
Paul Sorrentino, ed. *Stephen Crane Remembered*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2006. 385p.

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In his excellent introduction to *Stephen Crane Remembered*, editor Paul Sorrentino recounts the circumstances that produced the disputed biographical record of this major American writer. These facts are by now long familiar to Crane scholars. Including such occurrences as the use (and in some instances even creation) of false information by early biographers—most notoriously Thomas Beer, the author of the first major biography, *Stephen Crane: A Study in American Letters* (1923)—Crane's biographical record was for a long time surprisingly inaccurate for such a widely studied American literary figure. Combined with *The Crane Log: A Documentary Life of Stephen Crane, 1871–1900* (G. K. Hall & Co., 1994), edited by Stanley Wertheim and Sorrentino, *Stephen Crane Remembered* aims to continue the process of uncovering as much accurate information about the writer's life as possible.

The material collected in *Stephen Crane Remembered* presents descriptions of Crane from people who knew him during various periods of his life. Included here are excerpts from Crane's family members and friends, as well as such literary figures as Willa Cather, Joseph Conrad, Ford Madox Ford, Edward Garnett, and H.G. Wells. What emerges from these portraits of Crane is not so much an objective picture of his life, but rather a collection of subjective impressions sparked by Crane's own vibrant personality. For this reason, readers are well advised to heed Sorrentino's warning that some accounts contain misleading depictions of Crane, such as Ford's notorious claim that Crane enjoyed swatting flies with a pistol. Despite the subjective nature of many selections, every major period of Crane's life is represented, from his early life in New Jersey and New York to the travels he undertook before his death to such places as Cuba and England. Sorrentino does not aim to provide a complete record of every phase of Crane's life, but his volume still lacks information on several key periods. Missing from this collection are accounts of Crane in Greece, where he reported on the Greco-Turkish War in 1897, or of his final days in Badenweiler, Germany, where he died on June 5, 1900. Although *The Crane Log* contains detailed information on both areas, their exclusion here emphasizes a limitation of this volume, which collects accounts of separate episodes from Crane's life, but inevitably lacks a unifying picture of the author's experiences. Sorrentino's introduction works to remedy this weakness by stressing that this is merely a *selection* of accounts and incidents, but readers looking for a composite biography of Crane will come away frustrated.

Scholars searching for a collection of previously hard-to-acquire material, however, will value many of Sorrentino's inclusions, which often feature less familiar selections than those generally available. One figure conspicuously absent, however, is Henry James, who met Crane several times in England during the late 1890s. The influence this friendship may have exerted on each writer's work has generated considerable critical attention, so James' exclusion from this volume is puzzling. In fact, the selection from Ford discusses the friendship between the two at some length, providing a suggestion of the need for including an excerpt from James' writings on Crane. Also missing is an account from William Dean Howells, another well-known friend of Crane's who supported his work in columns and reviews. Puzzlingly, even the introduction touts Crane as a "close friend" of both James and Howells. These questionable exclusions aside, however, *Stephen Crane Remembered* is an informative resource on the author's life. Although there remains no definitive biography of the author, Sorrentino's editorial work—both here and in *The Crane Log*—provides illuminating material that is central to the ongoing process of uncovering Crane's life. ✱