

# THE WELL OF LONELINESS

A Novel

by

Radclyffe Hall  
Author of 'Adam's Breed'



With an Appreciation by  
HAVELOCK ELLIS

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OF  
THE WELL  
JONELINESS  
&  
WIDCUTTE HALL

ANTHAN CAPE

# THE WELL OF LONELINESS

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RADCLYFFE HALL

" . . . . . nothing extenuate,  
Nor set down aught in malice."



with a commentary by  
HAVELOCK ELLIS

JONATHAN CAPE  
THIRTY BEDFORD SQUARE  
LONDON

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OUR THREE SELVES



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#### COMMENTARY

I have read *The Well of Loneliness* with great interest because – apart from its fine qualities as a novel by a writer of accomplished art – it possesses a notable psychological and sociological significance. So far as I know, it is the first English novel which presents, in a completely faithful and uncompromising form, one particular aspect of sexual life as it exists among us to-day. The relation of certain people – who while different from their fellow human beings, are sometimes of the highest character and the finest aptitudes – to the often hostile society in which they move, presents difficult and still unsolved problems. The poignant situations which thus arise are here set forth so vividly, and yet with such complete absence of offence, that we must place Radclyffe Hall's book on a high level of distinction.

HAVELOCK ELLIS





#### AUTHOR'S NOTE

All the characters in this book are purely imaginary, and if the author in any instance has used names that may suggest a reference to living persons, she has done so inadvertently.

A motor ambulance unit of British women drivers did very fine service upon the Allied front in France during the later months of the war, but although the unit mentioned in this book, of which Stephen Gordon becomes a member, operates in much the same area, it has never had any existence save in the author's imagination.

By the Same Author

THE UNLIT LAMP

ADAM'S BREED

[Awarded the Femina Vie Heureuse Prize  
1925-26, and the James Tait Black  
Memorial Book Prize 1926]

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## THE WELL OF LONELINESS

*The Well of Loneliness*, Radclyffe Hall's new novel, is concerned with the phenomenon of the masculine woman in all its implications. The novel handles very skilfully a psychological problem which needs to be understood in view of its growing importance. In England hitherto the subject has not been treated frankly outside the region of scientific text-books, but that its social consequences justify a broader and more general treatment is likely to be the opinion of thoughtful and cultured people.

*The Well of Loneliness* presents the life-story of Stephen Gordon, only child of Sir Philip and Lady Anna Gordon, a girl born out of her physical sphere and whose devoted parents required and confidently expected a son and heir in her place.

In the opinion of Havelock Ellis, the great sex psychologist, *The Well of Loneliness* possesses 'a notable psychological and sociological significance,' and should be placed 'on a high level of distinction.'

The publishers have been deeply impressed by this study; they have felt that such a book should not be lost to those who may be willing and able to understand and appreciate it. They believe that the author has treated the subject in such a way as to combine perfect frankness and sincerity with delicacy and deep psychological insight.

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RADCLYFFE HALL

1928 - 1975