

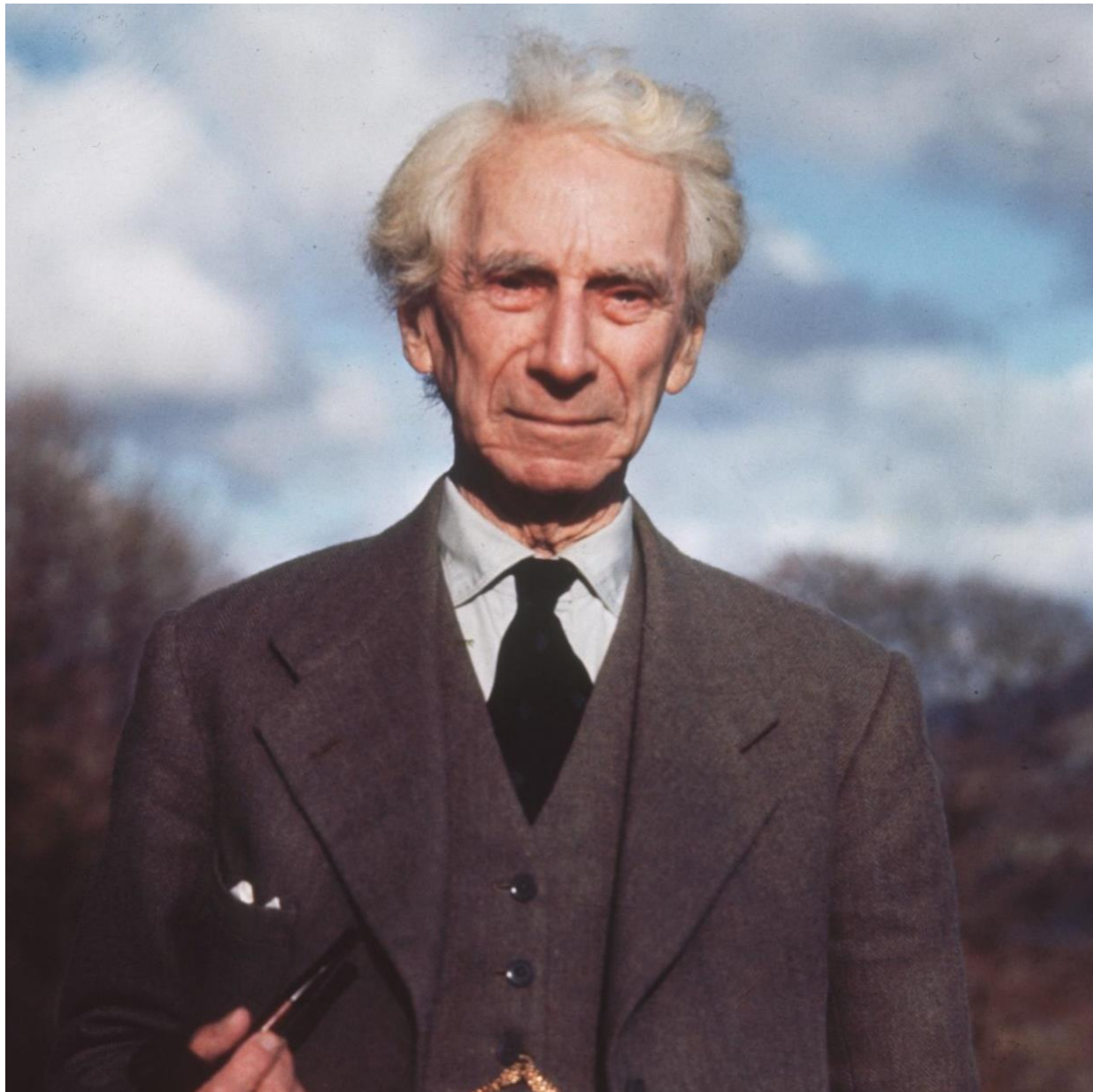
The Bertrand Russell Society

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# BULLETIN



## Editor

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Manuscripts may be submitted in Microsoft Word to the editor at his email address. Feature articles and book reviews should deal with Russell's life or works, written in scholarly or journalistic style. Articles generally should not exceed 3,500 words, and book reviews 1,000 words. Submissions should be made no later than August 31st and January 15th for the fall and spring issues, respectively. The editor collaborates with authors as necessary, and authors are invited to review suggested changes before publication. There are no guarantees of publication, and articles submitted may be held for future editions. Acceptance by the editor does not imply endorsement by the editor. The *Bulletin* aims to publish articles with various and sometimes contrasting views.

Membership in the Society is \$45 per year for individuals, \$30 for students, and \$25 for those with limited incomes (honour system). Add \$10.00 to each for couples. A lifetime membership is \$1,500 for an individual and \$1,750 for a couple. Besides the BRS *Bulletin*, membership includes subscription to the peer-reviewed scholarly journal, *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies* (published semi-annually by McMaster University) and other Society privileges, including the BRS email list, access to Russell-related multi-media resources, eligibility to run for the Board and serve on committees, and eligibility to attend the Annual Meeting.

Digital versions of the *Bulletin* appear on the BRS website at [www.bertrandrussell.org/](http://www.bertrandrussell.org/).

Renewal dues should be paid by or on January 1st each year. One's membership status can be determined by visiting <https://russell.humanities.mcmaster.ca/brsmembers.htm>. There one finds convenient links to join or renew via PayPal.

New and renewing members may also send a cheque or money order via traditional post to the treasurer (make it out to The Bertrand Russell Society). Send it to Landon Elkind, Treasurer, Bertrand Russell Society, Philosophy Department, 2-13 Assiniboia Hall, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2E7. The treasurer's email address is [brsocietytreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:brsocietytreasurer@gmail.com)

If a new member, please tell us a little about yourself beyond just your name (interests in Russell, profession, and so on). If a renewing member, please let us know of any relevant changes to your contact information.

The BRS is a non-profit organization, and we greatly appreciate any donations or bequests members choose to give. Donations may be tax-deductible in certain jurisdictions.

The final page of the *Bulletin* gives the names of elected and appointed officers of the Bertrand Russell Society.

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## From the Editor's Desk

Michael D. Stevenson  
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The global pandemic continues to exert a malign influence around the world, and the Bertrand Russell Society has been required to adapt to the realities of the Covid-19 climate in which we live. In his President's Corner column in this issue of the *Bulletin*, David Blitz outlines the successful initiatives that have been undertaken to advance the interests of the BRS, most notably in the holding of a very successful on-line annual meeting and an on-line discussion session featuring Bertrand Russell's 1960 debate with Edward Teller about the merits of a negotiated nuclear test ban agreement. Web-based events will continue to be scheduled going forward, and the 2021 BRS annual meeting is also tentatively scheduled to be held on-line from 18 to 20 June.

The BRS has unfortunately lost several influential members and supporters during 2020. Two obituaries are printed in this *Bulletin*. In the first, Tim Madigan recounts the important legacy of Michael Berumen as the Society's Treasurer and editor of the *Bulletin*. Tim's description of Mike's support of all things Russellian is amplified by other testimonials detailing his personal impact on BRS members. David Blitz then memorializes Mario Bunge, a former recipient of the Bertrand Russell Society Award. The death of Marvin Kohl should also be noted. Marvin served as the BRS President from 1985 to 1987 and as the Board Chair for six subsequent years. His on-line obituary can be accessed at <https://www.observertoday.com/obituaries/2020/07/dr-marvin-kohl/>.

This issue features a wide range of articles related to Russell studies. Sheila Turcon provides an account of the provenance of a watch fob gifted to Russell by Colette O'Niel. Peter Stone then describes his search for a painting of Russell on the side of a barn in an Irish community north of Dublin. Adam Stromme contributes an article on the economic views of Adam Smith and Russell; this is followed by a piece from Landon Elkind on causation in Russell's philosophy. Finally, your Editor presents an annotated transcription of 1895 depositions given by the Dowager Countess Russell and Lady Mary Agatha Russell in judicial proceedings related to the separation of Frank Russell, Bertie's brother, from his wife, Mabel Edith Russell.

The planning for the Spring 2021 issue of the *Bulletin* is well in hand. As always, readers are encouraged to submit manuscripts for potential inclusion in future issues; submission instructions and guidelines are provided on the inside front cover of this issue.

## President's Corner

David Blitz  
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The coronavirus pandemic has brought about some changes to the BRS. One of them is unfortunate: we had to cancel the on-ground annual meeting planned for Central Connecticut State University in June. But we were able to hold it on-line, with some 15 papers submitted in advance and available on the BRS website. Authors were able to present them in real time on 20 June to an on-line meeting via Zoom, with over 40 persons in attendance. We had attendees from the US, Canada, Brazil, South Korea, China, Ireland, and Great Britain—some of whom might not have been able to attend in person otherwise. We also had a presentation of films featuring Russell in interview with Ralph Miliband (“Man and the Twentieth Century”) and Woodrow Wyatt (part of a series of 13 interviews that are reproduced in *Bertrand Russell Speaks*).

The on-line experience having been very positive, the Board and membership agreed to have more on-line sessions. An on-line committee of the executive officers of the society assisted by Tim Madigan and John Lenz was established, and we agreed to have quarterly on-line meetings of the Board. The first of these was held on Saturday, 4 September, where we planned the next annual meeting in June—also now scheduled to be held on-line—and considered means to increase membership. We also agreed to hold further on-line sessions for all members to show further films of Russell, to present and debate papers, or to hold panel discussions.

The first such event was held on 26 September with two half-hour videos of Russell in debate with Edward Teller, the “father” of the hydrogen bomb, held in 1960 on the CBS network show “Small World”, hosted by the respected journalist Edward R. Murrow, best known for his earlier criticism of Joseph McCarthy’s “red scare” campaign. Teller argued against a test ban with Russia on the grounds that the Russians would cheat and take advantage of superior weaponry to establish their political system as the “only way of life”. Russell responded that negotiations always involved some risk, which could be mitigated, but that in the absence of measures to stop the nuclear arms race, there would result “no way of life” in the aftermath of a nuclear war. Attendees discussed the issues raised in the debate, and we were able to

spend nearly two hours on-line together, with some 30 participants in all. Discussion continued on the list serve thereafter.

We will hold further on-line sessions in November and December and thereafter. November will provide a special event of its own—the US presidential election—and we may wish to have a follow-up on-line discussion of its result and implications, when (and if) that is known. In December, we are planning a panel discussion on the Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, which just received its 50<sup>th</sup> ratification by a state and will enter into effect on 22 January 2021, even if the nuclear powers have refused to approve it. Tony Simpson, a member of both the BRS and the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, will take the lead in organizing an on-line panel. For January or perhaps a bit later, we are currently planning for a presentation by James Connelly about his forthcoming book on Wittgenstein's critique of Russell's theory of judgment; the details, date and time will be confirmed by e-mail.

On a personal note, I have contributed to this issue of the *Bulletin* a brief obituary of Mario Bunge, who was our honoree at the 2009 BRS annual meeting at CCSU. Bunge was my thesis advisor back in the 1980s, a mentor and a friend whom I first met as an undergraduate over 50 years ago. I was fortunate to attend his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration in September 2019, a modest affair at his home in Montreal with immediate family and two of his graduate students, of which I was one. Bunge was inspired by Russell in his own approach to philosophy and his dedication to social justice. As his wife, the mathematician Marta Bunge noted, he was born during the 1919 flu pandemic and died during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. Along with Michael Berumen, a past treasurer of the BRS whose obituary also appears in this issue of the *Bulletin*, Bunge will be missed as we continue our work into the 2020s.

## In Memoriam: Michael Edward Sproull Berumen (1952-2020)

Tim Madigan  
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It is with great sadness that I inform the BRS members of the death of Michael Berumen, our former Treasurer and editor of the *Russell Bulletin*. He died on 21 May after a long battle with cancer and other ailments. Mike was a self-proclaimed “Philosopher, businessman, juvenile delinquent, adventurer, editor, aviator, kung fu sifu, and veteran.”

It was my pleasure to work closely with Mike when I was President of the BRS. He was a great friend, and a stalwart member of the Society, whose love for Russell was ever-evident. In his book *Threads: A Life*, which he published shortly before his death, Mike writes that he first became aware of Russell while serving in the U.S. military: “The first book of his that I read was on philosophy. One day in the early summer of 1970, I was visiting the post library during my brief assignment in Fort Riley, Kansas,



*Photo courtesy of Carol Berumen*



and there was a display case that included his little book entitled *The Problems of Philosophy*. I had not heard of Bertrand Russell before. The short biography on the back of the book said that he was a renowned mathematician, logician, Nobel Prize winner, a Fellow of the Royal Society, and on top of all that, an English Lord. I have always had a bias favoring mathematical and scientific minds. So I checked it out. This book had more influence on me than any other book before or since. It sparked my interest in philosophy, gave me a perspective on the merits of analyzing things into their most fundamental component parts, wed me to the importance of clear and precise expression, and it opened up a whole new world for me: the world of ideas. It still holds up as a wonderful introduction to the subject.”

Mike is survived by his widow Carol, their daughter Anastasia, and their new granddaughter Genevieve Skye Knoll. Mike’s funeral occurred on 21 July, his birthday. He had an honor guard and was buried at Fort Logan, a Veterans Cemetery in Denver. His website has many articles he wrote about Russell and I encourage you to visit it at: <https://michaelberumen.academia.edu/>

Additional Comments:

“Mike heard that a well-known member of the Society was in dire financial straits. He sent me \$500 to pass on to the member. The only condition was that I not disclose that Mike was the donor. I was the grateful recipient of a book on *Operation Sea Lion* because Mike knew I was studying World War II and not least Churchill’s role, of whom and of which he was a great admirer. With his astonishing productivity I began to think he didn’t sleep, or not much. To wit: on the way to the Annual Meeting at Iowa, he drove overnight (I believe) from Colorado. He told me he stopped by the side of the road to catch a few hours’ rest. He was none the worse for that.” [Kenneth Blackwell]

“Thinking back a decade or more, I remember Mike Berumen as the good-humoured treasurer of the Bertrand Russell Society and later editor of the *Bulletin*. His mastery of the Society’s finances was a fine and reassuring thing, but so was his editing and writing at the helm of the *Bulletin*. He wrote as he talked, on point, always vigorous, always interesting.

His enthusiasm for Russell, for the humane scepticism that Russell embodied, and for the Society was a tonic. He drew people in from all the communities of which he was a part—the liberal political community, the business community, his California and

Colorado homes, his family. And in the end, he drew me in as well; it was Mike who persuaded me to become *Bulletin* editor in succession to him. It was hard to say ‘no’ to Mike. His constructive energy carried all before it. We talked often on the phone about the *Bulletin* and about the horrors of the current American presidency. He spoke of his delight in becoming a grandfather—and his agreement with Carol, his wife, that soon he would stop doing quite so much BRS work. He tried to persuade me to fly to Windsor, Colorado, to try out his piano. He was a delight to be around.

It was a sharp shock to us, his friends, to hear of Mike's illness and later of his death. For his family, in all generations, his passing must be tremendously hard. We in the Society will miss Mike at meetings and online and in politics and in philosophical argument. He would want us to keep on keeping on—in the Russell Society and in the wider Russellian community. That we shall do.” [William Bruneau]

"It is sad to know that Mike Berumen has passed away. By the little time we spent together I could attest to all the qualities that you mention, especially his congeniality. A very generous and compassionate person. He was a very good friend of mine. I will miss him very much." [Giovanni D. de Carvalho]

“Mike was a mentor to me and a dear colleague. I will miss his insightful comments and generous, amiable character at the annual meetings. He viewed things with a clear eye and good heart, which we should ourselves emulate in loving memory of him. As Russell put it: ‘Love is wise, and hatred is foolish.’” [Landon D.C. Elkind]

“Michael stepped up to the plate for the BRS at a critical time, helping the Society out by filling two vital positions—treasurer and *Bulletin* editor. Over the years, it has gotten increasingly difficult to find people willing to do the necessary work that keeps the BRS going. Michael was always there to make sure it got done, and got done well. The BRS should be very grateful for his wonderful contributions.” [Peter Stone]

“I have many fond memories of Michael Berumen. Two in particular I would like to share. In 2012, a church in Pennsylvania invited me to participate in a debate where my opponent would be tasked with representing the ideas of Saint Augustine and I would try to represent the views of Bertrand Russell. Along with the invitation came a solicitation for the Bertrand Russell Society to sponsor the event at a level of \$250.

Michael was treasurer of the BRS at the time and was concerned about commitments the Society had already made to sponsor the Glasgow and Ole Miss *Problems of Philosophy* conferences. Michael calculated that the BRS ought not to spend more than \$150 to sponsor this church event. He got it approved by the executive committee, and then he and Ray Perkins each kindly contributed \$50 of their own to meet the \$250 sponsorship request.

The other story I wanted to share involves the Bertrand Russell Society's 2015 annual meeting at Trinity College, Dublin. My work schedule was such that, although I could attend all three days of the meeting, I could be present in Ireland for only those three days. Much as I wanted to attend, the travel costs were substantial enough that I didn't think I could condone my spending the money involved for such a brief stay. When Michael brought up the subject of the meeting in Ireland with me, I indicated that I was not planning to attend the Ireland meeting considering the costs of the airfare and the brevity of the time I would be there. Michael would have none of it. He indicated that he really thought I should be at the meeting and offered to give me \$1,000 to defray the expenses. Initially, I wasn't sure how serious he was being, but I certainly thanked him for his kindness. I thought it best not to broach the subject with him again, not being sure what to expect. Only a few days later, a \$1,000 check arrived in the mail, and I was able to enjoy a great trip to Ireland because of Michael." [Chad Trainer]

"I did not know what to expect when Michael took over editing the *Bulletin*. He took an active interest in my articles. We mainly disagreed about commas. He wanted more of them, I wanted less. We went back and forth until we agreed on the number of commas that both of us were happy with. I was sad when he decided to leave his post. But I understood. Editing takes a lot of time and effort. In addition, you must get your authors to accept changes and agree with them. Michael excelled." [Sheila Turcon]

*A former president of the Bertrand Russell Society, Timothy Madigan is Professor of Philosophy at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York. Among many publications, he has co-edited (with Peter Stone) Bertrand Russell: Public Intellectual (Tiger Bark Press, 2016)*

## In Memoriam: Mario Bunge (1919-2020)

David Blitz  
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Mario Bunge was our Bertrand Russell Society Award honoree in 2009, at a BRS meeting held at CCSU. He was unable to travel to the event (he was 89 at the time), but we had a video interview which was played at the meeting. Bunge, who was born 21 September 1919 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, died 24 February 2020 in Montreal, Canada. He had just celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday a few months earlier, and despite difficulty in walking, was alert and at work on a book on inverse problems in philosophy of science.

Bunge graduated from the National University of La Plata with a PhD in physico-mathematical sciences; his dissertation dealt with the kinematics of the electron. But he had already developed a wide ranging interest in philosophy, from philosophy of science to political philosophy. During the 1940s he edited a journal called *Minerva*,



which opposed irrationalist philosophy (e.g., Heidegger) and political dictators (e.g., Hitler), at a time when irrationalist and authoritarian thought was a real danger in Argentina, eventually leading to the dictatorship of Juan Peron. Bunge also founded a workers' college, which became along with its founder an object of governmental repression.

Bunge's best known book is *Causality: The Place of the Causal Principle in Modern Science* (Harvard University Press, 1959), which was subsequently reprinted in the Dover series of influential writings and remains in print today. His most substantial work was the nine-volume *Treatise on Basic Philosophy* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1974 -1989) dealing with semantics, ontology, epistemology and methodology, philosophy of science and technology, and ethics. Bunge's overall perspective was materialist, systemist, and emergentist. He published in both English and Spanish, and was translated into numerous other languages, with some 100 books and 500 articles, as well as commentaries in the press on subjects of the day—ranging from opposition to the war in Vietnam to the danger of global warming. His political philosophy was democratic and socialist.

Bunge became a Professor of Philosophy at McGill University in Montreal in 1966, where he served as head of the Philosophy and Foundations of Science Unit and Frothingham Professor of Logic and Metaphysics until his retirement in 1990 at age 90. He continued to read, research and publish during his retirement, and followed *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies* as an honorary member of the BRS. Bunge was my thesis advisor, mentor, and long-time friend. He lived a long, productive and engaged life of the mind, and said in his recently published autobiography, *Between Two Worlds: Memoirs of a Philosopher-Scientist* (Springer, 2016): "I fell in love with philosophy when I read Bertrand Russell's *Problems of Philosophy* (1912)... Russell showed me how to rethink tough problems..." Mario Bunge will continue to have an influence on future generations of philosophers and scientists as a result of this problem solving approach.

*David Blitz is Professor of Philosophy at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut. He is the current President of the Bertrand Russell Society.*

# Tokens of Love

Sheila Turcon

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It was on 24 January 2020 when Ken Blackwell said to me—we sit near one another at Russell House—that Tony Simpson had just found a gold medallion with some French writing. I rushed over to Ken’s desk to look at the email, then exclaimed: “That’s the watch fob Colette gave Russell!” I was thrilled; I could not believe this love token still existed. Tony had found it “loose in a little blue Sellotape tin together with heart shaped gold locket with glass containing light brown hair, Egyptian coin, amethyst heart, and EF<sup>1</sup> pewter bracelet.” Tony recognized the date, 26 June 1919, which was inscribed on one side of the fob along with the location of Lulworth as “the day that Colette visited Bertie at the farmhouse near Lulworth Cove.” Russell was spending the summer with J.E. Littlewood, a mathematician, at Newlands Farm. He attached the fob to his watch-chain which secured his pocket watch.

Lady Constance Malleon, an aristocrat and actress who chose the stage name of Colette O’Niel, and Bertrand Russell began their affair in 1916. Four tokens of love were exchanged by the couple during their relationship: a watch, a cigarette case, the gold coin for Russell’s watch chain, and a brooch. On 20 December 1916 Russell wanted to buy Colette a watch, but he was too busy to find one. As late as 5 September 1917 they were to meet at Hatchett’s at 1 pm, presumably for lunch, and then go on to look for watches (document .200186). The watch was purchased either later that month or at the beginning of October. Colette wrote on 5 July 1918: “The watch you gave me ticks always of you; it’ll be having its first birthday when you come out.”<sup>2</sup> They did not provide any description of it. Then mysteriously it was gone. Russell wrote on 2 August 1919: “If I were you I should write again about your watch, or telephone to the *Times* to find out the proper address. The advt. *must* have been for you.” If there was a letter to Russell from Colette about its disappearance, it has not survived. The advertisement I think Russell is referring to reads: “Colette can have article lost by sending description

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<sup>1</sup> Presumably “EF” stands for Edith Finch, Russell’s fourth wife.

<sup>2</sup> On 21 June Russell had written to her that one-third of his time was over. This would mean a release date of c2 October from Brixton Prison.



**Colette O'Neil**

to Box H857, The Times" which appeared on 25 July 1919, p. 1. Why Colette would be in doubt as to whether this advertisement was meant for her is unclear. On 4 August Russell wrote again: "As to your watch, I believe the inscription was 'Colette; April somethingth, 1917 [not 1916]'—I forget the date, but it was the day we went to Richmond and bought your cigarette case. I should tell the people you had already communicated with Scotland Yard, as they can ascertain by inquiry. That will show them you are all right." Again, it seems odd that Colette would not remember the engraving on her own watch.

With regard to the cigarette case, Colette wrote to Russell on 23 April 1917: "My cigarette case has turned up. Will you sometime write my name on a slip of paper with the date of our Richmond Park day, so it can be engraved in the case?" The next day Russell replied he would do so. The first time they visited Richmond Park was 24

October 1916, her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. I don't know why Russell would write "not 1916". They did visit the park again c21 May 1917 and Colette may have caught a chill (document .200142), but this occasion was after her request.

Russell and Colette's relationship had been difficult since his early release from Brixton in September 1918. He was jealous of Colette's relationships with other men. Although they had spent Christmas at Lynton with Clifford Allen, they did not rekindle their affair. Colette refused to have sex with him in February. On 4 March Russell told her that if things didn't improve, he would have to look elsewhere. In April they vacationed at Ashford in Shropshire but again drifted apart. On 26 June she sent him a telegram telling him she would be driving to Lulworth. After their reconciliation, he wrote on 28 June: "It was all quite wonderful, from the first moment to the last.... Do not let us lose each other again my Heart's comrade—it is a very dark world without you." This was a momentous occasion for them both. Colette typed: "What Colette wrote after she motored to B. at Lulworth (written some good time afterwards). B. was standing in the open, smoking his pipe and looking out to sea. He turned suddenly and saw her standing on the footboard of the car, her bare arm holding back the open door. In a moment she was beside him, her hair brushing his cheek, her arms around him. Never, never as long as she lived would she forget that moment. And he, in a flash, knew that she still loved him." She used this scene in her novel *The Coming Back* (1933).

Russell wrote to Colette on 15 August 1919: "A thousand thousand thanks for your dear present for my watch-chain—I do *love* it, and the love that comes with it makes my heart sing with joy—I love the inscription—you told me those lines long ago, and they have been in my thoughts ever since." Colette had written to him on 2 January 1917: "Through all this dark time I am with you, caring for you 'aujourd'hui plus que hier, et bien moins que demain'."

The inscription on the watch fob was supposed to read: "Car, chaque jour je t'aime d'avantage, aujourd'hui plus que hier, et bien moins que demain" ("Letters to Bertrand Russell from Constance Malleson, 1916–1969", p. 331; typescript in RA). With the discovery of the watch fob, this was found to be incorrect. The fob only contains the text beginning with "aujourd'hui." In addition to this page in the typescript, Colette wrote out the words by hand: "Aug. 14. 1919. For your watchchain—Car, chaque jour je t'aime d'advantage, Aujourd'hui plus que hier—Et bien moins que demain" (document .200894R). The full quotation was obviously too long to fit on the small gold coin where it was engraved. The quotation is taken from a poem, "L'Éternelle Chanson", by



Aug. 14. 1919.

For your watch chain -

"Car, chaque jour je t'aime davantage,  
Aujourd'hui plus qu'hier -  
Et bien moins que demain -

Colette to Russell, 14 August 1919



Photo courtesy of Tony Simpson

Russell's watch fob inscription

Rosemonde Gérard (1871–1973) written in 1889. Colette left out “vois-tu” following “car.” It translates as: Because each day I love you more, today more than yesterday, and much less than tomorrow.

Jewellery with these words was first produced by Alphonse Augis, a jeweller in Lyon, France, in 1907. Augis generally produced items with the words “Qu’hier” and “Que Demain”, as well as plus and minus signs. However, he did make items with the entire last sentence of the quotation. Had Colette seen his jewellery and drew her inspiration from him? The maker of Russell’s watch fob is unknown.

On 16 August Russell wrote: “Dearest Love I love the thing you sent me for my watch-chain. Whenever I get alone I take it out—I am so glad too to have that date commemorated. If your watch isn’t found I will give you another with that date.” On 21 August he wrote: “Your second telegram yesterday did warm my heart most beautifully—thank you for it.” The second telegram sent on 20 August contained the



**Example of Alphonse Augis love token**

French quotation.

In July 1919 Russell gave Colette a brooch in the form of small diamond arrow, which she named “Conrad” (“Letters”, p. 331). It was purchased at S.J. Phillips Ltd. on New Bond Street; when not wearing it Colette kept it in its blue Phillips case.<sup>3</sup> On the evening of 31 July Russell wrote: “Tell Conrad I envy him being allowed to live with you, and I wish I had the same privilege.” *Arrow of Gold*, a novel by Joseph Conrad, was published in 1919 (Russell Library). The novel is set in Marseilles. Russell wrote from that city on 2 September 1920 as he prepared to leave for China with Dora Black (later his second wife): “Yes, I thought of the *Arrow of Gold* in Marseilles, in spite of the mad search of luggage.”

In 1948 the couple met in Stockholm. Colette had lived in Sweden on and off since the mid-1930s. Russell was there to lecture at both Stockholm university and Uppsala university and to address the Swedish parliament, among other activities. Colette booked him into the Reisen hotel where she had stayed briefly during World War II. She wrote to her friend Phyllis Urch on 21 May: “I’m just back from getting flowers for Bertie’s room: lilac, lily of the valley, violas, golden cowslips.... I was still in two minds what to wear for him. It ended in the garment with his mother’s lace on it, made for his return from China, 1921 —and of course never worn.” In the explanatory text it is noted that: “to her surprise—he was wearing on his watch-chain the small gold coin she had given him after their reunion in 1919” (“Letters”, p. 102). One can surmise from this that he was not wearing it when she visited him and his third wife Peter in Kidlington before they left for America in 1938.

Only a draft of the letter she wrote to him in June survives: “It is to thank you for our happy happy time—which made all the long years of separation vanish as if they had not been.... I’m remembering our last night in the narrow bed at Mariefred....”<sup>4</sup> He replied on 2 June 1948: “I am very very glad of the whole time, and that what has been between us is still so very much alive.”

A year later he wrote from Wales, 26 April 1949: “A thousand thanks for your very dear letter. It is a great happiness to me that after all these years and all my misdeeds you still like me.” Her letter of 24 April 1949 was brief: “Only one small word to send all my thoughts and all my love—aujourd’hui plus que hier et bien moins que demain.”

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<sup>3</sup> S.J. Phillips, an antique shop, was founded in 1869. It is now located on Bruton Street. By email, it was confirmed that jewellery used to be put into blue velvet boxes.

<sup>4</sup> Mariefred is located about 50 kilometers west of Stockholm.

The fate of her watch is unclear. It is not known if it was found or, if it wasn't, whether Russell bought Colette a replacement as he had promised. It is also unknown what happened to the Conrad brooch and the cigarette case. It is wonderful to know that the watch fob has survived and hopefully will be arriving at the Russell Archives before too long.

#### Coda

In March 2020, Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, completed her last round of official duties as a member of the British Royal family. At one of those engagements, she wore a pendant designed by Sophie Lis, with the plus and minus signs first popularized by Augis and the words "Qu'hier" and "Que Demain."

*Sheila Turcon is retired as an archivist from Research Collections at McMaster University. She continues to edit the Russell-Malleson correspondence. Expanded forms of many of her articles on Russell's homes that originally appeared in the Bulletin along with new entries can be viewed at <https://russell-homes.mcmaster.ca/>.*

## Bertrand Russell on a Barn?

Peter Stone  
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From 5-7 June 2015, the Bertrand Russell Society held its Annual Meeting at Trinity College Dublin. This was the first time the BRS had met in Ireland—indeed, the first time it had met outside of North America! I was proud to have been the organizer of the meeting, and I did my very best to give the meeting attendees a good experience. Little did I know, however, that I could have shown them a portrait of Russell...on the side of a barn!

The story begins on 21 July. I had interviewed Noam Chomsky (via Zoom) for the 2020 Annual Meeting of the BRS and had just gotten around to posting a link to the interview on Facebook.<sup>1</sup> Heike (my lovely wife) shared the link with her Facebook friends, and one of them, a graduate student named Hilary Darcy, wrote back. “Hey,” she wrote, “check out Bertrand Russell in North Dub on R132.” And she included a picture.



*Photo courtesy of Hilary Darcy*

**Bertrand Russell. On a barn.**

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<sup>1</sup> The interview can be seen here: <https://bertrandrussellsociety.org/2020/06/25/noam-chomsky-interview/>.

That was indeed a picture of Russell. And it was on a barn. I've lived in Dublin now for a decade, and most of that time I've lived in on the Northside. And yet somehow I'd never heard about this picture before now. Then again, it's not the sort of thing one expects to find!

Hilary supplied a few more details. The barn was in Corduff Townland, near the town of Lusk. Unfortunately, the photo was six years old, and so there was no



*Photo courtesy of Heike Schramm*

**Heike blowing Russell a kiss**

guarantee the portrait—or even the barn—was still there. Heike and I had to find out.

And so on 26 July, Heike and I went for a nice Sunday drive on R132 to do some barn hunting. We discovered that there were a lot of barns on R132. There was also an immense amount of Sunday traffic, and it took some serious effort to search for a barn while avoiding accidents. Finally, we found it, across the street from a maid service, shortly past the Irish Rosettes Pet Shop and before an Applegreen (an Irish service station chain). The portrait was still there, big as life. And we got the photos to prove it.



*Photo courtesy of Heike Schramm*

### **Hanging out with Bertie**

A knock on the door of the farmhouse next door produced a little more information. The artist responsible for this masterpiece was named Brendan Arnold. (We spoke to his brother, whose name I forgot to ask.) He claimed not to be a great artist, but he was reading a lot of Russell's work in the 1970s and thought that one particular picture of Russell would be easy to block off and copy. And so Russell's visage has been facing R132 in Dublin for over four decades now.

Mr. Arnold moved to Texas some time ago. (No word yet on whether he has been successfully assimilated, like the three Texans who supposedly read *Principia Mathematica*.) But his artistic legacy will last – well, until someone decides to repaint the barn, I guess. Until that sad day, Russellians the world over are encouraged to find their way to North Dublin. And I guarantee that should the BRS find its way back to Dublin some day, a side trip along R132 can be arranged.

Many thanks to Heike Schramm for generously providing her driving and photographic skills!

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## Bertrand Russell and Adam Smith

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The one began a promising career as a moral philosopher before gaining worldwide renown as the most prominent British economist of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The other started his career sowing the seeds of modern logic and establishing the research programme of analytical philosophy before being similarly drawn into the role of an economic analyst. Yet the two are rarely directly compared, and the debts the one has to the other are not much discussed. These two political philosophers, Adam Smith and Bertrand Russell, nonetheless have a striking degree of overlap in their approach to economics. What's more, where they differ provides insights between Smith's time and Russell's, and Russell's time and our own. I believe this intellectual link is worthy of note for a few reasons. First, a review of the scholarship does not yield any substantive analysis on the link between these two thinkers. Second, we know that Russell likely read Smith very early in his life, and advocated a liberal outlook on subjects like free trade in some of his earliest political writings. Despite that fact, explicit references to Smith are few and far between. Symbolically, Russell's most significant work of political theory, *Freedom and Organization*, mentions Smith and stresses his significance, only to add that he falls outside the book's period of study. Nonetheless, a review of how these two thinkers approached economics can tell us a great deal about how the world has changed since the late eighteenth century. This work came at the request of a member of the Bertrand Russell Society, Tanweer Akram, who suggested I take up a sustained engagement between the two thinkers. I hope he, and the rest of the Society, find it a stimulating and novel treatment of two powerful intellects who are rarely laid side by side.

In what follows, I would like to briefly review the modern history of economic thought, before turning to a few areas in which I think Russell and Smith's thinking shows a remarkably similar temperament. Finally, I will dwell on how some of the differences in their thinking can help flavor how political philosophy itself needs to adapt to changes in the economic structure of society. I begin with a brief survey of economic thought, and economic progress more generally, because I believe the changes in society brought about in the last two hundred and fifty years are of vital

importance in comparing the constructive proposals of Adam Smith with Bertrand Russell, who were separated by the most economically dynamic years in human history.

The esteem economics commands amongst the social sciences today is so taken for granted today as to scarcely seem worth comment. Yet little more than two centuries ago it numbered amongst the fringe disciplines, a mere appendage of the social sciences more concerned with methods of extracting taxes than the tedium of the “common people”. From the point of view of the intelligentsia, moreover, concern with the everyday seemed wholly irreconcilable with the priorities of exalted “sciences” like theology or metaphysics. Indeed, the etymology of economics, “Οικονομικά”, derives from the Greek word for “householding”, and the place to which householding has traditionally been subordinated placed it far below the more speculative “sciences”. For most of history one could imagine the intelligentsia of previous ages, dominated by ancient and feudal clergies, remarking on economics as Hamlet did of all worldly affairs:

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable,  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't! ah fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,  
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature  
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!<sup>1</sup>

What is more, without differentiation in employment, the dynamics of growth, or the data to piece it together, the means with which to research the subject matter of macroeconomics was effectively nonexistent. As result of this dearth of dynamism and data, it was in some respects natural that intellectuals, prodded by Plato, consistently drew their eyes either up to heaven or imagined themselves capable of gazing down on earth from it, inspired by his deductive method for which little empirical evidence appeared necessary. Versions of this thinking, partly liberated from its theological overtures, made their way into the universities during the late Middle Ages, imbuing the forerunners of modern social science through a renaissance in what is now called Natural Law theory.

With the rise of merchant, commercial, and then eventually industrial civilization, all of this began to change. The emphasis put on the progression of the division of labor

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<sup>1</sup> William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (Yale University Press, 1954), Act II, scene i. p. 22.

which marked off Smith from earlier theorists, and the shift out of agriculture that has defined every industrialization programme ever recorded, appears particularly prescient in light of the historical record.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, centuries of war and turmoil empowered the forces of centralization while rising debts compelled the creation of an efficient bureaucracy capable of administering and taxing the increasingly differentiated classes of people. With this newfound complexity came the need of cataloging and relating the various sectors in society to one another. Both the protagonist, industrialization and the division of labor, and its footfalls, in the form of the rich data which the discipline of economics requires to conduct detailed analysis, came into birth around the same time.

As latter day Smithian Karl Marx clearly recognized in his much-celebrated introduction to the *Grundrisse*:

It was an immense step forward for Adam Smith to throw out every limiting specification of wealth-creating activity—not only manufacturing, or commercial or agricultural labour, but one as well as the others, labour in general ... Indifference towards any specific kind of labour presupposes a very developed totality of real kinds of labour, of which no single one is any longer predominant. As a rule, the most general abstractions arise only in the midst of the richest possible concrete development, where one thing appears as common to many, to all. Then it ceases to be thinkable in a particular form alone. On the other side, this abstraction of labour as such is not merely the mental product of a concrete totality of labours. Indifference towards specific labours corresponds to a form of society in which individuals can with ease transfer from one labour to another, and where the specific kind is a matter of chance for them, hence of indifference ... Here, then, for the first time, the point of departure of modern economics, namely the abstraction of the category 'labour', 'labour as such', labour pure and simple, becomes true in practice.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In his encyclopedic monument to economic thought, the economic historian Joseph Schumpeter stresses Smith's noteworthy emphasis on the division of labor both in development and economics more broadly when he observed: "nobody, either before or after A. Smith, ever thought of putting such a burden upon the division of labor." See Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis* (Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 187.

<sup>3</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse* (Penguin Classics, 1993), p. 104.

To all this we need only remark that the masterpiece for which the *Grundrisse* was merely, as the name itself translates to, a “groundwork”, *Capital*, could never have been without the government blue books and commission reports made available to Marx at the British Museum.

Once the economics discipline began to assume its modern form, its decisive importance amongst the social sciences became obvious. As a guide to a state’s social policy in the early period of capitalistic production, the mentality of the economist found ready purchase amongst policymakers in a way that the work of theologians could no longer.<sup>4</sup> Seen in this way, Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*—a work replete with both analytic distinctions and empirical polemics of the “Policy of Europe” prevailing amongst the monarchies and republics of the continent—is truly deserving of its reputation as a foundational text.<sup>5</sup>

Having looked over the forces that shaped the substance of modern economic thought, we can now lay Smith and Russell down next to each other. The former emerges at the beginning of industrialization—if not slightly before—when the real stuff of economics was only just able to be discerned, whereas the latter arrives when that same system of small-scale liberal capitalism was reaching its apex, before bursting under its own contradictions. In what follows, we will compare both Smith and Russell on a few of the major issues that preoccupied them: first, their theory of motivation in economics; second, their analysis of combinations, including the place of the working class in capitalist society; and finally, their beliefs on the nature of the state. What will emerge from each of these points are prominent parallels between the two philosophers who were each drawn to economics from their own primary professions as philosophers due to the vital role economic questions played in public life.

Smith and Russell have theories of motivation that are remarkably similar. Contrary to purely utilitarian and materialist interpretations of social phenomena, they both give a great degree of space to cultural and status-conscious aspects of economic behavior, even as they recognize the extractive nature of productive relations.<sup>6</sup> In laying

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<sup>4</sup> For an echo of this summary in Russell, see “Psychology and Politics”, in *Sceptical Essays* (Routledge Classics, 2004), esp. pp. 173-176.

<sup>5</sup> Schumpeter describes Smith as “the most famous of all economists”, even going so far as to claim *Wealth of Nations* was the most successful scientific book in history, “with the possible exception of Darwin’s *Origin of Species*.” See Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis*, p. 181.

<sup>6</sup> See the “deductions” from labor’s proceeds, as well as the bargaining process of labor in Book I of the *Wealth of Nations* (Penguin Classics, 1999), pp. 168-170. See also Bertrand Russell, “Economic Power”, in

stress on these factors they betray their debts to the wider social sciences outside of economics, which lacks such a dogmatic focus upon studying commodity production alone. While Russell gives no sign of a conscious debt to Smith, the similarity between their critique of materialism is remarkable.

Both of Smith's major works make reference to the psychological motivations to engage in economically productive work. In *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Smith's main philosophical work, his rather wordy central argument distills to the fact that "man naturally desires, not only to be loved, but to be lovely", and that, "to attain this satisfaction, we must become the impartial spectator of our own character and conduct."<sup>7</sup> This is done by way of comparing ourselves to others, and our vision of ourselves to how we believe others perceive us, a test whose results constitute a vital source of self-esteem.<sup>8</sup> In Smith's own words, "the desire of becoming the proper objects of this respect, of deserving and obtaining this credit and rank among our equals, is, perhaps, the strongest of all our desires."<sup>9</sup> Tellingly, Smith also regards deference and emulation of the "rich and powerful", bordering "almost to worship", as "the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments."<sup>10</sup>

Smith regards this desire for respect as the psychological basis of social distinctions. In the section entitled "On the origin of Ambition, and of the distinction of Ranks", he observes that the "end of avarice and ambition" is not to "supply the necessaries of nature." Rather it is "the vanity, not the ease, or the pleasure, which interests us."<sup>11</sup> But this vanity cannot simply be equated with direct material self-interest, even if it often assumes the desire to accumulate riches. This distinction is clear from the outset of the work, and is echoed in the "Wealth of Nations" when it repeats on several occasions that the "greater part" of man's desire to "better their condition" lies in the "augmentation of his fortune."<sup>12</sup> Wealth is a primary means, but not the end,

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*Power: A New Social Analysis* (Routledge Classics, 2004), pp. 95-108.

<sup>7</sup> Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Penguin Classics, 2009), pp. 136-137. 2009.

<sup>8</sup> He calls these two aspects the "two tribunals" of our thought: the "man within" and the "man without." See *ibid.*, pp. 152-3

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 250.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>12</sup> The *Theory of Moral Sentiments* begins with the acknowledgment that "how selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it but the pleasure of seeing

of that quest.

We find a strikingly similar argument in a number of Russell's books. Unable to wholly endorse the economic materialist theories of Marx and Engels he became acquainted with while studying in Germany, Russell would develop a deep interest in psychoanalysis and psychology, and show the fruits of his learning across long treks across the broader social sciences in his hopes of bringing in more eclectic and nuanced considerations of human behavior.<sup>13</sup> This was most visible in his interwar work, including *Sceptical Essays* (1928) and *Power: A New Social Analysis* (1938). In each of them we find long retired the notion that all social behavior is best understood by deriving from it how it constitutes a purely economic motivation, though the economic motivations are given plenty of space, and all works display an attentiveness to them that testifies to their realism.

Though often giving decisive influence to economic factors, Russell makes clear how the desire for status differs from wealth. This is evident in an extensive part of his essay "Machines and the Emotions" in *Sceptical Essays*:

Why do we, in fact, almost all of us, desire to increase our incomes? It may seem, at first sight, as though material goods were what we desire. But, in fact, we desire these mainly in order to impress our neighbors. When a man moves into a larger house in a more genteel quarter, he reflects that 'better' people will call on his wife, and some unprosperous cronies of former days can be dropped. When he sends his son to a good school or an expensive university, he consoles himself for the heavy fees by thoughts of the social kudos to be gained ... One of the most powerful of all our passions is the desire to be admitted and respected. As things stand, admiration and respect are given to the man who seems to be rich. This is the chief reason why people want to be rich. The actual goods purchased by their money play quite a secondary part.<sup>14</sup>

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it." See *ibid.*, p. 13. The passage on "bettering their condition" can be found in *Wealth of Nations*, Book II, p. 441. Smith also uses the same turn of phrase on p. 443 and p. 502 of Books II and III, p. 120 of Book IV, and p. 260 of Book V. It is a recurring theme throughout his work.

<sup>13</sup> Russell's early interest in becoming an economist is not much discussed in the literature, but the following forms a fairly lucid introduction to his early forays into political philosophy and economics: J.E. King, "Bertrand Russell on Economics, 1889-1918", *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*, n.s., 25 (summer 2005), 5-38 [<https://mulpress.mcmaster.ca/russelljournal/article/view/2070/2095>].

<sup>14</sup> Bertrand Russell, "Machines and the Emotions", in *Sceptical Essays*, p. 66.

Russell also stakes out from the outset of *Power* that this differentiates himself from the “orthodox economists as well as Marx” who he thinks erroneously supposed “that economic self-interest could be taken as the fundamental motive of the social sciences.”<sup>15</sup> By contrast, Russell followed Hobbes in regarding the “chief” infinite desires of man as “power and glory”, concepts which he develops in their various historical guises throughout the book.<sup>16</sup>

One notable difference between the two thinkers is how they valued non-economic motivations. Standing at the high-water mark of British commercialism, Smith valued economic motivations as more rational ordering incentives than those of social distinction. The “prudent” logic of capital accumulation was something that marked off the capitalistic classes Smith supported over the vanities of landlords and the pomp of the court he so bitterly hated. Smith argues that the rational pursuit of gain, “turning a penny wherever a penny was to be got” as he called it, that was carried out by merchants and manufacturers is also something that ensures the ascendancy of the bourgeois class, as opposed to the wasteful idleness of the landlords who all too readily prove themselves happy to “sell their birthright” for “trinkets and baubles.”<sup>17</sup> For Smith, economic self-interest is the weapon against the excesses of the feudal age.

For Russell, by contrast, the limitation of the economic motivation is a sign that an alternative economic system is readily conceivable. For if commercial gain is the only end of social activity, as the materialist conception believes it is, then it stands to reason that it will be significantly harder to organize a socialist society that constrains these impulses, or channels them into alternative pathways. The capitalist class will resist every measure to curb their power, if their power is only able to be satisfied by their unfettered pursuit of economic gain. If, on the contrary, we understand that people can be satisfied with other measures of success, then a new mechanism of reward, merit and rank can be awarded through mechanisms other than profit. Therefore understanding that people do not merely desire to consume the most they possibly can is “of the greatest practical importance” because “the desire for commodities, when separated from power and glory, is finite, and can be fully satisfied by a moderate competence.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Power: A New Social Analysis* (Routledge Classics, 2004), p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Loc Cit. In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes gives “the three principle causes of quarrel” as “competition”, “diffidence”, and “glory”. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Collier Books, 1975), p. 99.

<sup>17</sup> Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, pp. 514-515.

<sup>18</sup> Russell, *Power*, p. 3.

In conclusion, for Smith self-interest is the product of the vanity of feudalism, whereas for Russell appealing to vanity is a way out of the plutocracy of capitalism. Both of these worldviews are flavored by the problems of their times, but they each display an appreciation of the social and cultural motivations of economic behavior at odds with the monotonous monotonicity of economic rationalism. As Russell might summarize for both thinkers “economics as a separate science is unrealistic, and misleading if taken as a guide in practice. It is one element— a very important element, it is true— in a wider study, the science of power.”<sup>19</sup>

This appreciation of the social nature of human action helps explain why both Adam Smith and Bertrand Russell also placed a strong premium on the importance of economic combinations. This takes us into our second area of comparison. In Smith’s case, the major combinations are traceable to their income streams: workers (wages), landlords (rent), merchants and manufacturers (profit), and the state (taxes). This approach set the template for classical economics’ focus on social classes. For Russell, the approach is similar, although in the post feudal-world the focus is more squarely between capitalists and wage-earners, with the state exhibiting either plutocratic or totalitarian tendencies. Unlike in the previous section, here the worldview of Russell and Smith differs in a pronounced way. Smith was essentially a preindustrial thinker, whereas Russell wrote after the first period of centralization. As a result, Smith endorsed proto-capitalism, whereas Russell endorsed socialism.<sup>20</sup> Yet as we shall see, the goals of both have some marked overlap.

The most powerful combinations in Smith’s day were landlords, merchants and manufacturers (capitalists), and the State. The story Smith tells across the *Wealth of Nations*, especially in the shortest book, Book III, is the transfer of economic, and, increasingly, political power from the landlords of the countryside to the merchants and manufacturers in the city. In his narrative, this constitutes a progressive development because the republican governments of the cities are able to exact more civil liberties from their monarchs, including forcing the constitution of republics, than a social order

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 108. One commentator on Adam Smith, paraphrasing Terence Hutchinson, agreed: “Adam Smith was unwittingly led by an Invisible Hand to promote an end no part [sic] of his intention, that ‘of establishing political economy as a separate autonomous discipline’.” Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, p. 84.

<sup>20</sup> “Socialism as a political movement has aimed at furthering the interests of the industrial wage-earners; its technical aspects have been kept comparatively in the background... This is a proposal for the taming of economic power, and therefore comes into the purview of our discussion. Before examining the argument, I wish to say unequivocally that I consider it valid.” Russell, *Power*, p. 235.



founded on landlordism would ever promote.<sup>21</sup> This titanic transfer of power is essentially the same story told by Ricardo, Marx, and all economists covering the period up to the repeal of the Corn Laws.

What Smith's narrative is necessarily missing is the potential of the industrial working class and the modern labor movement. This is because, amongst other reasons, combinations of workers were illegal in Britain until 1824.<sup>22</sup> But with the rise of the labor movement, as Russell recognized from his earliest days, came the potential for the expansion of participatory democracy in a way that would radically transcend the sterile notion of bourgeois democracy embodied in government. While never succumbing to the illusion that the working class is a homogenous entity, Russell's political philosophy was keenly attuned to the potential latent within the labor movement to transform the economic system and end capitalism. In this way, despite his many theoretical polemics against them, Russell acknowledges the working class represents a potential economic combination with the kind of transformative power ascribed to it by Marx and Engels.

As he wrote in one of his most radical pamphlets:

British trade unionism, it seems to me, has erred in conceiving labour and capital as both permanent forces ... This seems to me too modest an ideal. The ideal which I should wish to substitute involves the conquest of democracy and self-government in the economic sphere as in the political sphere, and the total abolition of the power now wielded by the capitalist.<sup>23</sup>

But the change in mentality represented by Russell's rejection of economic liberalism cannot entirely be chalked up to the social contribution of the labor movement. As he wrote in his most mature work of political philosophy, it was also brought about by changes in "economic technique" which Russell regards as "the most important cause of change in the nineteenth century."<sup>24</sup> These changes in economic technique facilitated the centralization of industry and marked out the era of oligopoly and monopoly from that of the comparatively freer competition of Smith's age.

While the previous comparisons are fruitful as intellectual and academic

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<sup>21</sup> Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, pp. 496-504.

<sup>22</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Freedom and Organization* (Routledge Classics, 2010), p. 66.

<sup>23</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Political Ideals* (Unwin Books, 1963), p. 54.

<sup>24</sup> Russell, *Freedom and Organization*, p. vii.

questions, on this particular point the differences between Russell and Smith's political philosophy have far more wide-reaching effects. Changes in the technical basis of industry, the rise of economies of scale, the need for economic planning imposed on the capitalist system by its own instabilities, and the rising importance of coordinated scientific research in order to produce the most important technological advances are what make the socialist argument compelling even from a purely technical standpoint.<sup>25</sup> Reactionary political philosophies that are commonly backed out of Smithian arguments are ones that fundamentally refuse to engage with these technical developments, as the Smith of the neoliberal revolution cannot emerge from any more than isolated snippets of Smith himself.<sup>26</sup> This is because both Smith and Russell were believers in what can be called "self-government" in industry: the belief that the ideal arrangement of production is one in which the workers own the means of production under which they labor, and by that measure control their own economic destiny.<sup>27</sup> In Smith's case this belief is mostly offhand and instinctive, whereas in Russell the changes brought about by large-scale industry made the technical case much more obvious.

Russell was acutely aware of these changes. The entirety of *Freedom and Organization* is branded as an attempt to "trace the opposition and interaction" of those two factors, the former which is prized by liberals and the latter by socialists. Economic technique, large-scale industry, and the corresponding need for organization all militate against the old liberal doctrines of *laissez-faire*, even in their own terms. What Smith

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<sup>25</sup> Russell stresses how undervalued he believes this aspect of socialist doctrine is in his famous-essay "The Case for Socialism": "[W]hile I am as convinced a Socialist as the most ardent Marxian, I do not regard Socialism as a gospel of proletarian revenge, nor even, *primarily*, as a means of securing economic justice. I regard it primarily as an adjustment to machine production demanded by considerations of common sense, and calculated to increase the happiness, not only of proletarians, but of all except a tiny minority of the human race." See Russell, *In Praise of Idleness* (Routledge Classics, 2004), p. 81.

<sup>26</sup> The Adam Smith Institute is perhaps the most prominent advocate of these mono-dimensional misinterpretations. As head of the Economics Society in St. Andrews during my undergraduate studies, we were sent, *gratis*, boxes full of primers of right-wing thinking with titles such as "Classical Liberalism: A Primer", which includes an entire section of nothing more than snippets of quotations from Classical economists making right-wing arguments. Smith, naturally, is very prominent.

<sup>27</sup> Russell is, of course, a more full-throated supporter of this concept, but the idea is everywhere in Smith, from his defense of "the superiority of the independent workman" over "servants", to his repeated criticisms of the institution of slavery on both ethical and economic grounds. The basis of both statements is the same: the desirability of workers being in control of their economic livelihoods. See Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, p. 187. For a critique of slavery, see pp. 183-4, 488-9.

prizes in extolling competition and distrusting state power is the right of the worker to dispose of his own labor, an essentially individual task in the context of small-scale industry. Yet capitalism as it actually emerged is predicated off of removing this form of individual ownership through the system of wage labor, and as a result, what Smith regards as the “most sacred and inviolable” right of the worker, namely “the property which every man has in his own labour”, is removed from the start.<sup>28</sup> Thus, underlying their superficial differences, in Smith there is the embryo of what would later blossom into the socialist critique of wage-labor in favor of self-government, a critique Russell takes up in earnest.

While Russell differs from Smith in explicitly advocating for self-governance against the capitalist class, he shares Smith’s wariness of state power in a way that was alien to much of the socialist movement in his own time. Whereas both Smith and Russell desire the emancipation of the worker, neither believes that nationalization is the solution as an end unto itself. This takes us into our final subject. In Smith’s age, the state was distrusted as an economic agent because of its weakness and corruption. By contrast, especially in the inter and postwar period, Russell feared the *strength* and unity of state power, and the fearsome despotism that resulted from uniting economic and political power in the hands of the state, as he saw in Soviet Russia.<sup>29</sup>

But while Russell feared state power, he also came to recognize that short of a socialist transformation of industry, regulation of capital by the state was the best that could be expected to reform the excesses of capitalist production. Thus, while Smith is more consistent in drawing sharp red lines to limit the purview of the state, Russell was forced to grapple with both the possibility and the danger of state interference in the economy. In his later work he expressed a hope that Roosevelt’s New Deal in the United States would help create “a new kind of democratic intelligence” that would see in the trust system that “the organization, as organization, was valuable” while transcending “the defect” of the system, which “was in its purpose, which was solely to make rich men richer.”<sup>30</sup> Though Roosevelt would disappoint, the welfare state he and his “Brain trust” would help create was the most conscious recognition of the need for this new “democratic intelligence” the American ruling class would ever demonstrate.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>29</sup> His classic account of this is *The Theory and Practice of Bolshevism*, published upon returning from a tour of the Soviet Union in the early 1920s.

<sup>30</sup> Russell, *Freedom and Organization*, pp. 296-7.

The difference between Smith and Russell on state power belies a common faith in the primacy of independent producers in civil society over the institutions of political governance. Faced with barony and monarchy, Smith affirmed the “system of natural liberty” which would dismantle the “commercial system” and liberate Britain from the strictures of feudalism. After these systems had been swept aside and replaced with capitalist plutocracy, Russell favored the emancipatory potential of the working class against the political programmes of state capitalism and state socialism. Despite presenting different visions, what binds these two British philosophers is their faith in the capacity of people to manage their own affairs free from despotic intermediation. In this way, they both remain exemplars of an illustrious tradition of critical British political philosophy.

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## Russell's 1914 "On the Notion of Cause"

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In his 1914 "On the Notion of Cause" (and many other works), Russell argues that there is no metaphysical relation between events that counts as a causal one in the traditional sense of necessitating or bringing about its effect. In that sense of "cause", he eliminates causes and causal relations. What remains are mathematical laws of prediction between series of events. According to Russell, what makes causal claims true (like "water spilling caused the couch to get wet") is that one series of events is related to another series of events by mathematical laws.

These mathematical laws are essentially to predictions as to what events occur, have occurred, or will occur rather than relations between events than any sort of "making things happen" causal relation between events. It is helpful to compare Russell's view about causal claims being akin to predictions with weather forecasting: given a certain cold front happening now, we can infer that rain will occur later. But this is all we can claim to know: to go beyond this and say that the cold front "caused" the rain later is to introduce a specious piece of metaphysics that is not needed to explain what we observe.

Russell's view is a thoroughgoing departure from the classical view of causation, which is what makes it special (though not unique!). Consider the shared traditional view of causal relations in the disagreement between Hume and Kant (see [this Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry](#)). Kant says the following about cause (quoted from the SEP entry, my bold emphasis):

...if a body is illuminated sufficiently long by the sun, then it becomes warm. **Here, there is certainly no necessity of connection as yet, and thus [not] the concept of cause.** However, I continue and say that, if the above proposition, which is merely a subjective connection of perceptions, is to be a judgment of experience, then it must be viewed **as necessary and universally valid.** But **such a proposition would be:** the sun is through its light **the cause of heat.** The above empirical rule is **now viewed as a law**—and, in fact, not as valid merely of appearances, but **[valid] of them on behalf of a possible experience, which requires completely and thus necessarily valid rules.**

Kant held that a causal claim is one that, if true, must be necessary and universally valid. These features are, on the classical view of causation, what underwrite our valid inferences about (the occurrence or character of) future events given (the occurrence or character of) present events: because causes are necessary and universal, they must apply to possible, future experiences that have not yet occurred. As Kant sees it, it is because of the necessity of causal relations that we can justify causal laws, according to which we can validly infer what will happen given what is.

Russell flatly rejected this. He thinks that no such appeal to necessity or universality is needed to underwrite valid inferences about the future or scientific inquiry:

What I deny is that science assumes the existence of invariable uniformities of sequence of this kind, or that it aims at discovering them. ("On the Notion of Cause", [p. 188](#))

The radical character of Russell's view should not be overlooked. In contrast to those like Kant, Russell argues that *any* events will admit of many different mathematical relationships between some states of the universe and others (my bold emphasis):

If formulae of any degree of complexity, however great, are admitted, it would seem that **any system, whose state at a given moment is a function of certain measurable quantities, must be a deterministic system.** (Ibid., [p. 203](#))

According Russell's view of causation, it is in fact unsurprising that there are mathematical laws that allow us to predict future events seemingly without (or with few) exceptions. There are many such laws if we allow the formulas to get complex enough. Perhaps the only surprising feature of the mathematical laws actually used in science, given the plenitude of mathematical laws that do obtain, is that the laws we use are, mathematically, fairly simple. But there is no assumption of a universal or necessary connection in Russell's conception as there is in, say, Kant's conception.

Russell's radical view about causal relations, which eliminates causal relations in the traditional sense entirely, involves some oddities that have discouraged some philosophers from embracing it. These include:

1. Seemingly, any invariable sequence of events is a causal one.
2. Seemingly, present and future events can cause past events.
3. Seemingly, events are not really the proper relata of causal connections: rather, entire states of the universe are.

In the rest of this piece I focus on (2), with an example from my family life. After my baby poops, I change the dirty diaper. This is a nearly invariable sequence; let us suppose that I am a terrific father, so that this sequence is really invariable. (The distinction between a *wet* and *dirty* diaper is inessential here.) Then there is a mathematical equation that takes the event of my changing the dirty diaper and the time interval as an input, then outputs the event of my baby pooping and the time interval as an output. Under the assumption that I am a terrific father, this time interval between my baby's pooping and my changing the diaper will be quite short. This equation might be rather more complicated and takes other inputs, like whether I am on the phone when the baby poops—changing a diaper one-handed takes somewhat longer—but we can ignore those complications here. The point is that Russell seems committed to saying that my changing the dirty diaper causes my baby's pooping, just as much as my baby's pooping causes my changing the dirty diaper (again, we assumed the sequence of events really is invariable). While my baby might appreciate this cause-shifting consequence of Russell's view, it sounds plainly unbelievable to many philosophers wedded to the traditional notion of cause, well-represented by Kant.

Russell talks about some of these points in his 1914 essay in more detail and offers a gloss of their oddity. In the above case and others falling under class (2), Russell thinks that the oddity is merely apparent: it is due to our confused associations with causal relations. We tend to think of causes as “forcing” or “bringing about” their effects just as Kant did. This sort of notion that has no good use in science, in Russell's view, and should be abandoned. Thus, Russell's view is thoroughgoingly eliminativist about causal relations in the traditional sense. The error theory is that our hesitance to embrace backward causation or a symmetry between cause and effect is due to our unfortunate habit of associating causal relationships with antiquated notions of “force.” It is an unfortunate habit that plagues philosophers of science just as much as everyone else.

Because of all these scientifically unhelpful associations with the ordinary idea of causation, Russell holds that it is better to eliminate causal notions altogether and replace them with the mathematical equations. Compare:

1. My changing the dirty diaper caused my baby's pooping.
2. My changing the dirty diaper at some time interval almost invariably allows one to infer my baby's pooping at some earlier, nearby time interval.

Russell wants to eliminate statements like (1)—define them away—using statements like (2). Using statements like (2), we can dissipate the oddness of (1) by explaining the “determining” nature of causes as follows:

The word “determine” here, has a purely logical significance: a certain number of variables “determine” another variable if that other variable is a function of them. (Ibid., [p. 195](#))

There is thus no asymmetry between past and future events in Russell's eliminative take on causation. His belief is that empirical sciences, and philosophy, do quite well, and even better, without confused causal notions and with these mathematical equations in their place.

I think Russell is right—but do not *blame* me for my baby's pooping. I did not *cause* it!

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# Frank Russell, Mabel Russell, and the January 1895 Depositions of the Dowager Countess Russell and Lady Agatha Russell

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John Francis Stanley Russell (1865-1931, second Earl Russell from 1878) lived a remarkably colourful life. The grandson of Prime Minister John Russell and Bertrand Russell's older brother, the thrice-married Frank Russell gained international notoriety for his matrimonial difficulties, eventually serving time in Holloway Prison after being convicted of bigamy in a 1901 House of Lords trial. An entrepreneur and avid motorist who played a prominent role in the Automobile Club of Great Britain, Russell became a staunch advocate of divorce reform and served as the under-secretary of state for India in the second Labour Party government. He died suddenly in 1931 in the south of France, which came as a great shock to his brother. "It was a pity we quarrelled," Bertrand lamented in a letter to Ottoline Morrell, "as we were always very fond of each other ... My brother died stoically, knowing that he was about to die, and saying so jokingly, so that no one thought he meant it. He showed complete courage, as he always had done ... He died of his exertions in the public service. It was a good end."<sup>1</sup>

Popular and scholarly accounts documenting Frank Russell's life are providing an increasingly comprehensive picture of his private and public activities. His own autobiography published in 1923<sup>2</sup> is a fascinating—though somewhat selective—account of his tumultuous family experiences, and Russell's contemporaries such as his friend George Santayana<sup>3</sup> offer detailed portrayals of his personal relationships. A particularly biting portrayal of Russell is also found in *Vera*, a novel written by his third wife, Elizabeth von Arnim.<sup>4</sup> Academic analysis of Russell has documented his legal

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<sup>1</sup> B. Russell to Morrell, 9 March 1931, RA3 69, Box 2.69, Bertrand Russell Archives, McMaster University.

<sup>2</sup> Earl Russell, *My Life and Adventures* (Cassell and Company, Ltd., 1923).

<sup>3</sup> William G. Holzberger and Herman J. Saatkamp, Jr., eds., *Persons and Places: Fragments of Autobiography* [The Works of George Santayana, Volume I] (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1986).

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth von Arnim, *Vera* (Doubleday, Page and Company 1921).

battles in the 1890s<sup>5</sup> and now also includes a long-overdue entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.<sup>6</sup> The first comprehensive biography of Russell is scheduled to be published in 2021.<sup>7</sup>

Russell's reputation as "the wicked Earl" derived primarily from his scandal-plagued tenure at Oxford University and his legal battles with his first wife. He went up to Oxford University in 1883, but withdrew two years later after the Master of Balliol College, Benjamin Jowett, accused him of writing an inappropriate letter and questions arose about Russell's improper relationship with the poet Lionel Johnson; the precise circumstances leading to his exit from Oxford remain somewhat murky.<sup>8</sup> Russell met Mabel Edith Scott in 1889—a woman described by Bertrand Russell as "very nice by nature, but from education utterly without firmness or moral courage"<sup>9</sup> and who appeared to be acting under the malign influence of her mother, Lady Selina Scott. Frank and Mabel married in February 1890 but separated three months later. In November 1890, Mabel launched a petition for judicial separation accusing Russell of physical and mental cruelty and engaging in homosexual activity. Mabel's petition was dismissed, and the widely-publicized acrimony between the still-married couple continued. Seeking an allowance from Russell, in 1894 Mabel petitioned for the restitution of conjugal rights, and Russell then sued to judicially separate from Mabel based on her scurrilous allegations against him. After a jury ruled in Russell's favour in April 1895, Russell received his long-sought legal separation from Mabel, a decision subsequently reversed on appeal. Russell successfully sued Lady Scott for criminal libel before he moved to the United States in 1899 with a new lover, Mollie Somerville. He obtained a divorce from Mabel in Nevada before immediately marrying Somerville. Since Russell remained legally married to Mabel under British law, he was successfully

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<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Ann Sumner Holmes, "'Don't Frighten the Horses': The Russell Divorce Case", in George Robb and Nancy Erber, eds., *Disorder in the Court: Trials and Sexual Conflict at the Turn of the Century* (New York University Press), 140-163.

<sup>6</sup> P.W.J. Bartrip, Russell, John Francis Stanley [Frank], second Earl Russell (1865-1931), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [on-line]. See also Bartrip, "A Talent to Alienate: The 2nd Earl (Frank) Russell (1865-1931)", *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*, n.s. 32 (winter 2012-13): 101-26.

<sup>7</sup> Ruth Derham, *Bertrand's Brother: The Marriages, Morals, and Misdemeanours of Frank, 2nd Earl Russell* (forthcoming: Amberley Publishing, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Ruth Derham, "'A Very Improper Friend': The Influence of Jowett and Oxford on Frank Russell", *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*, n.s., 37 (winter 2017-18): 271-87.

<sup>9</sup> "A Locked Diary", 5 June 1890, in Ken Blackwell, et al., eds., *Cambridge Essays, 1888-99* [The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell, Volume I] (George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 48.

prosecuted for bigamy before Lady Russell finally obtained a divorce decree in October 1901 following his release from prison.

Frank Russell's marital misadventures have provided a treasure-trove of primary source documents for historians to analyze, particularly newspaper accounts and official archival records chronicling his divorce proceedings. Among these records are depositions collected in one legal document of the Dowager Countess Russell—Lord John Russell's widow and Frank and Bertrand's paternal grandmother—and her daughter, Lady Mary Agatha Russell, taken at Pembroke Lodge on 16 January 1895 as part of the case involving Mabel's efforts to restore her conjugal rights.<sup>10</sup> Frank Russell believed that the testimony of both women would materially aid his defence, but the age of the Dowager Countess and the health of Lady Agatha precluded their appearance in court. Due to influenza and other physical maladies, Lady Agatha's doctor in particular emphasized in November 1894 that "her health has given way and her nervous system has been so completely shattered that in my opinion the ordeal of attending at a court of justice to be examined and cross-examined would be assuredly attended with grave risks to her health."<sup>11</sup> The Registrar for the Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice subsequently issued orders on 12 December 1894 for the deposition of the Dowager Countess and on 12 January 1895 for the deposition of Lady Agatha.

Both of these women had played critical roles in the formative years of Frank and Bertrand Russell while they were raised at Pembroke Lodge following their parents' deaths. Frank, although dissatisfied with the regimentation of daily life as a youngster that he equated to a prison, nonetheless described his grandmother "as one of the best women who ever lived. She was witty, amusing, kind, even devoted, full of a sense of duty, and of considerable toleration, though rather from loyalty to the traditions of the Whigs than from any inborn conviction that other points of view were really tolerable."<sup>12</sup> He described Lady Agatha, who was responsible for some of his early education, as possessing "a tendency to rather more robust common sense" and being "more alive" than other family members at Pembroke Lodge.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Bertrand

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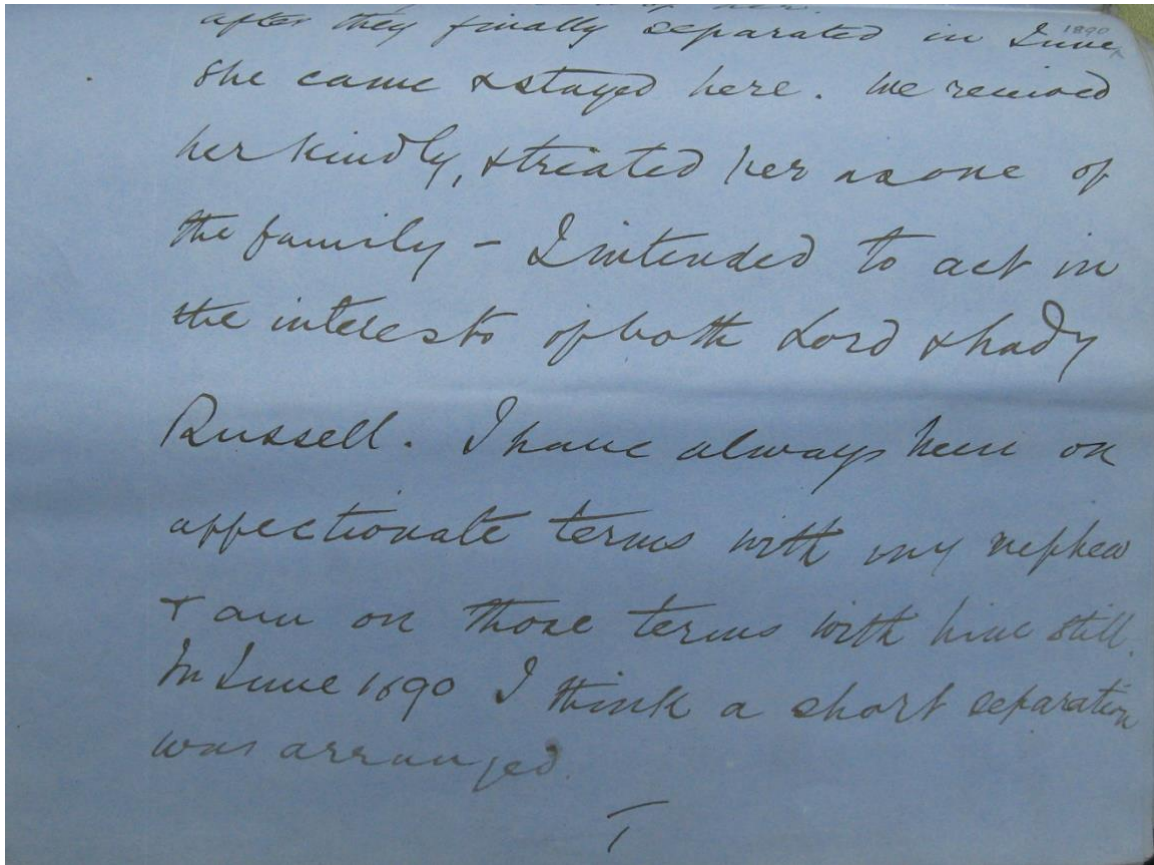
<sup>10</sup> "Russell (Countess) agst Russell (Earl)—Depositions of the Lady Agatha Russell & of the Dowager Countess Russell taken on Commission at Pembroke Lodge the 16th Jan 1895", J77/534/16305, The National Archives, Kew, United Kingdom.

<sup>11</sup> Sworn statement of Matthew Henry Gardiner, 23 November 1894, *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Russell, *My Life and Adventures*, 33.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 33, 35.

Russell pronounced his grandmother Russell "as the most important person to me throughout my childhood" who moulded his outlook on life through "her fearlessness, her public spirit, her contempt for convention, and her indifference to the opinion of the



after they finally separated in June 1890  
she came & stayed here. We received  
her kindly, & treated her as one of  
the family - I intended to act in  
the interests of both Lord & Lady  
Russell. I have always been on  
affectionate terms with my nephew  
& am on those terms with him still.  
In June 1890 I think a short separation  
was arranged.

Author photograph, J77/534/16305, The National Archives

### Portion of First Page of Lady Agatha Russell's Deposition

majority."<sup>14</sup> Although Russell recounted Lady Agatha's frequently ineffective efforts to educate him, his spinster aunt nonetheless succeeded in teaching him English constitutional history and continued to play a role in his life until her death in 1933. "Those who thought her sentimental and doddering," Russell observed, "were liable to be surprised by a sudden outburst of shrewdness and wit. She was a victim of my grandmother's virtue. If she had not been taught that sex is wicked, she might have been happy, successful, and able."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Autobiography* (Routledge, 1998), 15-17.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

The 16 January 1895 depositions of the Dowager Countess Russell and Lady Agatha Russell provide an intriguing view of life at Pembroke Lodge and the involvement of the two women with Frank and Mabel Russell's marital breakdown. These depositions printed below are faithful transcriptions of the original handwritten document with the exception of the merging of separate paragraphs to improve the clarity of the document. The document creator's frequent use of dashes to separate many sentences is also transferred to the transcribed version. Annotations are provided to identify individuals, places, or events mentioned in the depositions.

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The High Court of Justice  
Probate Divorce & Admiralty Division (Divorce)  
Russell (Countess) against Russell (Earl)

The depositions of the Dowager Countess Russell and the Lady Mary Agatha Russell taken before me this 16th day of January 1895 at Pembroke Lodge,<sup>16</sup> Richmond, pursuant to the orders of Mr. Registrar Owen dated respectively the 12th day of December 1894 and the 14th day of January 1895.

Robert Woodfall<sup>17</sup>  
Commissioner  
5 New Court, Carey Street  
London

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<sup>16</sup> Queen Victoria had granted Lord John Russell the use of Pembroke Lodge and the surrounding 11 acres of enclosed land in 1847. Located in Richmond Park southwest of London, Pembroke Lodge remained occupied by the Dowager Countess Russell following her husband's death in 1878 and then by Lady Agatha Russell until 1902 following her mother's death in 1898. Frank and Bertrand Russell arrived at Pembroke Lodge in 1876 to be cared for by their grandmother after the death of their father, Viscount Amberley. For a full history of Pembroke Lodge, see Sheila Turcon, "The Homes of Bertrand Russell: Pembroke Lodge, 1876-1894" [<https://russell-homes.mcmaster.ca/home/pembroke-lodge>].

<sup>17</sup> A prominent London barrister, Robert Woodfall had been appointed private secretary to Sir Francis Jeune, the President of the Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice, in 1892. He was appointed a judge in the Devonshire County Courts in 1898.

The Lady Mary Agatha Russell being duly sworn & examined by Mr. Llewellyn Davies<sup>18</sup> on behalf of the Respondent saith:

I am the daughter of the first Earl Russell. The Respondent is my nephew. I made the acquaintance of the Petitioner after her engagement to the Respondent. I did not see very much of her during the engagement – Between the marriage in February 1890 and May of that year, I did not see very much of her. After they finally separated in June she came and stayed here. We received her kindly and treated her as one of the family – I intended to act in the interests of both Lord and Lady Russell. I have always been on affectionate terms with my nephew and am on those terms with him still. In June 1890 I think a short separation was arranged. I never said anything to discourage the Petitioner returning to the Respondent. During her stay here she talked to me about her married life and her relations with her husband – I expressed sympathy with her where I thought she deserved it – I never at any time, either to her or in her presence, made any charge against the Respondent’s character. Whilst the proceedings were going on before the trial I once heard of allegations made by the Petitioner with regard to a man named Roberts<sup>19</sup> – I never said a single word to the Petitioner to suggest those allegations, or to suggest allegations of such a kind – This letter (marked M.A.R.1) is my letter to the Petitioner.<sup>20</sup>

Q. To what does the word “charges” on the fourth page of the letter M.A.R.1 refer?

A. As far as I remember my brother Mr. Rollo Russell<sup>21</sup> spoke to me and told me we had better not see her.

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<sup>18</sup> Arthur Llewellyn Davies, a member of Frank Russell’s legal team, was one of a distinguished group of siblings that included Crompton Llewellyn Davies, Bertrand Russell’s long-time friend and lawyer, and Margaret Llewellyn Davies, a prominent English suffrage activist. His children served as the inspiration for novelist and playwright James Matthew Barrie’s *Peter Pan, or The Boy Who Wouldn’t Grow Up*, the original play first staged in December 1904.

<sup>19</sup> Herbert Ainsley Roberts, the Head Mathematical Master at Bath College, had been accused by Mabel Russell during the 1891 divorce proceedings of engaging in homosexual activity with Frank Russell during the brief time they lived together following their marriage.

<sup>20</sup> Woodfall’s margin note reads: “The letter marked M.A.R.1 is enclosed in the sealed envelope annexed hereto. R.W.” This envelope is found in these files, but the letter is not present. All letters identified in margin notes by Woodford below as being contained in this envelope are similarly not present.

<sup>21</sup> Francis Robert Rollo Russell was the youngest son of Lord John Russell who resided at Pembroke Lodge during Frank and Bertrand Russell’s childhood and adolescence. Educated at Christ Church College, Oxford, Rollo Russell gained some distinction as a meteorologist. Frank described his uncle

[Mr. Barnard<sup>22</sup> objects to so much of the answer as is hearsay.]

Q. Can you tell me generally to what you referred when you used the word “charges”?

A. My recollection is that I asked not to know. I don’t remember if I had an answer to M.A.R.1. Before the trial I gave the Respondent’s Solicitors all the letters I had received from the Petitioner. I wrote the letter (produced and marked M.A.R.2)<sup>23</sup> of March 24th 1891 to the Petitioner. Up to the time of this letter (M.A.R.2) I had carried on a friendly correspondence with the Petitioner. After this I think it came to an end.

Cross-examined by Mr. Barnard on behalf of the Petitioner the witness further saith:

Before his marriage this house used to be the Respondent’s home, and we saw much of him – I don’t recollect if the Petitioner stayed here before May 1890 – I don’t think she stayed here without her husband before the final separation. I remember the Petitioner and Lady Scott coming to call on my mother. I can’t say if it was the 7th May. I remember a meeting at this house, I believe it was in May, at which the Petitioner and Respondent, my mother, Lady Scott, and myself were present. I don’t remember if at that interview Lady Scott tried to pressure the Petitioner to return to her husband. My mother did not advise her not to go back. I am quite clear about that. I am almost as certain as I am of anything that the Petitioner, Lady Scott, and my mother were not during that interview together in my mother’s bedroom.

Q. Can you swear one way or the other?

A. I can’t say more than I said before.

Q. May I take it that your impression is that they were not together but you cannot swear it?

A. I repeat my former answer.

Q. Will you swear one way or the other?

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dismissively as possessing “the outward figure of a man, but [he] was the perfect production of the sheltered life, the extreme instance of what a man can become when he spends his whole life surrounded by adoring females.” Bertrand was more positive in his appraisal. Although acknowledging Rollo’s “morbid shyness”, he noted his uncle “used to display a vein of droll humour” during their interactions and stimulated his scientific interests. See Russell, *My Life and Adventures*, 33, and B. Russell, *Autobiography*, 19.

<sup>22</sup> Biographical information on this lawyer supporting Mabel Russell’s petition cannot be located.

<sup>23</sup> Woodfall’s margin note reads: “The letter marked M.A.R.2 is enclosed in the sealed envelope annexed hereto. R.W.”

A. It is four years ago. I cannot say more than I have said. I did not leave this room – the interview took place in this room – at any time during the interview. I certainly did not object to the Petitioner going back to her husband. My recollection of the interview is not perfectly clear as to every word that passed. I did not at that time think it was better in both their interests that the Petitioner and Respondent should live separately for some months. I think I first thought so in June 1890. Certainly I did not at that interview object to the Petitioner going back to her husband, nor urge that it would be better that separation should take place for some months – My mother did not object to her return, nor urge a separation. Some time in June, in consequence of receiving a telegram, my mother and I went to Walton<sup>24</sup> – and saw Petitioner. She then made complaints against her husband – At that time we were sorry for them both. Neither at that interview nor at any other time did either my mother or I describe the Respondent as a ‘brute’ – nor do I remember that we advised the Petitioner to leave her husband. My nephew (Respondent) asked us to invite her here – we saw him downstairs and her upstairs – He was not present at the interview with her – I feel sure we saw him first – Very likely after what he said we did invite her to stay here. We never said “that the Respondent was not fit for any women to live with” nor “advised her to leave him and come and stay here.” She did come and stay here – I think the next day – and stayed for some weeks. I don’t remember Lady Scott coming over a few days after the Petitioner arrived here. I may have been away. I have no recollection of our interview at that time in my mother’s bedroom between the Petitioner, my mother, and Lady Scott.

Q. During the time the Petitioner was staying here did you ever mention to her about her husband having been sent down from Oxford?

A. Never.

Q. Did you ever mention to her about her husband’s past life?

A. Never.

Q. Was there anything in Respondent’s past life that you could have mentioned to her?

A. I did not speak to her about it.

Q. That is not quite an answer. Was there anything in Respondent’s past life about which you could have spoken to her?

A. I don’t know what you mean – everyone has a past life.

Q. Did you or did you not speak to her about his past life?

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<sup>24</sup> Lady Scott’s residence – The Hurst – was located in Walton-on-Thames.



A. I did not. This letter dated July 13th 1891 (marked M.A.R.3)<sup>25</sup> is my letter to the Petitioner.

Q. What do the words “we cannot help feeling so” refer to?

A. The letter was written at the Respondent’s suggestion.

Q. Did you intend the Petitioner to believe that this letter was written by the Respondent?

A. It was practically my letter. He wished me to write it.

[Mr. Barnard calls for the letter written by the Respondent requesting her to write the letter M.A.R.3. Letter produced and marked M.A.R.4.]<sup>26</sup>

M.A.R.4 is entirely in Respondent’s handwriting. I received it here by post. I can’t remember if I had any previous conversation with him about the letter. I never told the Respondent that I had any talks with Petitioner about his past life. Referring to the terms of M.A.R.3 the Petitioner may have said that she had heard things and the letter refers to the things she may have heard. I told her nothing.

Q. What were the things the Petitioner told you?

A. One thing only about Kate Williams.<sup>27</sup> I don’t recollect her telling me anything else. Whenever she said she heard things I stopped her. I never promised Respondent to try and induce Petitioner to keep back certain evidence. I do not keep all the letters I receive. When I say I gave the letters to the Solicitor I meant all I had – I believe I kept every important letter of hers. Between the 2nd February 1891 and the 13th August 1891 I did not see the Petitioner – I received this letter dated 26th May 1891 marked M.A.R.5<sup>28</sup> from Petitioner. I don’t remember answering it. It is very doubtful if I shewed it to my

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<sup>25</sup> Woodfall’s margin note reads: “The letter marked M.A.R.3 is enclosed in the sealed envelope annexed hereto. R.W.”

<sup>26</sup> Woodfall’s margin note reads: “The letter marked M.A.R.4 is enclosed in the sealed envelope annexed hereto. R.W.”

<sup>27</sup> Ravenscroft, located near the Welsh village of Trelleck, had been Frank Russell’s childhood home between 1870 and 1876. The gardener of the house, Mr. Williams, and his wife played an important role in Frank’s life there; indeed, Frank described Mrs. Williams as the “most important member of the household” who “acted to some extent as my foster-mother at the time when I required these attentions” (Russell, *My Life and Adventures*, 4). Their two oldest children, Kathleen and Polly, were also Frank’s playmates at Ravenscroft. Mrs. Williams and her children later became Frank’s servants while he lived at Broom Hall before his marriage to Mabel, and he testified during the 1891 divorce proceedings that he had seduced Kathleen Williams four years earlier and maintained a sexual relationship with her until two months before his marriage.

<sup>28</sup> Woodfall’s margin note reads: “The letter marked M.A.R.5 is enclosed in the sealed envelope annexed hereto. R.W.”

mother. Referring to page 3 of M.A.R.5 I say I never told Petitioner that Respondent had made us suffer.

Q. Why did you not write and say so?

A. I saw her and asked her to strike these words out of her letter. I think M.A.R.3 is the first letter I wrote Petitioner after 26th May. It is not an answer to M.A.R.5. In the summer of 1891 I frequently saw Respondent. I can't say if I saw him between 26th May and 1st August. I have some letters from him during that period.

Q. How many?

[Mr. Davies objects.]

A. I can't say how many without looking. I have a bundle of letters here. I think I have here all I kept. I find here nine letters between those two dates.

Q. Do you produce them?

[Mr. Davies objects to the question and also objects that he is entitled to see the documents before the witness answers. The witness handed the bundle of nine letters to the counsel for the Respondent. The said bundle was handed to me for purpose of identification and the said bundle marked M.A.R.6 7 8 9 9a 10 11 12 13 respectively. Mr. Davies refuses to produce them to other side or to put them in.]

I am quite willing to produce all letters I have received from the Respondent to the Solicitors for both sides. I don't remember if I saw Respondent shortly before writing the letter dated August 3rd 1891 and marked M.A.R.14. I was anxious to see Petitioner at that time.<sup>29</sup> The Petitioner came to see me here on or about the 13th August 1891. I can't recollect if her sister came with her. I remember being alone with her in my sitting room. At that interview I asked Petitioner to strike out from M.A.R.5 the words on the third page commencing from "from all you have told me" to "made you all suffer." I had not the letter before me, and I said to her that she had reported what she had said before, and what she had struck out before, that is, that we had told her things. I said also "you know it's not true that we told you things." She declined to strike it out of this letter – and repeated it to me that I had told her things. The Respondent had not asked me to get the words struck out.

Q. Have you got the letter to which you have referred in which similar words were struck out?

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<sup>29</sup> Woodfall's margin note reads: "The letter marked M.A.R.5 is enclosed in the sealed envelope annexed hereto. R.W."

A. I have not got it – I handed all the letters to Mr. Doulton<sup>30</sup> – he must have got that letter.

[Mr. Barnard calls for the letter referred to by the witness in which words were struck out – not produced.]

Q. Was Mr. Roberts' name mentioned by you to Petitioner, or by her to you?

A. She mentioned it to me. I never told her I objected to Mr. Roberts – nothing of the kind.

Re-examined the witness further saith:

I knew Mr. Roberts. I never introduced the subject of the Respondent's past life with Petitioner. None of my relations ever introduced the subject to the Petitioner in my presence.

Q. Was it the case that you had ever told Petitioner that the Respondent had "made you all suffer"?

A. I never told her anything against him – I feel quite sure of this.

[signed] Agatha Russell

The deposition of the witness contained in pages 1-15 inclusive were read over by me to the witness and by her signed in my presence.

R. Woodfall

Pembroke Lodge

Jan 16th 1895

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The Right Honorable Frances Anna Maria – Dowager Countess Russell being duly sworn and examined by Mr. Llewellyn Davies on behalf of the Respondent saith:

I am the widow of the first Earl Russell, and the Respondent is my grandson. I made the acquaintance of the Petitioner directly after the engagement. I saw her 3 or 4 times. I

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<sup>30</sup> Alfred Percy Doulton acted as Frank's solicitor during the 1891 trial. He continued to have some involvement in the 1894-1895 proceedings as well, although he was not Frank's primary legal counsel in court.

don't remember the number of times, but not very often after the marriage. I did not see her often before the final separation. When they separated, Petitioner came to stay here. We received and treated her kindly to the utmost of our power. All through that summer we acted in the interests of both Petitioner and Respondent. I have always been on affectionate terms with Respondent and am so still. When Petitioner was staying here she spoke to me about her married life and I felt and expressed sympathy for her – I undoubtedly expressed similar feelings for my grandson. I never said anything to discourage Petitioner from returning to her husband. It was medically ordered – I believe in June 1891 – that Petitioner should be separated from Respondent for three months. I was bound to approve of this short separation and did approve – it was in the interests of both. I never to the best of my belief made any charge against the Respondent's character. I don't say to the "best of my belief."<sup>31</sup> I say I never made any such charge. I never made any such charge in the presence of either the Petitioner or of Lady Scott.

Q. In the course of the proceedings before the trial did you hear that allegations about Roberts had been made by the Petitioner?

A. I suppose I did. I can't say. I think I heard of it before the trial. I never said anything to the Petitioner to suggest these allegations or allegations of such a kind.

Cross examined by Mr. Barnard on behalf of the Petitioner the witness further saith:

This letter, dated 14 June 1890 and marked C.R.1,<sup>32</sup> is in my writing. What I say in this letter quite represents my then feelings towards the Petitioner. She was then in a delicate state of health. For a month before the marriage we had seen a good deal of Respondent. If Petitioner came to stay here after the marriage before May it must have been with him. Perhaps she came and stayed two or three days alone. I can't say. There was no reason why the Respondent should not have come and stayed with his wife – Petitioner and Lady Scott called on me here one day in May. It may have been the 7th.

Q. Did Petitioner tell you that day that the Respondent had left her the day before?

A. He told me – he either wrote or came. I am certain I heard it before I saw her. If it was by letter I must have the letter somewhere in the house. I am quite clear it was the Petitioner left the hotel in which she and the Respondent were – I was very sorry for

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<sup>31</sup> Woodfall's margin note reads: "The witness added this of her own accord and without a further question. R.W."

<sup>32</sup> Woodfall's margin note reads: "The letter marked C.R.1 is enclosed in the sealed envelope annexed hereto. R.W."

them both on that day. I did not suggest that they should separate for three months. I did not say to Petitioner in the presence of Lady Scott "what an awful man your husband is. It is better that you should separate for three months. He has always been a bother and a disgrace to the family." I never said such things nor any words to such effect. The Petitioner did not thereupon ask me "Why under the circumstances I had allowed the marriage to take place" and I did not reply "I looked on it as a miracle from heaven and hoped it would reform him and make him a better man." I do not remember that it was arranged at that interview that the Petitioner should meet the Respondent in a few days. There was a meeting – I think it was in May – at which the Petitioner and Respondent, Lady Scott, Lady Agatha and I were present – it might have been the 11th or 12th. I don't know if at this interview Lady Scott tried to persuade the Petitioner to go back to her husband – I did not at that interview say that the best thing was for them to separate for three months. I only said this after the doctor's opinion in the following June. At this interview I asked Lady Scott to come into my bedroom. I don't remember asking Petitioner – I remember I asked Petitioner on one occasion but not with Lady Scott. I don't remember Lady Scott and Petitioner both being in any bedroom on the occasion of this interview. I never said in the bedroom to Lady Scott & Petitioner "I am afraid Lord Russell will never have a child." I never then said to Petitioner "Have you had any of your husband's College friends to stay with you since you were married?" I won't swear I did not ever ask about the College friends. I do not feel very sure of it. I don't remember Petitioner replying "Yes Mr. Roberts did." I don't remember anything about it. I won't swear, but I feel very sure. I don't believe Roberts' name was mentioned. I certainly did not say to Petitioner that I "never liked Roberts," because I have never seen him. I cannot swear that Petitioner did not say that "she never liked him because he had a great influence over her husband." I don't remember her saying so. I did not say at the same interview to the Petitioner, in Lady Scott's presence, "if you return to your husband never have any of his College friends to stay with him." I never said such a thing. On the occasion when Lady Scott and Petitioner came to my bedroom they did so at my invitation – I must have invited them because I wanted to talk to them privately. I do not remember Lady Scott again urge the Petitioner to return to her husband and I did not again advise separation. I can't say whether it was arranged that the Respondent should return to Walton that night to his wife. I can't say how long Petitioner was here on that occasion. I only remember one thing about that interview – something that she (Petitioner) told me, something that came out on the trial that I did not know before. It was in reference to Kate Williams –

that is the only incident of that interview of the 11th or 12th May that I remember.<sup>33</sup> I don't think the interview was a long one. I remember going over to Walton with Lady Agatha. I don't remember the date. We went over in consequence of a telegram from the Respondent – when we got there we saw the Petitioner. She was ill and said something about her husband's conduct to her. I sympathized with them both but I did not say to her "that the respondent was a brute unfit for any women to live with." I did not advise her to leave her husband at once – I don't remember asking her to come and stay here with me. We saw the Respondent there, both before and after we had seen Petitioner. I don't think she came next day to stay here. I don't remember if our visit to Walton was the next day before the final separation – Petitioner came here about that time and stayed for some weeks. I know Lady Scott was here a second time. I don't know when – Lady Agatha did not see her. She was either away or not well. I don't think on that occasion that I invited either Lady Scott or the Petitioner to come into my bedroom – I will not swear I did not.

Q. I now suggest the conversation which took place in the bedroom between you and the Petitioner in the presence of Lady Scott – Did you say to Petitioner that you thought you ought to tell her something of her husband's past life?

A. No. I feel certain that I never told Petitioner that I ought to tell her about her husband's past life. I did not say that "Respondent had been turned down from Oxford for disgraceful conduct with men." I did not add "that it was almost too shocking to talk about." I never said that "he was a perfect disgrace to the family and not fit to live with any woman." I don't know if I said that he had caused the family great anguish. It is most unlikely that I said so.

Q. Had he caused the family great anguish?

A. Please don't ask me.

Q. Did you say at that interview that his Uncle Rollo had told him that after the Oxford incident the best thing he could do would be to blow his brains out?

A. Oh good heavens no. I did not refer to Mr. Roberts at that interview. I remember nothing of the things that have been suggested to me as said at that interview. I do remember that on one occasion, where or when I can't say, the Petitioner said her husband neglected her for Roberts, or something of the kind. I never said "that he was quite hopeless." I don't remember saying anything in the least like "that I was very sorry for her and knew she was not to blame." I can't have said that "I was sorry she

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<sup>33</sup> Woodfall's margin note reads: "The witness answered this question with much hesitation and said 'must I answer the question?' Mr. Barnard suggested the name of Kate Williams. R.W."

had such a man for a husband." I did not frequently talk to Petitioner whilst staying in my house about Respondent having been sent down from Oxford. Certainly not. I do not remember ever having spoken to her about it – It is impossible to recollect if the subject ever came up. One has to answer things when said – Respondent has often stayed on a visit with Lady Stanley in Dover Street.<sup>34</sup> I did not tell Petitioner that some scandal had arisen about her husband in Dover Street. Certainly not. I never heard of it. Q. Did you tell Petitioner that the Respondent had concealed a Chinese boy<sup>35</sup> in his room at Dover Street for some days?

A. Undoubtedly not. I never told her that the Hon. Maude Stanley<sup>36</sup> had brought the boy here – In fact she did not bring a boy here. The boy was sent to Liverpool and then to his own country, but I did not tell the Petitioner so.

Q. There was some scandal with reference to Respondent and a boy was there not?

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<sup>34</sup> Henrietta Maria Stanley, Lady Stanley of Alderley, was Frank and Bertrand Russell's maternal grandmother. She lived at 40 Dover Street in London, and Frank recalled that throughout "the whole of my adolescence the one relief, the one escape, the one freedom from the oppression of P[embroke] L[odge] was represented by 40 Dover Street" (Russell, *My Life and Adventures*, 52). Bertrand Russell described his grandmother Stanley as "rationalistic and unimaginative, keen on enlightenment, and contemptuous of Victorian good-goody priggery" (B. Russell, *Autobiography*, 28). Although he feared her growing up, Bertrand changed his opinion of his grandmother and her family as he aged: "I owe to the Russells shyness, sensitiveness, and metaphysics; to the Stanleys vigour, good health, and good spirits. On the whole, the latter seems a better inheritance than the former" (*ibid.*, 30).

<sup>35</sup> In a letter dated 22 November 1890, Mabel had asked Lady Stanley the following question about Frank: "Did he take a China boy to the upper story of his Grand Mother's house in Dover Street, which China Boy was cleverly shipped off afterwards to his own country by the Honble. Lyulph Stanley?" (quoted in Holmes "'Don't Frighten the Horses'", 153). During his testimony in the 1896-1897 libel trial of Lady Scott, Frank provided an account of this incident involving a Chinese servant from San Francisco he had employed briefly beginning in March or April of 1886, claiming that he did not know why the servant was collected and sent away by a "barrister and bookmaker" with a surname of Saunderson and not by his uncle, Lyulph Stanley, as Mabel had alleged. "You do not suggest," asked Lady Scott's solicitor, John Lawson Walton, "that a servant of yours was sent away to China without your knowing the reasons and circumstances?" Frank replied: "That is exactly what I do suggest." Lawson Walton again pressed the issue: "Were you conscious of any impropriety in having this Chinese boy in your service?" "Most decidedly not," Russell stated. See "The Trial of Lady Scott", *The Standard*, 27 November 1896, p. 2. Like many aspects of Frank's life, the exact nature of this incident remains difficult to determine.

<sup>36</sup> Maude Stanley was one of Lady Stanley's daughters who never married and lived with her mother at 40 Dover Street. Frank described his aunt as "the beloved confidant of the whole family" who was "indefatigable in ministering to my pleasures, and my thirst for knowledge" during his visits to Dover Street (Russell, *My Life and Adventures*, 9, 53).

A. I don't know. It was thought better to send the boy to L'pool and then to his own country. I had nothing to do with it.

Q. Had the course adopted reference to the Respondent?

[Mr. Davies objects on the ground that after the last answer the reply must be hearsay.]

A. I had nothing to do with it. It was thought better.

Q. I suggest that you told the Petitioner about this matter?

A. I feel sure I did not. I never said a word about it to her.

Q. During Petitioner's stay here did you tell her that after Respondent was sent down from Oxford he was sent out of the country and that he was looked upon as a perfect outcast?

A. No. Neither then nor ever. In June on the doctor's urgent advice we thought the Petitioner and Respondent should live separately for three months. This letter of the 4th July 1890 marked C.R.2 is from me to Petitioner.<sup>37</sup>

Re-examined by Mr. Davies the witness further saith:

[Mr. Davies calls for a letter dated May 10th 1890 from the witness to the Petitioner. It is not produced. Mr. Davies tenders a copy of the letter. Mr. Barnard objects.]

I think this (C.R.3)<sup>38</sup> is substantially a copy of the letter I wrote on the 10th May 1890.

The letter correctly represents my feelings towards the Petitioner and Respondent at that time – I then wished them to live together as husband and wife. I hope they would live together again after the interval of three months.

Q. Do you think Respondent was fit to live with his wife?

[Mr. Barnard objects.]

A. Yes, if they both agreed.

The witness desires to add that when the Respondent came down from Oxford he came to this house and stayed here.

[signed] F. Russell

The deposition of this witness contained on pages 16-31 inclusive was read over by me to the witness and by her signed in my presence.

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<sup>37</sup> Woodfall's margin note reads: "The letter marked C.R.2 is enclosed in the sealed envelope annexed hereto. R.W."

<sup>38</sup> Woodfall's margin note reads: "The letter marked C.R.3 is enclosed in the sealed envelope annexed hereto. R.W."



R. Woodfall  
Pembroke Lodge  
Jan 16th 1895

# The Bertrand Russell Society

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David Blitz, President • Professor, Department of Philosophy, Central Connecticut State University • blitz@ccsu.edu

## Call for Papers for the 2021 Meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society

The Bertrand Russell Society (BRS), an international organization dedicated to the memory of the philosopher Bertrand Russell, will hold its annual meeting on-line from Friday, 18 June, to Sunday, 20 June 2021.

If you are interested in presenting a paper at the BRS Annual Meeting, please submit the paper abstract through our website at the following link:

<https://bertrandrussellsociety.org/submissions/>.

Special emphasis will be given to commemorating the 100th anniversary of Russell's *The Analysis of Mind*. But we welcome papers on any aspect of Russell's life as well as his thought, work, and legacy. We also welcome proposals for other activities that might be appropriate for the meeting (e.g., a master class on a work by Russell). Each abstract should be no longer than two paragraphs. The deadline for submission is 2 April 2021.

There is a time limit of 20 minutes for each presentation. An additional 10 minutes are allotted for discussion.

Further details about the annual meeting (registration, etc.) will be posted at the Bertrand Russell Society website: <https://bertrandrussellsociety.org/meetings/>.

For further information, please contact Professor David Blitz, President of the BRS, at blitz@ccsu.edu.

Thank you, and we hope to see you at the meeting!

“The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge”

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