

## **Wells, Reginald Fairfax 1877 - 1951**

Reginald Fairfax Wells [commonly known as Reginald F. Wells; Reginald Wells; and as R.F. Wells] was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1877. He subsequently moved to England and studied sculpture at the National Art Training School in South Kensington [later Royal College of Art] in London in the 1890s. where he was taught by Édouard Lantéri. He later also attended Camberwell School of Art in London, where he trained as a ceramist.

In the 1890s he worked as an illustrator and contributed work to *The Sketch* and *The Quartier Latin*. Wells was employed as a ceramic artist at the Chelsea Manufactory in London and worked as a designer at Messrs Coldrum & Sons Pottery. In 1910 he set up a pottery in Chelsea, producing what he called 'Coldrum ware'.

After the interruption of World War One in which he set up a business, the Wells Aviation Company, which produced aircraft parts, he moved to the King's Road, London where he set up a new pottery. The pottery from this period is marked 'SOON'. Between 1925-1951 he worked in Storrington Sussex.

In the 1920s and 1930s he turned to architecture, and designed and built some 200 'Wells cottages' in Kent and Sussex. These were essentially copies of seventeenth century dwellings employing bricks of irregular sizes covered in whitewashed slurry to make the walls appear aged. The cottages had thatched roofs, small rooms and tiny windows, just as the original buildings would have had. These homes had no electricity, they were served with cesspits and the water came from wells in the gardens.

Wells exhibited extensively between 1899 and 1933 including at the International Society of Sculptors, Painters & Gravers, Grosvenor Gallery, and Royal Academy in London; the Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts; Royal Scottish Academy in Edinburgh; and at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool. He was elected a member of the Royal Society of British Artists (RBA) in 1905, and an associate member of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers in 1908. He died in Worthing, Sussex on 29 June 1951

Worked in  
UK

## Bibliography

'A young sculptor: Mr Reginald F. Wells and his rustic art'. *The Studio* vol. 28, February 1903 pp. 17-22

Beattie, Susan. *The New Sculpture*. London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983

Reginald Fairfax Wells: sculptor, potter, designer. *Luton: Luton Museum & Art Gallery, 1998.*

## Links

- Mapping the Practice & Profession of Sculpture in Britain & Ireland 1851-1951  
[https://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/mapping/public/view/person.php?id=msib2\\_1203552906&search=](https://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/mapping/public/view/person.php?id=msib2_1203552906&search=)
- Aberystwyth University Ceramic Collection & Archive <https://ceramics-aberystwyth.com/potter/reginald-wells/>
- Victorian Web <https://victorianweb.org/sculpture/misc/wells1.html>
- Victoria & Albert Museum, London  
<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O19789/vase-wells-reginald/>
- Fred Redwood. 'A passion for pastiche' *The Telegraph* 24 April 2002 [Access by subscription]  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/property/advice/propertymarket/3301359/A-passion-for-pastiche.html>
- Artist Biographies [Subscription service]  
<https://www.artbiogs.co.uk/1/artists/wells-reginald-fairfax>
- Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reginald\\_Fairfax\\_Wells](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reginald_Fairfax_Wells)
- Lincolnshire Life <https://www.lincolnshirelife.co.uk/lifestyle/reginald-fairfax-wells/>
- ART UK <https://artuk.org/discover/artists/wells-reginald-fairfax-18771951>
- Billion Graves <https://billiongraves.com/grave/Reginald-Fairfax-Wells/19329613>
- artnet <http://www.artnet.com/artists/reginald-fairfax-wells/>