

Editor's Introduction

Ian Firla

Nearly a year between the publication of the last number of *Gravesiana* and this number will have passed by the time you are likely to be reading these pages. In fact, 'only' about eight months will have passed between the printing of the last number and this one—problems with production and with delivery created delays that were beyond the control of the editorial board. In order to prevent these problems cropping up again in the future, we have decided to revise both the production and the delivery of the journal. The journal will still be printed in Oxford, however the responsibility for layout and for design will rest with the editor.

The reader will have also noticed some changes on the editorial board of the journal. Patrick Quinn has retired his position as editor but remains a part of the team as Senior Advisory Editor. Scott Ashley has taken over from Caroline Zilboorg as Reviews Editor and I have taken over as Editor.

Patrick Quinn's involvement with all matters Gravesian is long and distinguished. However, his role in rejuvenating the now defunct *Focus on Robert Graves and His Contemporaries* cannot be over estimated. *Focus*, when it was founded, was a journal printed on letter-sized pages, photocopied and stapled—a far cry from what you hold in your hands today. Its readership was small, distribution limited and subject, while doubtlessly 'focused', was rather too narrow to be of interest to an audience beyond those working directly on Graves scholarship. Nevertheless, thanks to *Focus*, a forum existed where a community of scholars interested in Robert Graves could exchange their ideas, publish their research and offer speculative articles on an author whose place in literary history was far from established.

Thanks to Patrick Quinn's involvement, the journal began to develop, its format was revised and through his efforts as the journal's editor, interest in Graves grew. As interest grew, the topics for discussion broadened and the journal began to reflect the growing interest within the growing community for identifying Graves with his literary peers and literary history in general. This was, and shall continue to be, the *raison d'être* of the journal.

Gravesiana is not a 'fan-zine'. It is not interested in publishing writings on Graves whose interests seem, exclusively, to praise the man

and his works. *Gravesiana* is the journal of the Robert Graves Society only in as much as it is an obvious vehicle for promoting Society events such as conferences, lectures and meetings, announcing prizes and awards from sponsoring organisations such as the Deya Town Hall, the Palma Town Council, the Robert Graves Trust or the University of the Balearic Islands and for printing Society related news. The Society does not dictate and has no influence on the editorial policy or scholarship of the contributions to the journal though it does contribute generously to the production and distribution costs.

Gravesiana is a peer-reviewed journal. We make it policy to send contributions to colleagues outside of the Graves Society community for comments and criticism as well as within. The new reviews editor, Scott Ashley, for example, is not a member of the Society. As his paper which is printed here as the feature article for the first issue of the second volume should demonstrate, his interests are more broadly literary-historical to what we have become accustomed from Caroline Zilboorg, his predecessor (to whom great thanks is due)—his renewed approach is stated clearly in his ‘mission statement’ for the reviews section which is printed at the end of this issue.

This number also features a very solid and interesting article by Anne Mounic on *The White Goddess*—the first in what will be a series of articles on the subject in upcoming issues. Michel Pharand continues his series of excellent biographical studies with a much needed sketch of the relationship between Graves and Mallik. Caroline Zilboorg’s last issue as reviews editor is an excellent one with articles by Richard Emeny, Devindra Kohli, Jane Dowson, Sean Street and a review of the White Goddess conference by John Presley.

It is also our aim to publish more poetry. We are very fortunate to have poetry from Simon Armitage, David Constantine, Grevel Lindop, Bernard O’Donoghue, Asphodel Long and Andrew Painter. All save for Simon who was unfortunately unable to attend, participated at the conference held this past summer in Manchester. We’re also fortunate to have a chapter from a ‘Graves inspired’ novel by John Leonard as a pre-publication preview. I don’t know if we’ll be fortunate enough to be able to include so much creative writing in future issues but I do hope that this is a new trend rather than a one-off occurrence.

You’ll also find a very valuable resource toward the end of this issue. Robert S. Means of Brigham Young University has assembled an index to volume one of the journal. It’s available in our internet site <http://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk/graves/graves.html> but I include it here as

well since, often, a printed copy is what is most wanted.

I do hope that you find this issue enjoyable and my editorship satisfactory. I've received some interesting post recently and will use a selection to begin a 'Letters' section in this number. Please take this as a sign of my openness for advice and discussion about the contents of the magazine.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to dedicate this number to my friend, colleague and predecessor, Patrick Quinn. We have him and his hard work and his initiative to thank for the very existence of this journal, the conferences and the Society.

Ian Firla

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