A note on the editors of Parasitology

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Professor George Nuttall founded the Journal of Hygiene in 1901. With time, the journal attracted an increasing number of papers on parasitological subjects that prompted Nuttall to found another journal, Parasitology, in 1908. He edited both journals until his sudden death in 1933, and indeed it is recorded that initially he personally took responsibility for the substantial costs of production. Within a few years of their foundation both journals paid their way and later both journals were taken over by Cambridge University Press. Nuttall, in addition to ensuring that the papers published in Parasitology were of a high standard, took on an educational role in guiding authors, especially younger scientists, as to how their papers could be improved and indeed in some cases re-wrote papers for the authors. After his death, his ‘Notes on the preparation of papers for publication in the Journal of Hygiene and in Parasitology’ were published, in 1940, in the latter journal.

Upon Nuttall’s death, David Keilin, having assisted Nuttall in editing Parasitology for a few years, took over as editor and remained in this post from 1934 until his death in 1963. Keilin had come to Cambridge to work as an assistant to Nuttall and succeeded him as Quick Professor of Biology and Director of the Molteno Institute for Research in Parasitology in 1931. Parr Tate had arrived in Cambridge in 1924, also to work under the supervision of Nuttall in the Molteno Institute, and remained there until his retirement in 1968. He succeeded Keilin as Director of the Molteno Institute in 1953. Tate is first listed as editor of Parasitology in 1952 and served jointly with Keilin from 1952 to 1963, and then ran the journal himself from 1963 to 1968.

Tate was succeeded by Harry Crofton at Bristol University, breaking the link of editorship of the journal with Cambridge and the Molteno Institute. The untimely death of Crofton led to the editorial reins returning to the Molteno Institute, now being held by David Crompton and Bruce Newton, from 1973 to 1981. Frank Cox and Phil Whitfield at King’s College London, succeeded Crompton and Newton. Chris Arme (Keele University) replaced Whitfield in 1987 and the partnership of Cox and Arme continued the tradition of editors steering the journal forward over a significant number of years until Cox retired in 2000. Cox was replaced by Stephen Phillips (University of Glasgow) and he worked with Arme until the latter retired in 2006. Robin Gasser (University of Melbourne) joined Arme and Phillips as editor in 2005 and Les Chappell (University of Aberdeen) replaced Arme in 2006. Les Chappell was no newcomer to the journal as he had been responsible for editing and production of the Parasitology supplements since 1987 and was an obvious replacement for Arme.

Up until 1976 the editors not only sent out papers to referees and in due course decided which papers might be published in the journal after their formal acceptance, but also undertook the very onerous and intensive work of preparing the papers for publication in the journal. In 1976 this aspect of the process of publication was allocated to an assistant editor in the person of Dr Liz Painter, a role that she has fulfilled expertly from 1976 to the present, and continues to do so. Liz Painter, therefore, with 33 years of service to date has the longest association with and service to Parasitology.