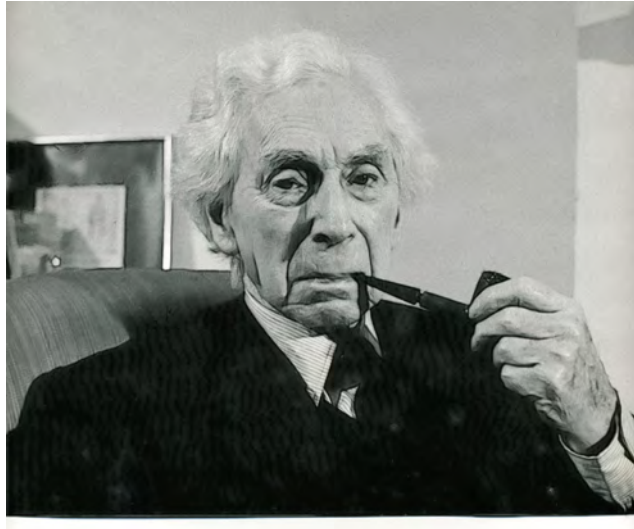


BERTRAND RUSSELL

SOCIETY BULLETIN



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The *BRS Bulletin* is produced for the Bertrand Russell Society at the Philosophy Department of Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT, with the assistance of the Carol A. Ammon School of Arts and Sciences, Susan E. Pease, Dean. Editors for this issue are David Blitz (text) and Kris Notaro (web). The web site for the *Bulletin* is <http://bertrandrussell.org> where past issues and additional material and links are available.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE
39TH ANNUAL BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY MEETING
JUNE 1-3, 2012

Plymouth State University, Plymouth, NH

Co-sponsored by the PSU Department of History and Philosophy
Convenor: Ray Perkins

All members of the Society are invited – indeed encouraged – to attend the 39th Annual Meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society, whether they are submitting a paper or not. This is an occasion for the exchange of ideas, meeting others who are interested in Russell, attending sessions, and having a good time.

Papers, of approximately 15-20 min. reading time, on any aspect of Russell's work or life are welcome. Papers marking the 100th anniversary of Russell's *Problems of Philosophy* are especially welcome. Please submit paper abstracts to Alan Schwerin at aschweri@monmouth.edu.

Students, both graduate and undergraduate, are also encouraged to submit papers (about 10 pages) for the annual BRS student essay competition. Cash prizes (\$100) will be awarded to the best graduate and best undergraduate essay on any aspect of Russell's work. Essays on *Problems* are especially welcome.

<i>Registration Fee</i>	
BRS members:	\$95
Students (BRS members):	\$45

This includes meals as follows: breakfasts (2); lunches (3); as well as: Friday welcome buffet and Saturday night banquet.

Note: The campus cafeteria will be closed until noon June 3.

<i>Lodging (on campus)</i>	
Single:	\$21/ night (+ \$11 linen)
Double:	\$15/ person/ night (+ \$11 linen)

The deadline for Registration is Friday, May 25.

Questions regarding the June Meeting may be directed to: Ray Perkins:
perkrk@earthlink.net

Details--including paper abstracts, program and registrants--will soon be available at: <http://www.plymouth.edu/departments/history-philosophy/519/bertrand-russell-society-annual-meeting-held-at-psu/>

Send checks (both registration and lodging) payable to the Bertrand Russell Society to:

The Treasurer, Bertrand Russell Society
c/o Bertrand Russell Research Centre
Mills Library 108
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario,
Canada L8S 4L6

You can also pay by PayPal to the BRS account, brs-pp@hotmail.com, or by credit card to Arlene (duncana@mcmaster.ca) at the Russell Centre. Ken will acknowledge such payments.

BRS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL INFORMATION

The *Bertrand Russell Society Bulletin* is sent to all members of the BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY. Membership to the Society is \$45 per year for individuals, \$50 for couples, and \$25 for students and those on limited incomes. As well as a subscription to the *Bulletin*, Society membership includes a subscription to *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies* (published by McMaster University) as well as other Society privileges. Institutional and individual subscriptions to the *Newsletter* are \$20 per year.

To check whether your membership is in good standing, go to <http://russell.mcmaster.ca/brsmembers> and see who's in the Society.

To subscribe to the journal or join the Society, send check or money order, payable to the BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, to Kenneth Blackwell, at the same address (above) for registration for the annual meeting.

For payment by PayPal, go to <http://users.drew.edu/~JLENZ/brs-join.html>

If available, SINGLE ISSUES of the *Bulletin* may be obtained for \$5 by sending a check or money order, payable to the BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, to Ken Blackwell at the address above. BACK ISSUES of the *Bulletin* and of its predecessor, the *Bertrand Russell Society Quarterly* are also \$5 each. For availability of current and back issues, query Tom Stanley, BRS Librarian, Box 434, Wilder, VT 05088 or email tjstanley@myfairpoint.net

RUSSELL'S HOMES: PEMBROKE LODGE

Sheila Turcon
McMaster University Archives and
Bertrand Russell Research Centre

This is the second in a series of articles about Russell's homes.



Pembroke Lodge in the 1980s (Front View)

A cottage for the mole catcher who patrolled Richmond Park, a royal park, was constructed on the location currently occupied by Pembroke Lodge (PL) around 1754. The Countess of Pembroke later took a liking to what had become a four-room structure. King George III granted her the use of the building and by her death in 1831 the Lodge had been greatly expanded. Before the Earl and Countess Russell moved in the Earl of Erroll lived in the home and its expansion had continued. In the gardens the highest point of land is King Henry VIII's Mound. From there Henry had a good view of the London Tower; he supposedly stood there waiting for the signal that one of his wives had been beheaded. Accounts vary as to whether it was Anne Boleyn or Catherine Howard. While living there Russell "grew accustomed to wide horizons and to an unimpeded view ..." which became necessary to him to "live happily." But to return to the mole catcher – the moles in the park may have come under control, but rats were a problem in the main house. In a visit to PL on 22 January 1866 Russell's mother, Kate Amberley, noted in her journal that she had been driven out of the drawing-room by the stink of dead rats.

Earl Russell's daughter from his first marriage, Lady Georgiana Peel, tells the story of her family's move into the Lodge in her book of memoirs. Her father, as the younger son of the Duke of Bedford, could not inherit the family's estates. He had in fact come close to gaining another country estate, Chequers, currently the official country residence of the sitting Prime Minister of Great Britain. The owner, however, was received coolly by the Duke and did not offer the estate as a gift to Lord John (as the Earl was then known) as he had planned. Lord John "used to remark that he had lost Chequers for want of a glass of sherry and a biscuit!" Twenty years passed before Queen Victoria offered him Pembroke Lodge for his lifetime in 1847. By then he was serving as her Prime Minister.

The family chose the wallpapers, furniture was moved from their previous home at Chorley Wood, and some prints, gifts of the Queen, were hung. There was great excitement all round. Outside "the glimpses of the Thames shining through the stately old oaks added more beauty to the pretty rambling house, with its old-fashioned gardens and shady walks." Lord John decided that there must be a rose garden. Georgiana and her husband later erected a sundial in his memory in this garden with the sentiment "Redeeming the time." She concludes: "The Queen with her kind gift endowed us all with a fountain of happiness." The family put on entertainments. One such effort survives: *Dewdrop and Glorio; or The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood*, acted at PL on 23 and 28 December 1858. Dedicated to Lord John, several family members were in the cast, although not Georgiana.

Bertrand Russell moved in 1876 to Pembroke Lodge under very unhappy circumstances. He and his brother Frank had to leave Ravenscroft after the deaths of their mother Kate, sister Rachel, and lastly their father. Russell was only three years old when he came under the care of his grandparents. Also living in the house were two of their grown children, Agatha and Rollo. Only two years later Lord John was also dead.

Both he and the house were described by a cousin, George W.E. Russell, in an article "Earl Russell and Pembroke Lodge". The author concentrates on the house as "an abode of culture" and describes Lord John's library and the quiet and privacy the home provided him. The other family members are not mentioned.

Lord John's second wife (and Bertie's grandmother), also wrote about PL in her memoir. It is "a long, low, irregular white house on the edge of the high ground which forms the western limit of Richmond Park. Added to and altered many times, it has no unity of plan, but ... [has] an air of cheerful seclusion and homely eighteenth-century dignity." Standing "upon the top of the steep, wooded ridge above the Thames Valley, its windows overlook a thousand fields, through which the placid river winds ..." The two of them had wished to live there while sitting under an oak tree which became known in the family as the wishing tree once they took up residence. Both of them felt that being there added years to Lord John's life. Lady John's memoirs have several excellent colour illustrations of the house and grounds as well as a photograph of the Lodge taken from the South Lawn.

Although PL was a respite from busy London, the Russells welcomed many visitors during their tenure including the Shah of Persia, Garibaldi, Charles Dickens, Queen Sofia of the Netherlands, King Leopold II of Belgium, Gladstone, and many others including of course Queen Victoria. After one visit Agatha wrote to her sister-in-law Kate about Rachel and Bertie's reaction. The children were spending some time with their grandparents while their parents were away. "I hope Rachel has written at length about the visit of the Queen on Saturday – but she was terribly disappointed expecting her to have a crown on her head and various other magnificences. Bertie made a nice little bow but was much subdued and did not treat Her Majesty with the utter disrespect I expected." Frank too remembers the Queen visiting, detailing two of several visits in his memoir. In one, the Queen remembers his grandmother's "peculiar and unusual capacity of being able to waggle her ears like a dog" and called upon her to perform before an ambassador. Lady John at first lost the ability to move either ear. On another occasion Lady John asked permission to sit down in the presence of the Queen who was standing. This was allowed but two other ladies had to stand in front of her. PL was also the setting for many cabinet meetings.



Pembroke Lodge (Rear View)

Frank provides the most detailed descriptions of the various rooms and their functions in the household, as well as its inhabitants, including the many servants. They included: “Mrs. Cox, a very old, very angular, and very severe Scotch housekeeper, but full of kindness – she often gave me sweet biscuits and Turkish delight; McAlpin, the old Scotch butler, who was devoted to me, and used to allow me to help him in stamping the letters for the post; the footman, John, who cleaned and trimmed the innumerable oil lamps in use and astonished me by his ability to throw a stone over the very top of the tall poplars outside the house” Russell also remembers McAlpin who took him on his knee and read “accounts of railway accidents in the newspaper.” Frank remembers that he and Bertie lived in the old nursery “at the far end of the house”. He also mentions the rather unusual wallpaper in the dining room. [Note: Frank also has an excellent chapter on Ravenscroft which I neglected to mention in my first article in this series.] In addition to the physical descriptions he provides, Frank describes the atmosphere of the house as “mournful Christian humility” which he found to be a “nightmare”; it was the exact opposite of the atmosphere at Ravenscroft. Both he and his brother came to loathe PL but for Russell this feeling only came later on. A childhood friend, Annabel Huth Jackson confirms the gloomy PL atmosphere in her memoirs.

As a young child, Russell found the Lodge a wonderful place to grow up. The account in his *Autobiography* concerns both his childhood and then the problems he

faced in adolescence. At the age of twelve he wrote two letters to his uncle Rollo. He enthuses about going out on the ponds, finding nests all around the park, especially of thrushes, playing cricket, and spending time on the Thames. He is hoping to learn how to swim. In an article in 1943, he describes the same wallpaper which was noted by Frank. In the dining room, it was of “trelliswork and landscapes adorned with birds of various imaginary species. Two vast, ornate edifices of Dresden china (a present from the King of Saxony) were posed on two cabinets.”

Russell was tutored at PL unlike his brother Frank who had been sent away to school. His first time away was in 1888 when he was sent to Green's in Southgate to prepare for his Trinity College scholarship examinations. He entered Trinity in Oct. 1890 and was there during term time until the spring of 1894. He was sent away to Paris in the autumn of 1894 in the hopes of breaking his engagement to Alys Pearsall Smith. This PL ploy did not work. Their wedding took place in December 1894. He never lived at PL again. His grandmother lived there until her death on 17 January 1898. Agatha stayed on for a few more years but in 1903 she left for Haselmere, breaking the family's connection to the home which had lasted for half a century. After Agatha left, the occupants were: Georgina, Countess of Dudley; John Scott Oliver; and the Phantom Squad, GCHQ Liaison Regiment.

Russell never forgot his childhood home. In 1948 he wrote to Gilbert Murray: “The Government proposes to transform Pembroke Lodge into quarters for park-keepers and a tea-shop. I see no objection for the former, but the latter would involve serious vandalism. The eleven acres of garden are very beautiful, & have always been full of wild birds. In my youth there were large numbers of nightingales, redstarts, wood-peckers, finches of all sorts, & other birds not easily found elsewhere near London. I am told this is still the case. The house is of historic interest as the house of my grandfather. It is to me very painful to think of the destruction of the garden, of which I think with affection almost every day of my life.” He asks Murray if he has any ideas on how to save the house and grounds.

When I visited PL in the 1980s a ghastly government-run tea room was in operation. A saviour for the Lodge appeared in the 1990s in the form of Daniel Hearsam.

The expensive and extensive restoration of the Lodge began in 1998 and lasted until 2005, winning an award from the Richmond Society. Mindful of the history of the Lodge, Hearsam visited McMaster University to research the Russell connection. It is now run as a successful wedding venue and conference centre. See the website at <http://www.pembroke-lodge.co.uk>. Tea is still offered to the public. See also the official royal park site, <http://www.royalparks.gov.uk/Richmond-Park.aspx> and a user site, available at <http://www.richmondparklondon.co.uk/pembroke-lodge>. I am not positive what Russell would have thought of this latest incarnation of the house and grounds which draws 250,000 annual visitors. I think he may have been pleased; the garden flourishes.

Sources:

Lady John Russell: a Memoir, edited by Desmond MacCarthy and Agatha Russell (London: Methuen, 1910)

Recollections of Lady Georgiana Peel, compiled by her daughter Ethel Peel (London: John Lane, 1920); Catherine Howard as the Queen being beheaded.

Frank Russell, *Earl Russell, My Life and Adventures* (London: Cassell & Co. Ltd., 1923); Anne Boleyn as the Queen being beheaded.

Amabel Huth Jackson, *A Victorian Childhood* (London: Methuen, 1932)

George W.E. Russell, "Earl Russell at Pembroke Lodge. A sketch reprinted with corrections from 'The World' of February 21, 1877. Being No. 27 of 'Celebrities at Home.'"

Note: These five publications are available in the Russell Archives.

Bertrand Russell, *Autobiography*, Vol 1. BR gives the location of the Queen Victoria / Lady John Russell standing anecdote as Windsor.

Bertrand Russell, *Collected Stories* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1972); The Shah of Iran had been caught in a rainstorm (p. 267). Peel's recollection that the Shah came on a day that it rained and thus the lawns could not be used for visitors as they normally were is dull but correct (p. 283).

The Times digital database: (search term, Pembroke Lodge)

Colleen McDonnell, "Philosophy behind ambitious restoration", *Richmond & Twickenham Times*, 31 Oct. 2005.

Correspondence in the RA: BR to Rollo Russell (15 May and 19 July 1885); BR to Gilbert Murray (710.053646); Agatha Russell to Kate Amberley, 27 April (332.078636).

Other RA sources; Amberley journals, selections from the journals appear in *The Amberley Papers* (London, Hogarth, 1937); *Dewdrop and Glorio; or The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood* in RL, no. 1656, given to "Bertie & Alys from their affectionate granny, Christmas Eve, 1897".

ALBERT C. BARNES:
THE CANTANKEROUS FREETHINKER

Tim Madigan

The philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952) was by all accounts a lovable, gentle and self-effacing man, who seldom made enemies and almost always sought a compromise between opposing points-of-view. And yet, surprisingly enough, for over 30 years he was a close friend to a man who was by all accounts unlovable, pugnacious and self-aggrandizing, with a penchant for making enemies out of most everyone he met and a reputation for never compromising even in the face of overwhelming evidence against his position. How could it be that Dewey could remain close to this outrageous individual? Dewey's other close associates were befuddled by this friendship. Sidney Hook, for instance, wrote in 1952, shortly after Dewey's death, that "Dewey's goodness was so genuine, constant, and sustained, even under provocation, that I sometimes found it somewhat oppressive. It was almost a relief that I discovered one shortcoming in him. That was his indulgent friendship with Albert C. Barnes."

Who was Albert C. Barnes, and why was Dewey so fond of him? Barnes (1872-1951), was a successful physician, scientist and entrepreneur. He co-developed the anti-inflammatory drug Argyrol, which went into production in 1902 and made him a millionaire. He later quarreled with Hermann Hille, the German chemist who co-discovered Argyrol, not the first time he would have a bitter falling out with a close associate. The profits from his business made Barnes a wealthy man. He became a highly influential art collector, and his personal fortune – which he managed to keep even during the height of the Great Depression – allowed him to purchase many masterpieces, especially of the Impressionist School, which he displayed in his mansion in Merion, a Philadelphia suburb.

As a self-made man, Barnes despised phonies and snobs. He had a love/hate (primarily hate) relationship with the Philadelphia art community, which he felt did not truly appreciate the works of art in their various museums. One of the things Barnes attempted to do at his factory was encourage the workers there to develop their artistic and intellectual capabilities, and he initially became an art collector to both show his

workers some of the best paintings then being produced as well as to thumb his nose at the Philadelphia curators who did not see the significance of such contemporary artists as Renoir, Picasso, Seurat, Modigliani and Matisse.

Barnes became enamored with the writings of William James, a philosopher whom he believed truly understood the common people. James' pragmatism was in line with his own "can-do" approach to problem solving. Much to his disappointment, however, James was already dead by the time he discovered his writings. Barnes learned that a professor at Columbia University named John Dewey was considered to be James' successor as an exponent of pragmatism. He promptly wrote to Dewey in 1917, and asked if he might sit in on one of the professor's philosophy courses. The always-courteous Dewey agreed to this (it was said that Barnes promptly fell asleep at the beginning of each lecture and only awoke when the class ended). Dewey was 12 years older than Barnes, and was flattered by the younger man's attention. It also didn't hurt that Barnes was fabulously wealthy, and treated the professor to many trips to Philadelphia to see his growing art collection. In fact, Barnes later gave funds to supplement Dewey's Columbia salary, which no doubt helped cement their relationship.

There are three main events in the Barnes/Dewey friendship that should be noted. The first was the so-called "Philadelphia Study of Polish-Americans." In 1918 Barnes funded a study by Dewey and some of his students, who wished to explore why Polish immigrants did not seem to be assimilating into the American democratic community in the same way as previous immigrants had. The study proposed that this was due to the baleful influence of the Catholic Church and its clergy, which kept the immigrants from learning English and discouraged them from communicating with non-Poles. The study was widely criticized at the time, and continues to be a bone of contention for Polish-Americans, who felt that Dewey and his associates were insensitive to Polish Catholic concerns. But Dewey countered by saying that many members of the Polish community welcomed interactions with the broader culture when they were allowed to do so, and Poles in general would benefit from coming into contact with democratic forms of life.

The second event of great importance in the Barnes/Dewey friendship was Dewey's publication of the book *Art as Experience* in 1934. It is Dewey's major

contribution to aesthetics, and he dedicates the book “To Albert C. Barnes, in gratitude.” He wrote most of it while staying at the Barnes Foundation, and he states in the book that Barnes went over every page and made substantial comments. It is in many ways a collaborative effort, and expresses their common view that art is something that is natural to all human beings, and should not be overly explained or theorized about before being experienced.

The third event occurred in 1940, when the philosopher Bertrand Russell was denied a job teaching at the City University of New York, because of his controversial views on sexuality, religion and politics (even though the courses he was scheduled to teach were on logic and related issues). Knowing that Russell desperately needed a job, Dewey asked Barnes if he might be able to employ him at the Foundation. Barnes agreed, and paid for Russell to give lectures on the history of Western philosophy to the factory workers and other students. Not surprisingly, the equally headstrong Barnes and Russell soon clashed (it was said that Barnes could not stand the fact that Russell’s wife knitted throughout her husband’s lectures, forgetting perhaps his own tendency to sleep through his friend Dewey’s lectures). He fired Russell, who promptly sued and won. Ironically enough, the lectures which Russell prepared for the course were eventually published, and the proceeds from the book essentially supported him financially for the rest of his long life.

Albert Barnes was a complex man. He had deep respect for African-Americans, and left his Foundation to be administered by Lincoln University, a traditionally black college. But he sometimes made disparaging remarks about blacks, as he tended to do about all groups. He had a remarkable inferiority complex, yet he could also be extremely perceptive. Many painters – even those who despised him as a person – respected his sensitivity to their work. He was a lover of democracy who ran his company like a tyrant. He was an advocate for the common man who led a highly unconventional life. He was an advocate for public art who only allowed a select few to see his works. Perhaps the best term to describe this unusual and unorthodox man is “freethinker.”

All in all, Barnes was a fascinating individual. He added spice to John Dewey’s life, and Dewey in turn helped to soften Barnes’ bad temper. They had a profound effect

upon one another, not only as inspirers of each other's works but as true companions. For all his ire, there is a humorous and human side to Barnes which can best be seen in reading the vast number of letters he sent to Dewey. As far as I know, he was the only person who ever called him "Jack." Barnes died in 1951, after being hit by a car, and Dewey died the next year. The Foundation has had many hardships over the years, and will soon be moved to a new location. Freethinkers who have the chance to see it before the move should certainly do so – for a little while yet you can still experience the art collection of this idiosyncratic man as he meant it be seen. For further details on his life and views, I recommend Howard Greenfeld's 1987 biography *The Devil and Dr. Barnes: Portrait of an American Art Collector*.

BRS BULLETIN – POLICY ON MANUSCRIPTS

We are seeking contributions to the *Bulletin*. These can take various forms, including:

- *Regular contributions on a theme* – such as Sheila Turcon's series on Russell's houses. We plan to add a new theme for the next issue on "Collecting Bertrand Russell" – on books, pamphlets and ephemera. Other themes that would be of interest include Russell's significant others, Russell's university affiliations, Russell's travels to foreign countries, and more.
- *Papers presented on Russell at a conference* - such as Tim Madigan's paper on Albert C. Barnes in this issue. Papers should be limited to 7 pages, spaced at a line and a half with a 1" margin on top and ½" on bottom. Longer papers and research papers should be submitted to Ken Blackwell for *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*. Papers for this *Bulletin* should be accessible to the general public and concise; they can include footnotes and bibliography where appropriate. Presentations to the annual BRS meeting are especially welcome.

RUSSELL ON HISTORY AND INTRINSIC VALUE

Jane Duran
University of California
at Santa Barbara

ABSTRACT

An analysis of Russell's short essay "On History" reveals some intriguing points of convergence with the better-known piece "Pragmatism." It is argued that Russell's overall concern for the development of the sciences is not inconsistent with his valuing of history; rather, his point is that what history can give us transcends—and is considerably different from—the sorts of knowledge that we ordinarily deem to be scientific.

I

Briefly, in a piece that appears in the Simon and Schuster collection *Philosophical Essays*, Russell deals with history.¹ Short essays such as the one that purports to address historical matters in this collection might easily be dismissed, and in fact often are. But if ever an object lesson were needed with respect to a sort of consistency in Russell's views, I claim that this particular essay helps us grasp it. For, examined carefully, this short piece makes many of the same points found in the much better-known "Pragmatism," and does so in a way that helps fill in the blanks in a number of areas.

Part of what makes his essay on pragmatism the trenchant read that it is is Russell's obvious delight in letting us speculate about what the ultimate ends of a valorization of the pragmatic conception of truth will be. The essay contains the well-known aside that "this philosophy [pragmatism]...develops...into the appeal of force and the arbitrament of the big battalions."²

The essay on history develops a similar set of notions, but in a way that not only recapitulates the general points. For part of Russell's argument in "On History" is that what we can derive from a study of the historical is best seen as material

¹. Bertrand Russell, "On History," in *Philosophical Essays*, New York: Touchstone, 1966, pp. 60-69.

². Bertrand Russell, "Pragmatism," in *Essays*, p. 110.

revelatory of human aims and higher ends, or, as he has it, of “grandeur.”³ The naïve reader, or one acquainted, for example, only with lines of thought parallel to those found in “Logical Atomism,” might very well be surprised at the tone taken by this essay. And yet it is the same tone taken in many of Russell’s other, less overtly philosophical works, and it is, of course, consonant with what he took to be his own aims. Here is Russell, for example, on the relation between historical fact and some of the other concepts that might be derived from a study of the historical:

And there is a further point against the view of history as solely or chiefly a causal science.... Historical facts, many of them, have an intrinsic value, a profound interest on their own account, which makes them worthy of study, quite apart from any possibility of linking them together with causal laws.... It enlarges the imagination, and suggests possibilities of action and feeling which would not have occurred to an uninstructed mind.⁴

Here Russell attempts to set out a notion of history as instructive agent with regard to human possibilities on the grand scale—not merely political strategies, or calculations about how to distribute goods or power, but possibilities having to do with human growth and development on the individual level. So Russell’s view of the study of history is that it is insufficiently a causally-traceable sort of thing to count as a quasi-science, but that that is of little matter: what is important about history is what it can do for us internally. Russell ends the essay by noting that, “[in] the past...every great deed, every splendid life, every achievement and every heroic failure, is there enshrined.”⁵

In the essay on pragmatism, Russell had also remarked that “what we mean when we say that [a] law works...[is] [not] that it gives us emotional satisfaction, that it satisfies our aspirations, that it is a help in navigation, or that it facilitates a virtuous life.”⁶ But the relationship of this to history is precisely that, despite what some have called “cliometrics,” history in general is not capable of being conceptualized in this sort of way. So the very distinctions that Russell promulgates

³. Russell, “History,” p. 68.

⁴. *Ibid.*, pp. 62, 63, 65.

⁵. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁶. Russell, “Pragmatism,” p. 95.

in “Pragmatism” work toward the rather visionary view of historical studies that he develops in “On History.” Since history is manifestly not a science, it must be studied for other reasons.

II

It might be thought to be somewhat odd that Russell’s view of history as a discipline leans in a decidedly idealized direction, but once the entire argument is spelled out, one can see that Russell has been headed in this way all along. Russell sees the sciences as providing us with factual analyses from which can make inferences, use induction and come to broad generalizations.⁷ This sort of knowledge is not only useful—it provides the platform for other kinds of endeavors. Thus a problem for pragmatism is that its concept of truth does not allow us to make the sorts of generalizations that human knowledge requires.

So history is not a causal science—but that simply means that it should be viewed in another way. If it does not give us an adequate causal account (and if it is also the case that “facts” are sometimes a bit shaky), we must find some other rationale for its study. Here is where Russell’s counterarguments to the pragmatic notion of truth (that it provides ammunition for those who ultimately aim at a sort of fascistic preeminence) come into full play. History can provide us with a sort of aim and push us where we might not be able to go, even if that aim and push comes more from a metaphoric glance at the past than an anthropological or archaeological quest. Russell is quite explicit about what the study of history can do for us.

As Russell says with respect to the notion of history and some sort of quantifiable prognostication:

History, considered as a body of truth, seems destined long to remain almost purely descriptive. Such generalizations as have been suggested—omitting the sphere of economics—are, for the most part, so plainly unwarranted as to be not even worthy of refutation. Burke argued that all revolutions end in military tyrannies, and predicted

⁷. See fn. 4.

Napoleon. In so far as his argument was based on the analogy of Cromwell, it was a very lucky hit; but certainly not a scientific law.⁸

Here Russell plainly indicates that something nomological along the lines of predicating tyrannies to follow revolutions obviously does not make sense, and is stateable as a “law” only in the most metaphoric way. But Russell, unlike today’s postmoderns, does not have any difficulty with history as a repository of truth—in fact, he states this at the beginning of the essay.⁹

The most patent tie-in to his views on pragmatism revolves around these very areas. In that essay, he had said with respect to William James that “He [the pragmatist] begins by assenting to the dictionary definition that ‘truth’ means ‘the agreement’ of our ideas with ‘reality.’”¹⁰ But then again the pragmatist “holds that different sorts of ‘agreement’ and different sorts of ‘reality’ are concerned in different cases.”¹¹ So here we have a much better handle on what Russell is after. In the most highly alembicated case, history, were it to be constructed differently as a discipline, might be able to yield to us enough facts to enable us to promulgate at least miniaturized versions of those laws, such as tyranny-follows-revolution, that Russell sees as highly unlikely. But if we could ever use history in this way, it would not be because history could best be interpreted *à la* the pragmatists—rather, it would be because history does deal with Truth.

So, given the failure of cliometry then or now to give us a set of facts upon which inductive inference can build nomological piles, what is the best use of history? Just as Russell thinks that the pragmatists’ shifting ground will ultimately lead to “whatever satisfies desire,” a better use of history (and a better understanding of what its use could be) will help us in many ways.¹²

⁸ Russell, “History,” p. 62.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁰ Russell, “Pragmatism,” p. 90.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 92.

III

One of the functions that history can fulfill, given its truthful foundation and a right-headed view of the development of the sophisticated sciences, is suggestive.

Here is Russell again:

Nevertheless, history has a function in regard to current affairs.... It may, in the first place, suggest minor maxims, whose truth, when they are once propounded, can be seen without the help of the events which suggested them.... History may yield useful precepts.¹³

But this function is probably not worthy of history as a discipline. As Russell indicates, some of this material would doubtless occur to any thinking individual in any case.

Much more to the point is the inspirational value that can be attached to a close study of history. This line of Russell's is probably the most striking, not only in the sense that it leaps out at the reader, but also in the sense that, in its romantic idealization, it does seem somewhat out of step with the drier and harsher aspects of Russell's thought. Of course, it is not at all inconsistent with the big picture, so to speak. As he writes:

Another and a greater, utility, however, belongs also to history. It enlarges the imagination, and suggests possibilities of action and feeling which would not have occurred to an uninstructed mind. It selects from past lives the elements which were significant and important; it fills our thoughts with splendid examples, and with the desire for greater ends than unaided reflection would have discovered. It relates the present to the past, and thereby the future to the present.¹⁴

Russell's comments about "enlarged imaginations" and "splendid examples" might appear to be difficult to decipher were it not the case that we already know what direction to go here from much of his other work. The same individual who had to pay a £100 fine for failing to be in accordance with the Conscription Act in World War I wrote these words. Here the tie-in with the essay on pragmatism becomes greater, rather than less. If it is the case that the pragmatist conception of truth ultimately yields an overview that can lend itself to any enterprise, however specious, then it is also the case that a more foundational conception of truth (the one that Russell clearly possesses in the history

¹³ Russell, "History," pp. 64-65.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

essay, as his apparent goal for history would be that it might prove itself, sometime, to be a science) cannot be abused in the same sort of way. Thus what Russell's attitude comes to—however hard-lineish it might seem to an admirer of pragmatism—is that knowledge of the truths of the past can guide us in the future and guide us in ways less petty, less narrow and less selfish, if only we are willing to listen. Pragmatism, as a doctrine, does not have that virtue; it is too susceptible to misuse.

In the essay "Pragmatism," Russell makes all of this clear when he notes that the pragmatists not only play around with the concept of truth, but that they also do damage to the notion of a concept's "working." Again, Russell says:

What science requires of a working hypothesis is that it shall work theoretically, i.e. that all its verifiable consequences shall be true and none false....

This is what we mean when we say that the law 'works.' We do not mean that it gives us emotional satisfaction, that it satisfies our aspirations, that it is a help in navigation, or that it facilitates a virtuous life.¹⁵

To recapitulate, history as a discipline cannot aspire—without giving itself pretensions to which it is not entitled—to the formation of laws or of theories in the sense that those theories assist in such promulgation. But what history can do is give us a sense of human beings at their best—guided by intelligence, good will and a concern for others. Admittedly, the historical record may not contain enough examples of those sorts of humans, nor of their activities. But if we read widely—if we pick and choose—we can find the exemplars that do exist, and we can use their examples in the ways that would be best for all.

IV

A final example of what Russell hopes to accomplish in his essay on history helps to fill in the blanks with respect to the import of the work. The essay was published in 1904, so both twentieth century wars were still fairly far off, but the high price of colonialism was already evident in Great Britain from the trials of the 1890's. Perhaps Russell was a great deal more sensitive to these sorts of issues than many of his time; in any case, parts of the essay exhibit an emphasis on humankind as a whole, regardless of ethnicity and ancestry, that seems ahead of its time. While

¹⁵ Russell, "Pragmatism," p. 95.

reminding the reader that history can leave us with splendid examples, Russell also repeats the notion that history is the story of humankind writ large, and of all humans. In a passage toward the close of the essay, he says:

But history is more than the record of individual men, however great: it is the province of history to tell the biography, not only of men, but of Man; to present the long procession of generations as but the passing thoughts of one continuous life;.... Through unnumbered generations, forgotten sons worshipped at the tombs of forgotten fathers, forgotten mothers bore warriors whose bones whitened the silent steppes of Asia.¹¹⁶

Whatever may be said about this rather hyperbolic and wordy passage, it shows Russell as concerned with all human beings. An essay written in 1904 and published in any European country might very well be forgiven for not showing such an interest—but we do not have that particular worry here. Continents far removed from the sphere of European history are populated with human beings, and Russell is more than aware of this.

To sum up, Russell has presented us with a set of theses in “On History” that bear a remarkable relationship to some of the core contentions in his essay “Pragmatism.” Although there might superficially appear to be little relationship, there is no question that a careful reading yields a great deal with respect to these two essays. History might aspire to be a science, but, although it can give us facts, it is difficult to present them in the organized kind of way that leads to scientific theorizing. The pragmatist may play fast-and-loose with truth, but such playing has dangerous consequences. A better path for all is to investigate the truths of the past, peruse them for what they will yield, and to bear in mind that they can be dangerously misused or misconstrued.

Russell is concerned with “splendid examples” because, as a humanist, he knows the damage that can be done by other sorts of examples. “On History” is itself a splendid example of the quasi-philosophical essay. It repays rereading, and is testimony both to its author and the spirit it invokes.

¹¹⁶ Russell, “History,” pp. 67-68.

RUSSELL AT PHILADELPHIA

At the initiative of Carlin Romano, of Ursinus College in Pennsylvania, three members of the BRS (Chad Trainer, Tim Madigan and David Blitz) gave talks on Russell at a session of the Greater Pennsylvania Philosophy Consortium held on Oct. 1, 2011 and devoted to Russell and Pennsylvania.

Afterwards, a group of those who attended the talk visited Russell's residence "Little Datchet Farm", about which more will be said in a further article in the series on Russell's Houses. Below is a photo of the presenters and convenor in front of that house:



From left to right: David Blitz, Carlin Romano, Chad Trainer, and Tim Madigan

Readers of the *Bertrand Russell Bulletin* are requested to send in news of talks on Russell and Russell-related events to the editor, at dsblitz@gmail.com. We plan, in following issues, to have regular announcements of upcoming and recently past events.

G. K. CHESTERTON AND BERTRAND RUSSELL

By Father Leo Hetzler, CSB

Father Hetzler, professor emeritus of English at St. John Fisher College, was the guest speaker for the August 2005 meeting of the Greater Rochester Russell Set. He is an expert on the life and writings of Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1936). Here is an edited version of his talk:

I want to thank you for inviting me to join you this evening. I know that Chesterton himself would have liked to have come along, too, for he loved ideas and the play of the mind. He once remarked, "Ideas are dangerous, but the man to whom they are least dangerous is the man of ideas. He is acquainted with ideas, and moves along them like a lion-tamer. Ideas are dangerous, but the man to whom they are most dangerous is the man of *no* ideas."

Chesterton would have been good company this evening, too, for he was a gentle and humorous person. H. G. Wells observed, when told that people said he had an irascible temper: "You're right. I've quarreled with everyone in England." Then, after a moment's pause, he added "Except Chesterton." Even when Chesterton criticized certain thinkers, he would always say that at least they were thinking, and had forged a set of principles for themselves. Thus he spoke words of praise in his 1904 book *Heretics*: "These thinkers do each of them, have a constructive and affirmative view, and they do take it seriously and ask us to take it seriously." In the same vein, in 1909 he ended his book on George Bernard Shaw with these words of appreciation: "When the spirit who denies besieged the last citadel, blaspheming life itself, there was one especially whose voice was heard and whose spear was never broken." (Shaw said of the book: "This is the finest work that my genius has provoked.")

I would like to take a few moments to give you a little background on GKC. First of all, his workload was enormous. He wrote more than a hundred books and contributed to two hundred more. He wrote articles for and was editor of *G. K.'s Weekly*. In addition, he wrote two weekly columns, one in the *Daily News* and the other in the *London Illustrated News*, and wrote essays for more than 125 magazines. In fact, there was a joke about trying to find an issue of *any* magazine that did not have a contribution by him. *The Railroad Times? Raising Rabbits? Chess Board*

Scandals? No, there he was. He wrote five novels (Kafka said he owed his career to Chesterton's *The Man Who Was Thursday*), more than 200 short stories, hundreds of poems, nine biographies, and five plays. He was famous for his Father Brown detective stories. But perhaps his insights were most telling in his literary criticism – numerous essays, two books on Dickens, one on the literature of the Victorian Age, and books on Chaucer, Browning, Stevenson, Blake, and Shaw.

Chesterton was born in 1874 (just two years after Russell), and was raised in the Kensington district of West London near Notting Hill. His father owned a real estate firm, and was a gentle, well-read man, much like Gilbert himself. His mother was of French Huguenot and Scottish descent, liberal but, like Chesterton's brother Cecil, a forcible personality. Gilbert remarked of his younger brother: "Cecil was born one November morning and immediately began to argue." Cecil shared his older brother's atheism – Gilbert was an atheist from the ages of 12 to 30 – and his brother's anti-Church and anti-establishment cast of mind. But whereas Cecil rejoiced in their atheism and materialism, Gilbert – although above his desk stood the classic books on atheism from Ernst Haeckel on down – inwardly could not rejoice. This same reaction was well expressed in 1929 by Joseph Wood Krutch in *The Modern Temper*. When I went to Cornell this book was required reading for all Freshmen. Krutch set forth in detail how science had proven that God did not exist. But Krutch's book was less a celebration of science than a cry from a wounded heart. He could find no basis for any values other than that of survival. (Incidentally, as you may know, in 1952 in *The Measure of Man* Krutch answered his own arguments in his earlier book and had joined the Anglican Church.)

Young Chesterton, as a materialist, found a certain degree of contentment in its simplicity and appreciated the knowledge brought by empirical conclusions. But inwardly he regretted that no secure and respected place could be found for primal instincts and the creative imagination that was fed by the unconscious. A surrealistic short story he wrote when 17 reflected these thoughts. In the story a young hero, setting out to tame the wild Nightmare, passes by a melancholy, pathetic monster, the Mooncalf, and overhears its poignant soliloquy. Man had once led the Mooncalf away to the sunlit Rationalist world in an attempt to put him to some practical use –

but there he remained, a thing of horror and ridicule. He retreats and now sings to the Moon his mother of his loneliness and of his monstrous appearance:

I forget all the creatures that taunt and despise,
When through the dark night-mists my mother doth rise,
She is tender and kind, and shines the night long
On her lunatic child as he sings her his song.

At last the hero encounters the wild Nightmare – literally a wild horse – and wrestles it to submission and to love. “Jack took the big, ugly head in his lap and kissed it and guarded it in silence, until at last the Nightmare opened her eyes, now as mild as the Mooncalf’s, whinnied sorrowfully, and rubbed her head against his.” They talked of the Mooncalf and then rode through the world’s hostile landscapes. “Come,” said the boy, dismounting, “since men will not receive us, we will go on our way together. Perhaps we will visit the Mooncalf again, and see your mother and your brothers.” “My master,” replied the Nightmare, “I have no mother nor brothers. I know no one but you who does not shrink from me. But you are my master, and I will go with you wither you will.”

The symbolism in this strange tale cannot be simply equated with abstract terms, yet one might suggest that the “Mooncalf” points toward to intuitive, imaginative, and mystical side of man. This child of the moon, existing on – yet a stranger to – the earth, cannot remain content in the city of a smothering positivism. Further, the wild, motherless Nightmare symbolizes, on one level, Nature – as a not quite comprehensible, vital, free force. On another level, the Nightmare is the Unconscious that feeds the imagination and makes man’s perceptive myth-making power possible. Later, Chesterton will cite that power as one of the two roads to understanding our universe (the other road is that of Philosophy).

After graduating from St. Paul’s, he entered London University, taking courses in French Literature and Political Economy, and enrolling in the Slade School of Art in preparation for a career in painting and illustration. It was during these years that he became philosophically an Idealist, convinced that the only existence of which he could be certain was that of his own. This filled him with

pessimism and despair. Strangely enough, what slowly lifted him out of himself were two literary figures. Walt Whitman's poetry re-awakened his sense of wonder at the things of this world, especially man. And also from Whitman he took a hope for some new religion that could be welcomed by all cultures. In his pursuit of such a universal religion, for the next ten years he regularly attended lectures and meetings on Eastern Religions and Theosophy.

From the second literary figure, Robert Louis Stevenson, he re-discovered his boyhood sense of life as an adventure in a really strange world.

To complete my brief background sketch, after graduation Chesterton became a journalist and book reviewer for, first, *The Bookman*, and then *The Speaker*. His penetrating insights caused George Bernard Shaw to write him, and they finally met at Rodin's studio in Paris and became life-long friends. In 1901 Chesterton began a weekly column in the prestigious *London Illustrated News* that lasted until his death in 1936. Finally, in 1904 his novel *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* took England by storm. By this time he was so well known that the media referred to him simply as "GK." The next year he began a life-long dialogue with leading contemporary intellectuals with *Heretics*, a book that would be followed by *Orthodoxy* in 1908, *The Everlasting Man* in 1922, and *St. Thomas Aquinas* in 1933. In 1907 he was received into the Anglican Church and in 1922 he became a Roman Catholic.

During this brief biographical sketch, you no doubt have noticed certain points of similarity with Lord Russell. Born only two years apart, they lived through the same intellectual ferments. Both had deep humanitarian feelings, and hence politically were Socialists and later Liberals. Both were opposed to censorship. Both strove to be as honest and objective as they could. Both were atheists by the age of 12. Both went through a philosophical phase of Idealism. Both placed a high value on the work and findings of science, but both also were aware that there was a significant difference between "science" and unscientific "scientism." Both understood that the scope or objects of the physical sciences were different from those of philosophy – especially of Metaphysics and Natural Theology – though for Russell the questions that these struggled with had no answers. Russell was often

Chesterton-like in writing for the general public with clarity, concreteness, and directness. Both wrote with rapidity; often Chesterton would dictate simultaneously to three secretaries for different books or articles. Both wrote on an extraordinary wide range of fields and subjects. Hence both were well known public figures. Both gave widely popular series of radio talks. Both recognized that in Darwinian Evolution, the terms “fittest” and “best” referred merely to survival. Both, in the 1880s, had condemned the Czarist troops massacring unarmed protestors, yet in the 1920s also condemned the terrors of the Communist regime. Incidentally, Russell’s stand set him apart from almost all European and American liberals down through the years. In regard to Nazism, Chesterton condemned Hitler and his racist theories from 1932 on and foresaw in him the cause of a coming war; Russell, despite his pacifism, after the invasion of Poland agreed that Hitler must be defeated. Lastly, in a rare moment in 1900, you will recall that Russell wrote of a mystical illumination he experienced, one that transformed him into a pacifist, and overwhelmed him with a semi-mystical appreciation of beauty. Chesterton would have seen this as a natural working of the human mind, one to be valued and respected.

There was a deep point of similarity between the two thinkers. Both laid down as a primary principle that one should never accept unbacked assumptions – either about the foundations of knowledge, about causality, or about what may be said to exist. Chesterton discussed his skepticism in, for example, *Orthodoxy*, Chapter 4, “The Ethics of Elfland.” Incidentally, in 1957 this was reprinted in *Great Essays in Science*, along with essays by Darwin, Einstein, Eddington, and Russell. In introducing Chesterton’s essay, Martin Gardner, associate editor of *American Scientist*, pointed out that, although Chesterton was not a scientist per se, nevertheless, “there are times when . . . he startles you with unexpected insights.”

We have looked at similarities between Chesterton and Russell. What are some of the points on which they differ? I suppose the first difference would be that, whereas Russell was in the tradition of Descartes, Kant and the German Idealists in beginning and remaining with Ideas, Chesterton sought to bring back sensitivity to the Real – to see the specificity and oddness of things, things taken in themselves and as forming the cosmos. Etienne Gilson, the renowned scholar of Medieval

philosophy, attended Chesterton's lectures in 1929 at the University of Toronto, and wrote to a friend that he was astonished by Chesterton's ability to anchor his starting point invariably and with unfailing ease in intellectually perceived reality. Gilson cited these lectures as the greatest intellectual revelation of his life.

I would like to make a few brief remarks on the topic of science. As an historian, for the sake of accuracy it is wise not to speak too much in terms of "centuries" or "ages" – the 18th Century or the Victorian Age. Rather, one should think in decades – Ad. 310 to 320, 1470 to 1480, 1740 to 1750: what were the decades' assumptions, problems, scientific discoveries, favorite phrases, the constant that continued on into the next decade. For Russell and Chesterton, the constant that ran through the decades of their younger years was a phrase that we today do not hear any longer: "Science Says." Science says that the earth is enveloped in a layer of ether; science says that the cosmos is composed entirely of atoms, which are the final, irreducible components of matter, having no further elements within. Chesterton sought to point out that the findings of science did not conflict with the doctrines of the Church. First, he called attention to the contrast between what the scientists said, and what scientism said they said. Chesterton saw, for instance, that Darwin's theory in itself did not negate God's existence nor even His direct creation of man. And, of course, Darwin himself wrote in his preface to *On the Origin of Species* that he was suggesting just one way in which variety might have arisen. In that book he presented the struggle for existence as being not one of warfare but one of merely making adaptations favorable to finding food or to defense against predators.

However, Chesterton – far more than Russell -- noted problems with the theory even as it was set forth by Darwin. These were the problems raised by later scientists, suggesting qualifications and adjustments. I shall not go into those, but you are well acquainted with the findings of such respected evolutionists as Stephen Jay Gould, Peter J. Bowler, and Gaylord Simpson. In this same spirit, Chesterton in 1902 discussed the conclusions of the Paris Conference on Evolution – that evolution does not develop with Darwinian slowness, but rather happens in abrupt, oblique jumps.

We noted earlier that Russell and Chesterton – and H. G. Wells, too, for that matter – clearly saw that the only value present in Darwin’s theory was that of survival – that some germ might well prove to be the fittest in the long run (the Martians in Wells’ *War of the Worlds* found *that* out). But the public, not perceiving the real import of Darwinism, exulted in their status as humans, especially as members of the British Empire – they were on top. But at the same time, the public resigned itself to the fact that man himself was merely another phase in a chain of chance development.

Now, since the Judaeo-Christian belief in the divine creation of the human soul by God could not be proven nor disproved, Chesterton sought to show that this belief was not contrary to either logic or to reason. For instance, his book *The Everlasting Man* opens amid the magnificent art of Primitive Man in a cave at Font de Gaume – perhaps 20,000 years old and one more instance of how art had made a sudden appearance, what even anthropologists who are materialists call “the creative explosion.”

On the walls of this cave are “drawings or paintings of animals, and they were drawn or painted, not only by a man but by an artist. Under whatever archaic limitations, they showed that love of the long, sweeping line – or the long wavering line, which any man who has ever drawn or attempted to draw, will recognize. “ Then, too, once recorded history began, the evidence was that man, unlike the most intelligent ape, could laugh, feel shame, be conscious of his/her self, and of mortality, and so on. “Man,” observed Chesterton, seems to be “not merely an evolution – but rather a revolution.” Well, I’ve taken longer than I had intended. There are still important areas that I have not touched upon. But I hope I have opened a few doors in the course of this most enjoyable play of ideas.