to Wells as that used above for Doyle, it becomes obvious that Wells was never a regular contributor to the periodical. During the 46 year span of Wells's association with *The Strand*, he contributed no articles during twenty-five of those years. The average number of

articles Wells contributed to the magazine was just 0.8 a year, although during the Victorian period the figure was higher, at 3.5 articles a year (see Appendix). (Even this figure is misleading as ten of the thirteen articles he contributed between 1898 and 1901, inclusive, were the serialisation of the novel, *The First Men in the Moon*.) Nonetheless, it is plain that Wells was only ever an occasional contributor to *The Strand* and never a regular writer.

Having revealed the relative positions of Doyle and Wells in *The Strand* vis-à-vis regularity of contributions, it is now the task of this essay to compare the representation of Doyle with Wells in the journal during the Victorian period. This will reveal the ways in which the representation of a regular contributor differed from that of an occasional contributor.

Through a close analysis of *The Strand* between 1891 and 1901, I have discovered five different methods by which that magazine represented, either subtly or obviously, its contributors to its readership. Those methods were: i) biography, ii) serialisation, iii) visual representation, iv) autobiography, v) gimmickry. For the sake of manageability, I will deal with each method of representation separately and examine how those methods affected Doyle and Wells in their capacities as contributors.

Biography played a significant part in *The Strand*. Every edition contained a feature entitled "Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times of their Lives" in which three, sometimes four, "celebrities" were highlighted. These people came from select groups, with representatives from the Anglican Church, the military hierarchy, scientists, royalty, national sport and artists being featured in 1898 alone. A typical list would be that for August 1898 when Louise Jopling, an artist, Stanley Jackson, a cricketer, and the Anglican Bishop of St Asaph were the starred celebrities. Quite often the featured individual would be a person of the moment, like Richard Hobson in the October 1898 edition of *The Strand*: an Assistant Naval Constructor in the American Navy who had recently gone beyond the call of duty by sinking the Spanish ship, "Merrimac", during the Spanish-American War. Also, *The Strand* would publicise its own contributors through the "Portraits of Celebrities" page. This was so in the cases of Doyle and Wells.

Doyle featured in the November 1891 magazine, at the time when his first collection of short stories, "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes", was being run on a monthly basis. *The Strand*, by publicising Doyle's life, hoped to achieve, on the one

hand, publicity for Doyle so the public could associate the Holmes stories with a real person and hence iconise Doyle and create hysteria around his person. On the other hand, the magazine hoped to achieve further readership by associating itself with Doyle, "the icon" which it was creating. This notion of iconisation is evidenced by the content of the biographical piece: Doyle is advertised as coming from a talented family which included John Doyle, the caricaturist, Richard Doyle, the *Punch* illustrator, James Doyle, the historian, and Henry Doyle, the director of the Irish Academy. His trips abroad are referred to and his sporting interests noted, as well as his literary successes. Finally, the continued appearance of Sherlock Holmes in *The Strand* is announced with "great pleasure" in the article. Of more substance than the "Portraits of Celebrities" article, however, is a piece from the August 1892 edition of *The Strand* entitled "A Day with Dr Conan Doyle" by Harry How. This article trumpets Doyle's modernisation of "Detectivism". It describes Doyle as "a happy, genial, homely man; broad-shouldered, with a hand that grips you heartily, and, in its sincerity of welcome, hurts. He is brown and bronzed". This titan-image plunges "liberally into all outdoor sports" including football, tennis, bowls, cricket, photography and tandem-cycling. He is a family man, cycling "with his wife" and riding "his little three-year-old Mary" round the garden. Details of Doyle's artistic family are cited. A brief history of his education in Lancashire, Germany and Edinburgh is given as well as details of his literary beginnings. Doyle tells of the living prototype of Sherlock Holmes and gives details of how he writes his Holmes stories. The general impression received from reading this biographical article is of an educated, friendly, hard-working author with an adventurous background, a traditional family life and with much respect for his readership. Doyle is made into an ideal and through careful presentation and, possibly, some imaginative interpretation, a faultless figure is portrayed.

Wells was featured in "Portraits of Celebrities" in December 1898, after two of his short stories had been published and before a further short story and a serialised novel were to appear in *The Strand* (see Appendix). Far from iconising Wells, the article simply tells the bones of his life: his father, his birthplace, his education, his early career and his literary successes. The article finishes by announcing: "Mr Wells is at present writing a series of stories for this Magazine [...] which promise to show his powers at their highest mark," thus advertising Wells's current relationship with the periodical.

It is clear that the representation of Doyle and Wells in these portraits differ sharply. While they both aim to advertise the work being contributed by Wells and Doyle to *The Strand*, the emphasis on Doyle is much more sensational and personal, while Wells's portrayal is basic and standard.

A further way in which *The Strand* represents its contributors was through serialisation. During his career with the magazine, Doyle had eight novels, nine collections of short stories, one autobiography and one collection of war journalism serialised. Within the Victorian period itself, Doyle had two novels and three collections of short stories serialised (see Appendix). Through serialisation, the author gains greater familiarity to the reading public. As serialisation generally ran from month to month, the author's name appeared continuously for lengthy periods of time. "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes", for example, ran for twenty-four months in two spells (see Appendix). As Doyle had a serialisation in progress at least every other year during the Victorian period, his name could hardly be divorced from that of *The Strand* in the minds of its regular readers.

Wells, during his association with the magazine, had just one novel serialised in the periodical. This was in 1900-1901 with *The First Men in the Moon* (see Appendix). With this as the exception, Wells only ever submitted occasional, individual contributions to the magazine. As is clear, then, Doyle and Wells again received different representation from *The Strand*. Doyle was represented in long-running serialisations frequently throughout the Victorian period. Wells, however, was not permanently associated with the periodical but was recognised as being an occasional, and usually short story contributor to the magazine. This saturation publication for Doyle through serialisation, is further proof of *The Strand's* iconisation of Doyle as a regular contributor.

Visual representations played a large part in popularising *The Strand* and its contributors. During the Victorian period, ten visual representations of Doyle appeared in the magazine in five different articles. By studying just a few, it is possible to understand the purpose of them. In the "Portraits of Celebrities" article, Doyle can be seen in cricketing attire and his graduation gown, amongst other scenes. These pictures highlight his versatility and his intelligence by representing him as a scholar and as a player of England's national sport. Photographs accompanying the article, "An Alpine Pass on 'Ski'" from June 1895, show the lighter side of Doyle, able to have fun on the slopes, and both that article and its accompanying photograph

depicting "A Day with Dr Conan Doyle", represent Doyle as a model married man co-operating in leisure with his wife. Through these visual representations, Doyle is shown as all things good: the sportsman, the scholar and the husband. His multifaceted talents boost his image in the public eye as something more than just a literary pot-boiler.

Wells, on the other hand, received no photographic publicity outside the few pictures shown with his "Portraits of Celebrities" article. Even these do not try to portray Wells in any special light. They are simply standard portrayals of a man at different times of his life and show no additional talents.

The visual representations used by *The Strand*, therefore, are aimed at producing different effects with different people. Doyle, the regular contributor, is shown as multi-talented and an upright man of education and marriage. Wells, however, a married man similarly educated to Doyle and an avid cyclist and former sports master, is an occasional contributor and is represented as a very ordinary kind of person. The illustrative bias is clearly in favour of iconicising the regular contributor whilst simply advertising the occasional writer.

The final two methods of representation I am going to discuss are particularly relevant as they were applied to Doyle but not to Wells. During the periods when Doyle had no new fictional contributions for *The Strand*, he was allowed to submit autobiographical material. This served two purposes. Firstly it kept Doyle's name in print while his fiction was absent and, secondly, it allowed Doyle to advertise selectively interesting aspects of his life. One example of this was "An Alpine Pass on 'Ski'", which was about his skiing holiday in the Alps. It portrays Doyle as an athletic type of person, but also allows him scope for lightheartedness. The following passage is an example of this:

You put [the skis] on, and you turn with a smile to see whether your friends are looking at you, and then the next moment you are boring with your head madly into a snow-bank, and kicking frantically with both feet, and half-rising only to butt viciously into the snow-bank again, and your friends are getting more entertainment than they had ever thought you capable of giving.

The article continues in this vein throughout, sounding quite humorous. Doyle's second autobiographical article in *The Strand* was entitled "The Life of a Greenland Whaler", a retrospective piece about Doyle's time, in 1880, as a doctor on a whaling-ship. This discusses the life of whalers, describing the capture and beaching of whales and polar bears. It portrays Doyle as joining in the lives of seamen and

bearing the rigours of Arctic weather. Finally, Doyle wrote "A Glimpse of the Army" in September 1900, telling of his service in the army medical corps in South Africa during the Boer War. His association with active soldiers and his proximity to the battlefield are both emphasised in the text. These three autobiographical articles allow Doyle to address his audience without the literary conventions of fiction. He can write in a personal way to his readership and come across as a friend rather than a detached, faceless writer of fiction. Also, by choosing the experiences he tells of, he can emphasise his bravery in war, his athleticism in skiing and his heartiness in Arctic seas. The autobiographical articles allow free rein for the regular contributor to fan the flames of his or her own popularity and hence maintain that popularity with the public.

The final example of the way in which *The Strand* represented Doyle was its use of gimmickry. In January 1896, the first chapter of Doyle's serialised novel, "Rodney Stone", appeared in the periodical. The story begins with six hand-written lines by Doyle before breaking into the conventional typescript of the magazine. The hand-written text is footnoted thus: "Facsimile of the MS of The opening sentences of 'Rodney Stone'". This kind of gimmickry had also been used in the 1892 biographical article by Harry How cited above. It gives a "specimen of the MS of 'The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes'". By producing such items, *The Strand* is representing Doyle as an icon in much the same way as actors or singers are today. Samples of handwriting, in both examples, are exciting collectors' pieces and it is a kind of fanatical following that famous people receive that *The Strand* was trying to generate for Doyle through printing such gimmickry. It was a tactic reserved for the likes of Doyle and not extended to occasional contributors to the periodical like Wells.

Throughout the course of this essay, I have used several examples to show how the representation of a regular contributor to *The Strand*, like Arthur Conan Doyle, differed from that of an occasional contributor like H.G. Wells. Although Wells was published by the magazine, the publicity attached to him was simply short-term and aimed at generating an interest in his most current contributions. For Doyle, however, the picture is very different. He was provided with many opportunities by the magazine to keep his name known to the readership and to iconise him as a hero-figure amongst them. This took the shape of (auto)biographical articles which publicised Doyle's achievements and portrayed him as something of a model person.

His was not simply a life of writing but of learning, sport, medicine and family also. Things fundamentally irrelevant to his occupation were publicised to gain public idolisation for his way of life generally. The reproduction of facsimile handwriting and the publication of impressive visual representations of Doyle, as a regular contributor to *The Strand*, was publicised in wide and excessive ways as a long-term investment. He was being promoted as a magazine icon who would, and did, remain with the magazine a long time. Wells, on the other hand, received just short-term publicity to sell his current contributions in the magazine and nothing more. There was no attempt made to iconise Wells by revealing any "heroic" traits or by giving detailed information about his background, family or ancestry. It is that iconisation of Doyle, and the lack of it for Wells, which is the key difference in the representation of a regular contributor to *The Strand Magazine* from an occasional contributor.

Appendix: Articles by Arthur Conan Doyle and H.G. Wells in *The Strand Magazine* during the Victorian Period

Arthur Conan Doyle

- "The Voice of Science." 1 (Mar. 1891): 312-17.
- * "A Scandal in Bohemia." 2 (July 1891): 61-75.
- * "The Red Headed League." 2 (Aug. 1891): 190-204.
- * "A Case of Identity." 2 (Sept. 1891): 248-59.
- * "The Boscombe Valley Mystery." 2 (Oct. 1891): 401-16.
- * "The Five Orange Pips." 2 (Nov. 1891): 481-91.
- * "The Man with the Twisted Lip." 2 (Dec. 1891): 623-37.
- * "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle." 3 (Jan. 1892): 73-85.
- * "The Adventure of the Speckled Band." 3 (Feb. 1892): 142-57.
- * "The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb." 3 (Mar. 1892): 276-88.
- * "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor." 3 (Apr. 1892): 386-99.
- * "The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet." 3 (May 1892): 511-25.
- * "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches." 3 (Jun. 1892): 613-28.
- * "The Adventure of the Silver Blaze." 4 (Dec. 1892): 645-60.
- * "The Adventure of the Cardboard Box." 5 (Jan. 1893): 61-73.
- * "The Adventure of the Yellow Face." 5 (Feb. 1893): 162-72.
- * "The Adventure of the Stockbroker's Clerk." 5 (Mar. 1893): 281-91.
- * "The Adventure of the 'Gloria Scott'." 5 (Apr. 1893): 395-406.

- * "The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual." 5 (May 1893): 479-89.
- * "The Adventure of the Reigate Squire." 5 (Jun. 1893): 601-12.
- * "The Adventure of the Crooked Man." 6 (Jul. 1893): 22-32.
- * "The Adventure of the Resident Patient." 6 (Aug. 1893): 128-38.
- * "The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter." 6 (Sep. 1893): 296-307.
- * "The Adventure of the Naval Treaty." 6 (Oct. & Sep. 1893): 392-403, 459-68.
- * "The Adventure of the Final Problem." 6 (Dec. 1893): 559-70.
- "The Lord of Chateau Noir." 8 (Jul. 1894): 3-10.
- "The Medal of Brigadier Gerard." 8 (Nov. 1894): 563-76.
- ** "How the Brigadier Held the King." 9 (Apr. 1895): 363-76.
- ** "How the King Held Brigadier Gerard." 9 (May 1895): 501-14.
- ** "How the Brigadier Slew the Brothers of Ajaccio." 9 (Jun. 1895): 631-44.
- *** "An Alpine Pass on 'Ski'." 9 (Jun. 1895): 657-61.
- ** "How the Brigadier Came to the Castle of Gloom." 10 (Jul. 1895): 3-15.
- ** "How the Brigadier Took the Field Against the Marshall Millefleurs." 10 (Aug. 1895): 201-14.
- ** "How the Brigadier was Tempted by the Devil." 10 (Sep. 1895): 335-48.
- **** "Rodney Stone." (Jan.-Dec. 1896): vol.11: 17-23, 132-44, 261-69, 409-23, 521-33, 612-24; vol.12: 3-14, 123-33, 301-13, 382-90, 483-92, 753-57.
- *** "The Life of a Greenland Whaler." 13 (Jan. 1897): 16-25.
- **** "The Tragedy of the Korosko." 13-14 (May-Dec. 1897): vol.13: 483-97, 641-48; vol. 14: 3-11, 143-51, 243-49, 363-72, 483-90, 603-608.
- ***** "The Story of the Beetle Hunter." 15 (Jun. 1898): 603-12.
- ***** "The Story of the Man with the Watches." 16 (Jul. 1898): 33-43.
- ***** "The Story of the Lost Special." 16 (Aug. 1898): 153-62.
- ***** "The Story of the Sealed Room." 16 (Sep. 1898): 243-50.
- ***** "The Story of the Black Doctor." 16 (Oct. 1898): 372-82.
- ***** "The Story of the Club-Footed Grocer." 16 (Nov. 1898): 483-93.
- ***** "The Story of the Brazilian Cat." 16 (Dec. 1898): 603-15.
- ***** "The Story of the Japanned Box." 17 (Jan. 1899): 3-11.
- ***** "The Story of the Jew's Breast Plate." 17 (Feb. 1899): 123-34.
- ***** "The Story of the B24." 17 (Mar. 1899): 243-52.
- ***** "The Story of the Latin Tutor." 17 (Apr. 1899): 365-74.

- ***** "The Story of the Brown Hand." 17 (May 1899): 400-508.
"The Croxley Master." 18 (Oct.- Dec. 1899): 363-74, 483-89, 615-22.
"The Crime of the Brigadier." 19 (Jan. 1900): 41-49.
"Playing with Fire." 19 (Mar. 1900): 243-51.
*** "A Glimpse of the Army." 20 (Sep. 1900): 345-54.

H.G. Wells

- "Mr Ledbetter's Vacation." 16 (Oct. 1898): 452-62.
"The Stolen Body." 16 (Nov. 1898): 567-76.
"Mr Brisher's Treasure." 17 (Apr. 1899): 469-75.
**** "The First Men in the Moon." 20-22 (Nov. 1900-Aug. 1901): vol.20: 529-41,
697-705; vol.21: 30-41, 160-69, 279-90, 400-409, 497-507, 657-62; vol.22: 16-
29, 141-49.

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- * = Printed as part of the series, "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes".
** = Printed as part of the series, "The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard".
*** = Autobiographical articles.
**** = Serialised novels.
***** = Printed as part of the series, "Round the Fire".