

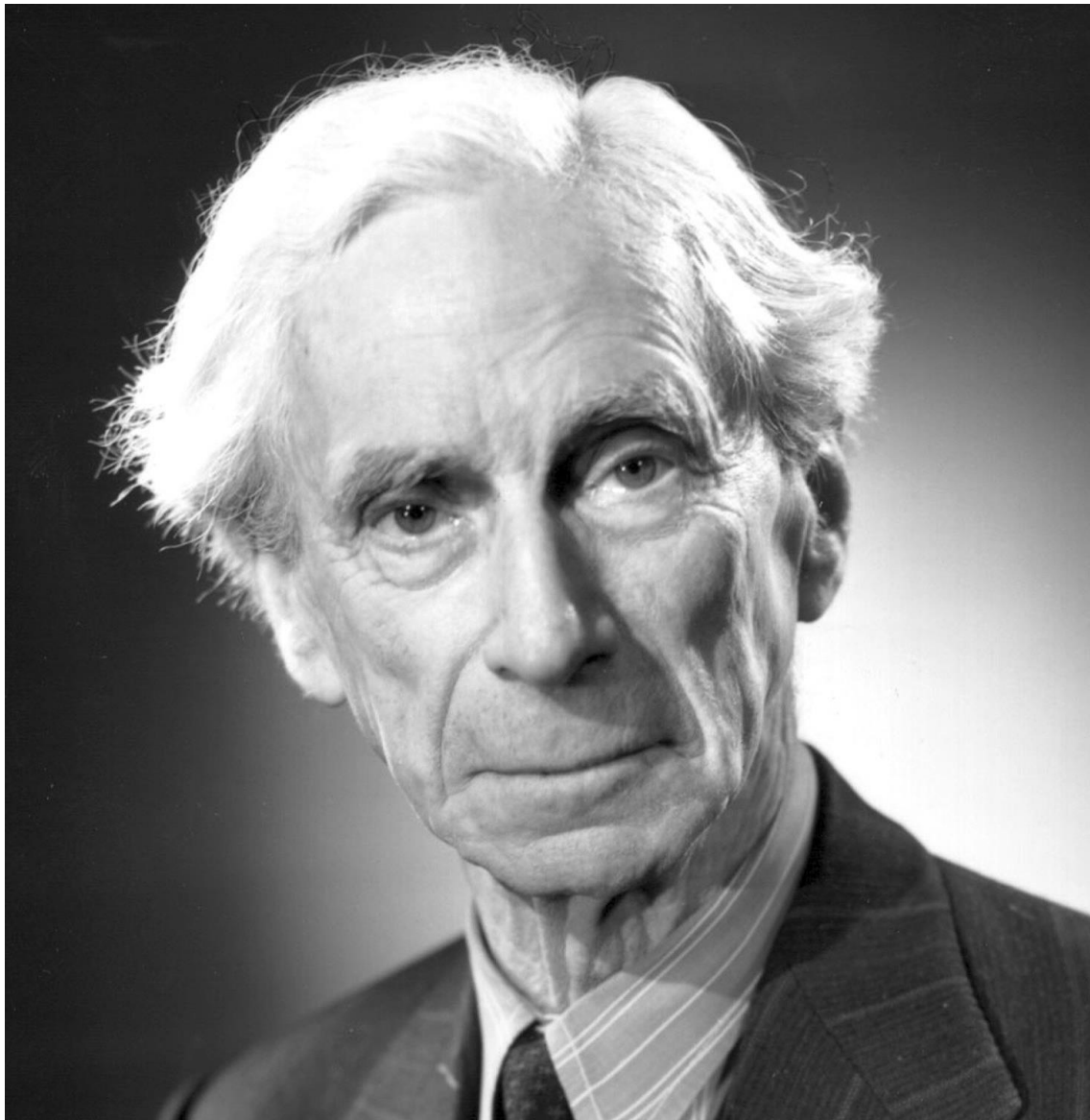
The Bertrand Russell Society

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BULLETIN



Editor

Michael Stevenson
Lakehead University
stevenm@mcmaster.ca

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/.

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, 574 English-Philosophy Bldg., University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 52242. The treasurer's email address is 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
stevenm@mcmaster.ca

The fiftieth anniversary of Bertrand Russell's death on 2 February 1970 generated widespread public interest that emphasized Russell's continued influence and relevance. Trinity College Library marked the event by providing an [on-line display of primary sources](#) from its archival collection documenting important aspects of Russell's life and writings. Similarly, the British Broadcasting Corporation highlighted the [on-line availability Russell's 1948-49 Reith Lectures](#) and noted the existence of [recordings of interviews conducted with Russell](#) while he resided in Wales later in his life. The Society's Landon Elkind also reflected on the anniversary in a [contribution to the BRS website](#) that included links to many other social media posts celebrating Russell.

The articles in this issue of the *Bulletin* reinforce the ongoing importance of Russell and his legacy. Andrew Bone provides the initial piece presenting an annotated selection of letters from Russell's tour of Australia in 1950. This contribution will give BRS members an early indication of the rich content that will appear in volume 26 of the *Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell* edited by Andy and scheduled to be published later this year. Next, Bill Bruneau's article examines both the *Collected Papers* edition and the ongoing Russell letters project in the context of other official papers and letters initiatives. This piece also contains a detailed interview with the members of McMaster University's Bertrand Russell Research Centre who completed the [Brixton letters project](#) documenting Russell's prison experience in 1918 and who are continuing the effort to make all of Russell's vast correspondence publicly available.

The remaining four articles examine various aspects of Russell's intellectual and personal life. Gregory Landini continues the vigorous academic debate about *Principia Mathematica* in response to an article authored by Nicholas Griffin in the Autumn 2019 *Bulletin* by arguing that Whitehead and Russell's landmark work is not required to recover what metaphysicians of mathematics do under their assumption that numbers are abstract particulars. Nick then replies to Gregory outlining their differences about the nature of *Principia* project. Moving to Russell's relationship with an important contemporary, Ken Blackwell documents the personal and intellectual links shared by Russell and George Orwell, noting—with few exceptions—their deep respect for each other's views. Finally, Adam Stromme analyzes Russell's nuanced assessment of

capitalism and socialism and recounts the impact of external events such as the First World War and the rise of Bolshevism on the development of his views.

Over the course of many issues, Sheila Turcon provided *Bulletin* readers with thorough accounts of Russell's homes he occupied during his lifetime. Some of these excellent articles have now been posted on-line—at <https://russell-homes.mcmaster.ca/>—in an expanded form with new photographs, and additional entries will be posted regularly. Links to all original articles on Russell's homes published in the *Bulletin* are also provided on this website.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 annual meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society has been cancelled in terms of an in-person conference. Plans are underway, however, to host this annual meeting in an on-line format. Paper proposals may be submitted by 2 April 2020 to <https://bertrandrussellsociety.org/submissions/>.

The planning for the Autumn 2020 issue of the *Bulletin* is at an advanced stage. 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.

In Memoriam: Jack Clontz

Ray Perkins, Jr.
perkrk@earthlink.net

Our esteemed colleague, Jack Marion Clontz, passed away on 6 December 2019 after several months of incapacitating illness in hospital in Bangkok, Thailand. Jack was a strong supporter of the Bertrand Russell Society over the last decade and added much to our on-line discussions, including the history of philosophy and little known details of Russell's life and work – and of his connections with many other great thinkers.

Jack was born 25 October 1938 in Charlotte NC, the second of three sons, to parents Herman James Clontz and Wilma Kizzie Davis. Both his brothers, William (several years younger) and James (91), currently live in NC.

Jack got his early education in Charlotte public schools. At an early age he took an interest in the family religion (Presbyterian) and showed a talent for preaching. After high school he went off to Presbyterian College in Clinton, SC, where he met and married Alice Watkins (divorced in 1975). But he became an atheist and gave up the idea of becoming a minister. He and Alice had a baby in 1961, Sharon Marie, Jack's only child. Both found high school teaching jobs in Aiken, SC, but circumstances pushed him to night school at the University of South Carolina where he earned a BA in Psychology in 1963. His daughter tells me "as the story goes" Jack lost his high school job for teaching evolution in his biology class. It does ring true. (Sharon Clontz Rowe is currently Library Manager for the public library in Alamogordo, NM.)

I became good friends with Jack in the late 1960s. Having just finished my doctoral studies at Duke and about to begin a dissertation on Russell's philosophy ("Meaning and Acquaintance in the Early Philosophy of Bertrand Russell"), I was invited by the University of South Carolina philosophy department to teach a few sections of logic for a semester while a hospitalized philosophy professor recovered. Jack was there just winding up his MA in philosophy and teaching logic. The Vietnam War was on. We both strongly opposed the war, and with a few other faculty, took a busload of USC students to DC in the fall of 1969 to protest the war. Even then, Jack was very well read and had considerable knowledge of the war's history, and we both



Photo courtesy Andrew West

had great respect for Russell's courageous and outspoken opposition. He turned me on to I.F. Stone, American progressive journalist (Russell was a subscriber to "I.F. Stone's Weekly" at the time), and we both shared great interest in Russell's theoretical work and much appreciated his practical public action against the war and nuclear weapons. I lost touch with Jack in the early-mid 1970s when he went off to UC San Diego for his doctorate in philosophy. I did get a trunkful of interesting, and lengthy, letters – Jack, as we know, was not known for skimping on words ☺, and he did connect me with two important department philosophers (Avrum Stroll and Richard Popkin). But he left San Diego to teach philosophy aboard US Navy ships and spent much time in the Pacific, especially the Philippines.

For several years he did a great deal of traveling. One never knew where he was, at least I didn't. He did settle down in the 1980s in Japan (for 20 years) to teach

philosophy and English at Kyoto University and later at a college for women. As the China Tiananmen Square massive protest (April 1989) was heating up (thousands of lives lost), I heard that Jack was visiting the region with students at that very time. I made a serious effort to contact him – and I finally did. He was safe in Japan.

For the last decade or so, Jack was in Bangkok, Thailand, with the Ramkhamhaeng Institute of Languages at their University working as editor, rewriter, translator, and researcher. He edited/critiqued innumerable Thai student dissertations and many papers/letters for Thai government officials. A couple of years ago, Jack was kind enough to translate a technical Italian legal document into English for my attorney brother.

I recently learned from Jack's good friend Andrew J. West (from Australia) that over the last few years Jack served as writer and editor for a number of works on Thai art and culture, as well as editing two of Andrew's gorgeous books on Thai art and serving as an indispensable sounding board for much of his fictional writings. As Andrew thoughtfully remarked: "He was a smart cookie and a polyglot ... I'm lucky to have known and worked with him." Indeed, Jack could read and write more than a few languages, including Japanese and Thai. And, as most of the Society has discovered over the last decade, he was also an amazing polymath. Our fellow Society member and Russell scholar, Gulberk Koc Maclean, put it well: "He seemed an embodied encyclopedia."

Farewell, good friend. You'll be sorely missed.

Ray Perkins, Jr., has been a BRS member since 1995, served as the Society's Vice-President, and is currently on the Russell editorial board. He is editor of Yours Faithfully, Bertrand Russell (Open Court, 2001) and author of The ABCs of the Soviet-American Nuclear Arms Race (Harcourt College Publishers, 1990). He lives in New Hampshire with his wife (and BRS member) Karen Brandt Perkins.

Letters and Pictures from Russell's Australian Lecture Tour

Andrew G. Bone
bone@mcmaster.ca

During the summer of 1950 (winter in the southern hemisphere), Russell spent nine weeks in Australia.¹ This was his only visit to the country, indeed to anywhere below the equator. He logged almost 10,000 miles, flying to every state bar Tasmania and staying in all major cities, as well as Toowoomba in the Queensland interior, Cairns on the Great Barrier Reef, a Victoria sheep station and the central desert town of Alice Springs. Along the way he delivered ten public lectures and addressed six semi-private audiences of the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA)—the principal organizing body of Russell's tour. He invariably spoke to capacity, if not overflowing, crowds, and all these events were widely reported in the Australian press. In addition, Russell gave five talks on ABC radio, the country's national broadcaster, and supplied articles to metropolitan dailies in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth (all of which were extensively reprinted nationwide). He also held press conferences in each state capital and provided interviews or off-the-cuff remarks to many big-city and small-town newspapers. The lectures that Russell reprised² in the Australian cities he visited tended towards more general discussion of the Cold War, rather than its particular bearing on his host nation. But he made many observations about the country's politics, geography and culture in his writing for newspapers and in conversation with journalists who were keen to report and scrutinize almost anything he said about Australia.

The textual record of Russell's public activities in Australia is extensive (although not complete) and will be showcased in *Papers* 26.³ The philosophical seminars he gave at the universities of Sydney, Melbourne and Western Australia are, by contrast, hardly

¹ From 22 June until 23 August, to be precise.

² I.e. "Ferment in Asia" and "Obstacles to World Government" (5 and 6, respectively, in *Papers* 26). There was nothing untoward about these repeat performances: the list of topics was invariably shorter than the itinerary of a BR lecture tour. The former topic, concerning the political future of Australia's "near North", was given greater pungency by the outbreak of the Korean War on 25 June, only two days after BR touched down in Sydney.

³ [*Cold War Fears and Hopes, 1950–52*](#) (forthcoming 2020). Aside from Alan Wood (an Australian), BR's biographers have given his lecture tour comparatively short shrift. But Nicholas Griffin's article (1974–75) remains invaluable on its subject's itinerary and movements and the role of the AIIA and has been supplemented recently by Jo-Anne Grant's intriguing analysis (2016) of BR's "utopian" vision of Australia's future.

documented at all.⁴ Russell also wrote a number of private letters during his lecture tour. Indeed, he seems to have devoted part of each morning in the hotel suites he occupied to catching up with correspondence and journalism. Relatively few of these letters have survived. In replying to his father on 7 July 1950,⁵ for example, John Russell acknowledged receipt of a missing letter dated 28 June 1950. Quite apart from the letters known to be missing, a few others have been excluded from this epistolary (and pictorial) survey of Russell's Australian tour. (It is hoped that the complete set will become part of the [Collected Letters](#) [see William Bruneau's article in this issue of the *Bulletin* – Ed.]).

Two of the best "Australian" letters—to his friends in North Wales, Rupert and Elizabeth Crawshay-Williams (2 July), and his first wife, Alys (2 Aug.)—appear, fully annotated, in Nicholas Griffin's edition of *Selected Letters* (Russell 2001, 448–50) and have therefore been omitted here. The former letter, along with another three written later in the tour to one or other of the Crawshay-Williamses, feature in Rupert's memoir of his friendship with Russell (1970, 65–7). Since those versions are slightly abridged and lacking annotation, however, it has been decided to reprint all except the first and publish another (**Letter 8**) for the first time. Two short telegrams have also been included: the first concerns the scheduling or cancellation of various Australian engagements; the second (also reproduced in facsimile: *Fig. 5*) relates to the public spat with the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne touched on in **Letters 6** and **8**.

Jo-Anne Grant (2016, 87) has noted the discordance between Russell's public and private parsing of his Australian experiences. In print and on the radio he was an unabashed booster of the country's supposedly untapped and almost limitless potential. But he was considerably less gushing in his correspondence. Instead of the awestruck tone with which, for example, he contemplated Australia's vast empty spaces in the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*,⁶ Russell derided the same landscape to his first wife as "so monotonous that I couldn't imagine how people found their way". After returning to London, he made this blunt judgment of Australia for the benefit of his daughter: "It is more like More's Utopia than one would think a real place could be, and almost equally dull. The people are pleasant and good-natured but not interesting.

⁴ But the Russell Archives (RA Rec. Acq. 313) does hold notes on the theory of knowledge taken during the Sydney sessions by John Anderson, the eminent Australian realist and holder of the university's Challis Chair in Philosophy. Wood (1957, 214) reports that these and the other seminars "were not always successful" and that BR found them rather trying.

⁵ RA2 710.111179.

⁶ "Science Can Help Australia Support More People", 21 July 1950, p. 8 (9 in *Papers 26*).

There are some nice bits of country, but most of it is flat, and goes on being the same for thousands of miles.”⁷ Not unexpectedly the “public” content of the letters (concerning both Australia and an international situation rendered newly perilous by armed conflict on the Korean peninsula) is balanced, if not outweighed, by matters domestic: continuing fallout from the breakdown of a third marriage, the (thwarted) quest for a refuge in North Wales from the Armageddon that he sometimes feared was imminent during his Australian tour, and concern for the future of his troubled older son and daughter-in-law.

The focus in **Letter 7** shifts to Russell’s professional life, discussing arrangements for his forthcoming lecture tour of the United States and making only passing mention of Australia. In one respect, though, this is the most revealing document of the entire selection. However weary and homesick Russell had become on his Australian odyssey, he could not afford to rest on his laurels. His financial situation had recovered from the highly straitened years of American exile, but—in the throes of another divorce, and with open-ended commitments to John Russell and his family—the near octogenarian Russell could not yet afford to scale back his commitments, not least to lecturing abroad, which had brought him to Australia on one of the most memorable of his many trips overseas.⁸

Letter 1 [telegram] *To Nance Dickins*⁹

[BRACERS 122352](#)

Brisbane
13 July 1950

THANKS TENTATIVE PROGRAMME PLEASE DELETE ARRANGEMENTS FOR
DRIVES OR VISITS WEEKENDS GRATEFUL IF SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS BE
QUIET¹⁰ FILL AS STATED ON PREVIOUS PROGRAMME DELETE DINNER

⁷ 2 Aug. 1950, RA Rec. Acq. 425 (Russell 2001, 450); 29 Aug. 1950, RA Rec. Acq. 435.

⁸ Although BR’s lecture tours of the United States in the fall of 1950 and 1951 (also covered in *Papers 26*) were his last two such undertakings.

⁹ Secretary of the AIIA’s Victoria branch.

¹⁰ BR would spend the weekend of 29–30 July at “[Mooramong](#)”, a large sheep station near Skipton, Victoria, owned by Melbourne “society” couple “Scobie” and Claire Mackinnon: “He had been at Jesus (Cambridge) but failed to get a degree. His wife had been at Hollywood in the movies” (to Alys Russell, 2 Aug. 1950; Russell 2001, 450).

RATIONALISTS¹¹ 26TH JULY WILL GIVE INTERVIEW TO RATIONALISTS BUT NOT AT DINNER WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHEN CONFERRING OF DEGREE DATE FIXED HAVE SUGGESTED 28TH OR 31ST AND ASKED UNIVERSITY TO INFORM YOU.

RUSSELL



Fig. 1: In Sydney or Melbourne, with R.P. Greenish, BR's private secretary throughout his lecture tour. BR described him to Rupert and Elizabeth Crawshay-Williams as "a charming young man appointed by the Australian Foreign Office to look after me. He answers the telephone, shoves off bores, provides typists, and when there is time takes me to the Blue Mountains [of New South Wales], which are delicious" (2 July 1950; Russell 2001, 448).

¹¹ The Rationalist Society of Australia ultimately received less cursory treatment than BR intended, for the function he attended as its guest of honour at Melbourne's Hotel Federal on 26 July was described explicitly by one city newspaper as a "dinner" ("And He Ran True to Form", *The Argus*, 27 July 1950, p. 5; App. I.16 in *Papers* 26). The "interview" portion consisted of BR's witty, extemporized answers to questions put from the floor (*ibid.*, and "Philosopher in 'Impish Oracle' Role", *The Sun*, Melbourne, 27 July 1950, p. 3; App. I.17 in *Papers* 26).

Letter 2 To Katharine Tait
[BRACERS 52627](#)

<letterhead>
Lennon's Hotel
Brisbane
July 16, 1950

Dear Kate

Your letter¹² reached me when I was in the throes of preparing for Australia and I have not had time to answer it till now.

I am afraid nothing is to be made out of publishers. The only ones I know in USA are Simon & Schuster, 1230 6th Ave., and W.W. Norton, who used to be 70 5th Ave., but I think has moved. But I am pretty sure there is nothing to be got from them. I think private translating is more possible, but very badly paid. I think you would do better to get a testimonial from Radcliffe than from me; I am still not in good odour in America. Is your French good? Any other languages besides German?

I devoutly hope Charlie won't be axed.¹³ I wonder how the Korean trouble affects him.

As things stand, my last engagement in America is Columbia Nov. 16,¹⁴ so I could come to Washington for 2 or 3 nights 17th and 18th—I can stay at a hotel if it suits you better.¹⁵ I hope to make you a premature birthday present of part of my earnings, but I don't know how much. I help John,¹⁶ and wish the law allowed me to help you

¹² 25 May 1950, RA2 710.107001.

¹³ BR's son-in-law Charles William Tait (1923–2017) was an expert linguist whose skills had been utilized by American military intelligence during World War II. After being discharged from the U.S. Army, Tait returned to Harvard (where he met Kate, whom he married in 1948) and completed a degree in comparative philology before enrolling in graduate school. Earlier in 1950 he had joined the intelligence branch of the State Department and became an analyst of Czechoslovakia in the Eastern Europe section. He was not "axed", for he continued in this role until training for the Episcopalian ministry at Virginia Seminary in 1958. He was ordained a priest three years later.

¹⁴ When BR gave the last of three Matchette Foundation Lectures on "The Impact of Science on Society".

¹⁵ On BR's slightly awkward stay at the small Washington, D.C., apartment of his daughter and her husband, see Tait 1975, 175.

¹⁶ Kate was aware of this, for BR had told her that his older son "would be utterly sunk if I did not help him financially" (11 April 1950, RA Rec. Acq. 435). This "help" had recently extended to the provision of accommodation for John and his family at 41 Queen's Rd, Richmond, the London home which (for over three years from May 1950) they shared with BR and, later, Edith Russell (see Turcon 2018a).

equally.¹⁷ The questions you raise about democracy, Asia, etc. are just what I am lecturing on. It is too long for a letter but when I come I will bring my stuff. Read Robert Payne, *The Revolt of Asia*¹⁸—for facts, not for opinions. I would write more but am terribly busy.

Very much love

Yrs aff

Diddy



Fig. 2: In the Australian bush (in trademark three-piece suit) with R.P. Greenish. The location is unknown but may be in the vicinity of Toowoomba, in the Queensland interior, where family of BR's temporary secretary owned property and the two men stayed overnight from 12–13 July after motoring there from Brisbane. The following day, the AIIA's general secretary, George Caiger (who also accompanied BR to Brisbane), reported to the E.C. Dyason Trust that BR "found the scenery on the journey and the views at Toowoomba 'exhilarating'" (to Margaret Smith, RA Rec. Acq. 291d).

¹⁷ The free movement and exchange of sterling and foreign currency assets had been strictly curtailed by war legislation perpetuated by the Exchange Control Act (1947). British travellers abroad were only entitled to a modest foreign-currency allowance, which fluctuated according to the balance of payments situation and was pegged at £50 per annum when Russell travelled to the United States in October 1950.

¹⁸ Robert Payne (1911–1983) was a prolific English author who specialized in biography but also wrote poetry and fiction. Drawing on first-hand acquaintance with India and China, his recent survey of Asian political developments (Payne 1948) was unabashedly sympathetic to the "revolt" it chronicled. In a subsequent letter to Kate (29 Sept. 1950, RA Rec. Acq. 435), BR derided Payne as a "fool" for his indulgent view of Chinese Communism. But he clearly found the book useful in preparing "Ferment in Asia" for his Australian lecture tour. Indeed, the two men occupied much of the same ground in assessing World War II's destabilizing effects on the region and the ensuing rejection of European colonial authority.

Letter 3 To Rupert Crawshay-Williams¹⁹

[BRACERS 56058](#)

Melbourne.

July 26, 1950

Dear Rupert

Thank you for your letter²⁰ received today. I telegraphed “Buy Penralltgoch if possible”.²¹ It doesn’t much matter what it costs, if I can raise the money, as I can take it out of what I pay Peter.²² I think, even if the present war does not spread, Korea has made a world war soon much more likely. The only hope I see is that Americans may be frightened by their failure.²³ But I don’t expect that. So I strongly favour getting a house in Wales, and it should be got *now* before people are alarmed in England. Here

¹⁹ A great-grandson of T.H. Huxley, Rupert Crawshay-Williams (1908–1977) worked as a music critic and preparatory school teacher before dedicating himself to philosophy after World War II. By that time he and his wife Elizabeth (d. 1977) had settled in North Wales, on the Portmeirion estate owned and lovingly restored by architect Clough Williams-Ellis, whose wife was related to Rupert. BR became great and lasting friends with the couple after first meeting them in 1947, when he also broadcast a laudatory review of Rupert’s *The Comforts of Unreason* (see *Papers* 11: 321–7). The couple died by suicide together after Elizabeth was diagnosed with an incurable paralysis.

²⁰ 15 July 1950, RA1 710.048664.

²¹ Telegram also dated 26 July 1950, RA Rec. Acq. 501e. Penralltgoch was the converted schoolhouse in Llan Ffestiniog, North Wales, purchased in January 1946 as a refuge for Patricia (i.e. “Peter”, née Spence [1910–2004]) from the Cambridge life for which she quickly developed an intense dislike after Russell embarked upon a five-year lectureship at Trinity College in 1944. Long before the feuding couple separated in April 1949, legal ownership of the extensively renovated cottage was transferred to Peter to avoid payment of estate duties in the likely event of BR predeceasing her (see Turcon 2018, 41–4). But he was permitted to reside there until moving to 41 Queen’s Rd., Richmond, and even paid rent on the property for several months. As intimated in a previous letter to the Crawshay-Williamses (2 July 1950; Russell 2001, 449), BR was interested in reacquiring the property as a rural retreat for his son’s family in the event of any major escalation of the Korean War.

²² The financial terms of BR’s separation from Peter were not finalized until both parties signed a Deed of Covenant in May 1951 (copy in RA Rec. Acq. 1,343). Until then he paid maintenance under non-binding arrangements similar to those ultimately agreed upon (see Bone 2019–20, 172–3). Perhaps here he was calculating that his repurchase of the cottage would reduce the size of any lump sum payable to Peter in a final settlement.

²³ In the initial phase of the Korean War, the South Korean army, together with hastily deployed American troops under UN command, were pushed ever further down the peninsula until a solid defensive perimeter was established around the port of Pusan on the south-east tip.

people are much more conscious of Asia; they were alarmed when the Japs got into Papua, and have remained so.²⁴

Tylor, of Coward Chance, has power of attorney for me and can pay what is necessary and arrange mortgage etc.

People here treat me well, except that I am having a row with the Catholics because I said Asiatics ought to learn birth control.²⁵ Catholics say they hope instead to teach them to live chastely in marriage!

There are two representatives of the King here, the Governor General and the U.K. High Commissioner (who counts as an Ambassador). Both are working men, both socialists,²⁶ and both proud of it. One of them I knew in S. Wales in 1916, when he and I were on the verge of going to prison.

Love to you both. I am homesick and hate being away at this time. My views are utterly gloomy so I laugh all day.

Yrs aff

B.R.

²⁴ In March 1942 Japan established a foothold on the northern coast of Eastern New Guinea (an Australian territory) as well as invading the Dutch-controlled, western half of the island. After a seaborne assault on the allied air base at Port Moresby to the south was ruled out by the inconclusive Battle of the Coral Sea early in May 1943, Japanese troops then tried (without success) to reach this strategic goal by traversing the island's daunting central mountain range—the site of some fierce jungle fighting. The vulnerability of northern Australia was also exposed by bombing raids on Darwin from Japanese aircraft carriers and bases in the former Dutch East Indies. By 1950 Chinese communism was supplanting Japanese militarism as the principal focus of these abiding Australian anxieties.

²⁵ BR imparted an urgent message about the perils of population pressure in the first part of his Australian lecture "Obstacles to World Government". Its closing section (on fanaticism) also took aim at "[t]hose who have theological objections to birth control [and] are willing that destitution, famine, and war shall continue till the end of time because they cannot forget one misinterpreted text in Genesis". His clerical enemies (see, e.g., the Rev. Leslie Humble's letter to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* [28 June 1950, p. 2]) neglected to mention that BR had also stressed that *Australia* needed to increase, not limit, its population.

²⁶ Australia's twelfth Governor-General, William McKell (1891-1985), a former boilermaker, was the first non-British holder of that office, to which he was appointed in 1947 after six years as Labor premier of New South Wales. Britain's High Commissioner to Australia from 1946 until 1952 was Ted Williams (1890-1963), previously Labour M.P. for the Glamorganshire constituency of Ogmore and, before that, a coal-miner and trade union official. Williams had presumably made BR's acquaintance in July 1916, when the latter brought his fervent anti-war message to South Wales—a hotbed of wartime labour unrest—on a lecture tour far more contentious than that undertaken in early Cold War Australia (see *Papers* 13: 420).



Figs. 3a and [above right] 3b: "I have become very grand. I associate with Governors, Chancellors, High Commissioners and such" (Letter 4). With William McKell, Governor-General of Australia (3a), and Ben Chifley (centre), leader of the Labor opposition (3b). McKell shared BR's enthusiasm for Australian resource and rural development and at their meeting in Government House, Canberra (18 July), treated him to a demonstration of the Snowy Mountains Scheme—the massive hydroelectricity and irrigation project on which construction had just commenced and which the Governor-General (as Labor Premier of New South Wales) had been instrumental in persuading the Commonwealth Government to launch.

Letter 4 To Elizabeth Crawshay-Williams²⁷

[BRACERS 56060](#)

Menzies Hotel,
Melbourne.
2.8.50

Dearest Elizabeth

I enclose two pictures²⁸ which need some explanation. A newspaper here said I looked like a "sophisticated koala".²⁹ I had never heard of a koala, but was told it is a tiny bear to be seen in the Zoo. So I went to examine my prototype, and found it a charming little beast which lives in trees. Here it is.

I have become very grand. I associate with Governors, Chancellors, High Commissioners and such. It will be a come-down when I get home. But I am desperately homesick. I hope it will be possible to buy Penralltgoch. Even if there is no

²⁷ See n. 19 above.

²⁸ See *Figs. 4a and 4b*.

²⁹ See "Bertrand Russell Talks on Women", *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, 8 July 1950, "Magazine Section", p. 15 (App. 1.9 in *Papers 26*).

war now, there will be one soon. I wonder whether John and Susan still want to live apart.³⁰ I am sorry they feel that way, and I think it may pass.

I am desperately busy here, but on the whole I think it is worth while.

It was delightful getting a letter from you some time back. I hope all goes well with you. Love to you both.

Yrs Ever

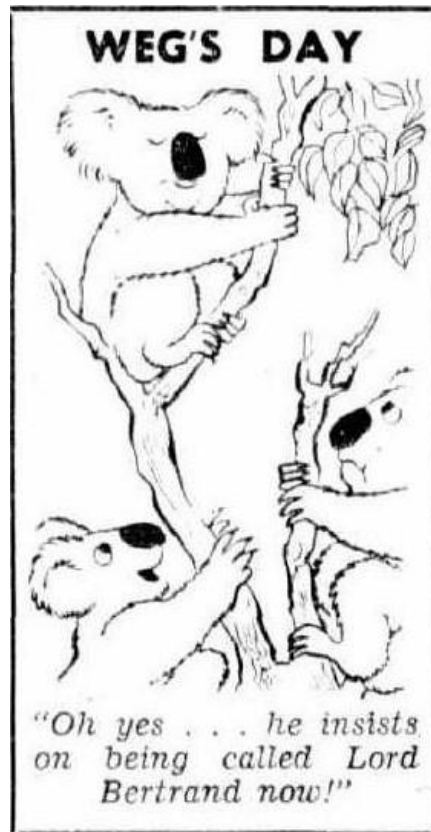
B.R.



Fig. 4a [above]: The Age, Melbourne, 27 July 1950, p. 3—reporting on BR's excursion to Melbourne Zoo the previous day. This is the most familiar photographic record of BR's lecture tour (see Wood 1957, [facing] 44 and the second volume of Autobiography, [facing] p. 48.

Fig 4b [see below]: Cartoon by "WEG" (William Ellis Green), The Herald, Melbourne, 28 July 1950, p. 4.

³⁰ On 14 July (according to a postmark of receipt) BR received a slightly disconcerting airmail from his oldest son, who reported that he was "having a rest from everything—no Susan, no children, no job" (7 July, RA2 710.111179). John had not actually worked for some time, and his children were being cared for by their nanny at 41 Queen's Road, while he stayed with a friend in Swiss Cottage, North London. Meanwhile, his wife was in Harlech, North Wales, possibly with a lover.



Letter 5 [telegram] To Archbishop Daniel Mannix
[BRACERS 2132](#)

Esplanade Hotel
Perth
[11 Aug. 1950]

ARCHBISHOP MANNIX
ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL,
GISBORNE STREET,
EAST MELBOURNE

I DEMAND THAT YOU MAKE AN IMMEDIATE PUBLIC APOLOGY FOR UNTRUE STATEMENT³¹ THAT UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REFUSED ME PERMISSION TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

BERTRAND RUSSELL

³¹ In the widely-published but inaccurate remarks at which this telegram (12b in *Papers* 26) took umbrage, Mannix (1864–1963) lamented that BR had been “treated differently” by Australian immigration authorities (see *News*, Adelaide, 9 Aug. 1950, p. 2).

T.G. 41. COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA—POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT. No.....

CASH REGISTER

TELEGRAM

AFFIX STAMPS HERE
Charges for ORDINARY RATE Telegram
For 14 Words or less :
Within a 15-mile radius 9d. Beyond a 15-mile radius
1/-. Each additional word in both cases 1d.

This message is presented for transmission subject to the Post and Telegraph Act and Regulations.

The addressee shall be responsible for all postage necessary to ensure delivery.

Words.....
Charge.....
Time.....
By.....
Remarks.....

TO *HR* ARCHBISHOP MANNIX
ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL,
GISBORNE STREET,
EAST MELBOURNE

For Office Use Only
T
C
B

I	D	THAT	YOU	MAKE
AN	DEMAND	PUBLIC	FOR	UNTRUE
STATEMENT	IMMEDIATE	APOLYGY	THE	GOVERNMENT
REFUSED	THAT	UNITED	STATES	ENTER
THE	ME	PERMISSION	TO	AMERICA
	UNITED	STATES	OF	

A REPLY PAID TELEGRAM is a courteous means of ensuring A PROMPT ANSWER

FROM BERTRAND RUSSELL
Esplanade Hotel Perth

Sch. C.5681—6/1948.

Fig. 5: BR's telegram to Archbishop Daniel Mannix (Letter 5).

Letter 6 To Elizabeth Crawshay-Williams

[BRACERS 56063](#)

<letterhead>
Hotel Esplanade
Perth
W.A.
11 August 1950

Dearest Elizabeth

Enclosed³² may amuse you and Rupert. I am sorry it got torn. Mannix is R.C. Archbishop of Melbourne. I have telegraphed to him demanding an apology.³³ I have hopes of a good old row.

This is a pleasant smallish town on a broad estuary but the inhabitants are very Tory and Xtian. I long to be home.

I am most grateful to Rupert for the trouble he is taking about Penralltgoch. I hope it will be possible to buy it. It doesn't matter much what it costs, as I can take the interest off what I pay Peter. But I must raise £2000 of the purchase price by loan or mortgage.

³² "Reply to Dr. Mannix", *The News*, 9 Aug. 1950, p. 2 (12a in *Papers* 26).

³³ See **Letter 5**.

I am very gloomy about the world. It seems Korea will not lead to a world war, but there remain Formosa, Indo-China, Hongkong, Persia, Turkey, and Finland, not to mention Tito.³⁴ I don't see how, with America in its present mood, we are to get through the next two years without a clash.

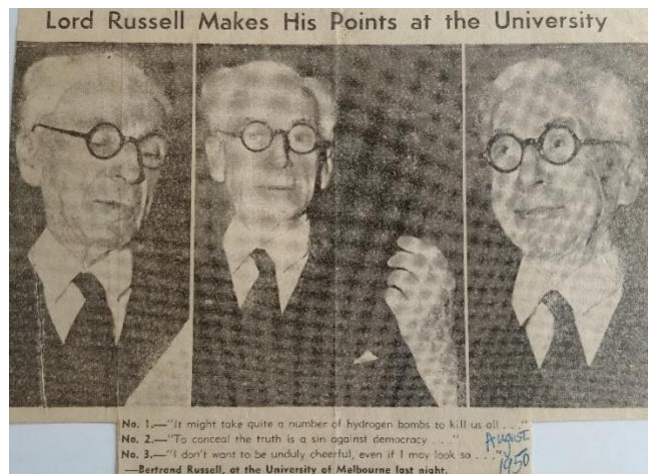
I expect to be in London on the 27th, and I shall hope to come to Wales soon after that.³⁵ Much love to you both.

Yrs aff

B.R.



Bertrand Russell (centre) with Mr. B. H. Molesworth (right), A.B.C. Director of Talks, and Mr. Gordon Batts, Talks Executive, listening to a playback of one of his talks.



Figs. 6a and [above right] 6b: From BR's news clippings—at the Australian Broadcasting Commission (The Broadcaster, Perth, 29 July 1950), and presenting "Living in the Atomic Age. I. Institutions", University of Melbourne, 25 July 1950 (not August, despite the handwritten date on the clipping from an unidentified newspaper).

³⁴ Yugoslav Communist leader Josip Broz (alias Tito, 1892–1980) had selectively revived his country's private sector and moved towards a diplomatic posture of non-alignment. This defiance of Moscow resulted in Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Soviet-led Cominform in 1948, threatening international strife of a rather different order than in any of the East–West flashpoints listed here by BR.

³⁵ Although BR later expressed regret to Elizabeth that "a mass of work" would prevent him from travelling to North Wales before flying to the United States on 22 October (8 Sept. 1950, RA Rec. Acq. 501e), he evidently relented and ended up spending a long weekend with his friends in Portmeirion from 6–9 October.

Letter 7 To Virginia Schuck³⁶

[BRACERS 65422](#)

<letterhead>
Hotel Esplanade
Perth
W.A.
[Address] 41 Queen's Road,
Richmond,
Surrey,
England.
August 13, 1950

Dear Professor Schuck

I am very sorry to bother you, but in the course of travelling round Australia I have mislaid some correspondence. I have all your letters, but I have a note to the effect that I am to lecture at Wellesley on November 2, but I cannot find any letter about it, so that I do not know who invited me, or what should be the subject, or what the fee would be.³⁷ Would it be asking too much of you to suggest that you should help me to find out?

In addition to the subjects you know of,³⁸ I could, if socio-political topics are desired, lecture on

Living in the atomic age.³⁹

Obstacles to world government.

³⁶ Victoria Schuck (1909–1999), Professor of Political Science, Mount Holyoke College, and chair of the appointments committee of the Florence Purington Foundation, under whose auspices BR would lecture at the liberal arts college for women in South Hadley, Mass.

³⁷ BR did speak there on the date in question, on "The Limits of Empiricism", for a fee of \$100.

³⁸ "When Is an Opinion Rational?" (42 in *Papers* 11); "Is Mathematics Purely Linguistic?" (43 in *Papers* 11); "What Desires Are Politically Important?" (19 in *Papers* 26); and "The Harm and Good Done by Dogmatic Ideologies" (possibly "Creeds and Ideologies" the last of three lectures on world government presented in Sydney and condensed by BR into 6 in *Papers* 26). See BR to Schuck, 9 Feb. and 2 March 1950, RA Rec. Acq. 1,740.

³⁹ BR had previously spoken on this topic at the University of Melbourne on 25 July and 1 August 1950. It was Schuck's preferred choice as his second *public* lecture at Mount Holyoke (to BR, 20 Sept. 1950, RA Rec. Acq. 1,740), where he also addressed students from three different academic disciplines. The college newspaper's report of the speech as given on 1 November (*Mount Holyoke News* 35, no. 7 [3 Nov. 1950]: 1) is too short to ascertain which of the two-part "Australian" lecture BR presented, or whether he provided a condensed treatment of both, i.e. "I. Institutions" and "II. Individuals"

The Ferment in Asia.

The impact of science on social institutions.

It is very kind of you to say you will have me met at the Air Port. I will let you know the day and hour as soon as I can.

One small matter: You know that one is not allowed to take dollars out of England, so I shall be very grateful if some part of my fee can be sent in cash by whoever meets me,⁴⁰ and not all in notes of large denominations. I hope this will not be a nuisance.

I shall be back in England on August 27.

Yours sincerely

Bertrand Russell.

P.S. Is it necessary to dress for the lectures? I don't like dressing but will of course do so if desired.

Letter 8 *To Rupert Crawshay-Williams*

[BRACERS 56064](#)

<letterhead>

Hotel Esplanade

Perth

W.A.

14 August 1950

Dear Rupert

Your letter⁴¹ talking of the failure to buy Penralltgoch⁴² reached me today. I am most grateful to you for the trouble you have taken, and sorry it has not borne fruit. But now that world war does not seem immediately imminent I am not altogether sorry. There will be time to look for something else, and I am glad not to have to deal with Peter. I shall hope to come to Wales soon after my return⁴³ for a short time, but in the main work will keep me at Richmond till I go to America. I hope Susan has not given

⁴⁰ The reason for this request is intimated in n. 17 above. Schuck herself would meet BR at Idlewild Airport on the morning of 23 October.

⁴¹ 5 Aug. 1950, RA Rec. Acq. 501e.

⁴² Peter soon got wind of BR's ruse to repurchase the property (for considerably more than the £3,000 he had paid for it in 1946) using his friends in North Wales as proxy buyers (see n. 21 above). She ended up selling the cottage to Cambridge economic historian Michael Postan (see *Crawshay-Williams 1970*, 44).

⁴³ See n. 35 above.

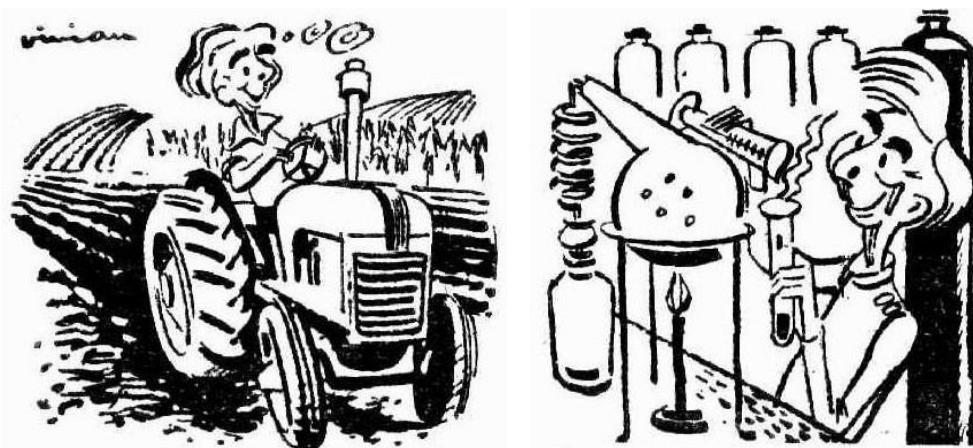
people trouble. She has fallen in love with N. Wales and is determined to find something there.⁴⁴

My row with the Archbishop came to an abrupt end. I telegraphed to him demanding a public apology, which he promptly made. I had hoped to sue him for libel.

I have little of interest to tell about Australia. It is not an exciting country. I am so anxious to get home that I can't think of much else. Love to you both.

Yrs ever

B.R.



Figs. 7a and (above right) 7b: Cartoons accompanying BR's article, "Land with a Future for Ambitious Youth", Daily Telegraph, Sydney, 23 Aug. 1950, p. 8 (14 in Papers 26). The piece provided a typically upbeat appraisal of the capacity of modern science to transform Australian agriculture in the country's arid interior.

⁴⁴ While in Harlech (see n. 30 above) Susan had also been seeing the Crawshay-Williamses in nearby Portmeirion, and was staying with them "for a week or so" when Rupert wrote to BR on 5 August. By that time she had been joined by John and their children while they looked for a suitable home, in accordance, perhaps, with BR's desire to move his family out of London (see n. 21 above). Susan was interested in renting a house in the vicinity owned by the architect Clough Williams-Ellis, but nothing came of these plans in the short term—although BR's daughter-in-law *did* end up living in North Wales.

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Andrew G. Bone is Senior Research Associate at McMaster University’s Bertrand Russell Research Centre. He is the editor of volume 26 of The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell (forthcoming 2020).

Russell's Letters: Beyond Brixton

William Bruneau
william.bruneau@gmail.com

Among the show-pieces of a great library are its literary and scientific journals or serials. If a library possesses 18th-century ancestors of bulletins, journals, and society transactions, so much the better. Even in an electronic age, university librarians see such big serials as evidence of commitment to public intellectual life: big books mean big reputations, big budgets, and big responsibilities.

At least as imposing are edited “complete works” of individual writers and scientists. Librarians and readers love the “completes” (to use the classification favoured by an archivist acquaintance of mine at UBC). The *Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell* [CPBR] does not claim to be complete, but my archivist friend says the CPBR “looks that way” to him. He is fond of the one-metre-long row of blue-bound CPBR that reside up the stairs from his office. It is hard to say how he will react to information that the letters project is going ahead. “Wasn’t the CPBR complete enough?” he will ask, forgetting that they are the *collected* papers.

Complete and collected scholarly works are usually created over decades. They may include manuscripts and correspondence or be limited to previously published books and articles. Either way, they shape the reading and writing of innumerable students, teachers, and “general readers.” They usually require significant investments of “capital”, human and financial.¹ They are called to high standards of precision and clarity, in structure and in prose (or poetry, for that matter). They depend on personal commitment, what in the 18th century was called “enthusiasm.” They matter.

Among many explanations for the publication of several “completes” in the past half-century, I emphasize two—the historical context in which they might be

¹ The origin story of the CPBR is told in Nicholas Griffin, “How the Russell Papers Came to McMaster,” *The Bertrand Russell Society Quarterly*, no. 123 (August 2004): 21-27, with details on funding provided by the Canada Council, Cyrus Eaton, the Laidlaw Foundation, and the Atkinson Foundation. Griffin’s article balances well with two recent articles: John G. Slater, “Russell Archives: The Early Days,” *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*, 38 (2018-9): 165-9, and Kenneth Blackwell, “Two Best Moments in the Bertrand Russell Archives,” *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*, 38 (2018-9): 170-172. Griffin’s article convincingly outlines the part played by William Ready, McMaster University Librarian in 1968 at the time of the purchase of the first Russell Archives, in acquiring the papers for Canada (and for McMaster).

understood, and the characteristics of researcher-writers who produce them. That second explanation accounts for the last half of this essay, a transcribed interview with the writer-researchers involved in editing and presenting the Brixton letters. My idea is to look through a wide-angle lens at the Russell Letters Project, but also to ask about the human side of the project. We might like to hear the voices of people at the beginnings of the Brixton project, their interests, their ways of proceeding.²

The CPBR is the beneficiary of a long history of major scholarly editions. This point has not been made as often as it should be. Editions “learn” from one another, but more important they get encouragement from the mere existence of their sister publications. In this essay, emphasis falls on Canadian editorial work, but a future paper might turn to several large American and European editorial ventures—the almost-complete *Correspondence of William James*,³ the *Collected Works of John Dewey*⁴ and the *Dewey Correspondence*,⁵ and the Edinburgh critical edition of the *Complete Works of Alfred North Whitehead*,⁶ each with its history. All of them point to or come at the end of long histories.

For present purposes, editorial history goes back to the 16th century CE. Most of my examples have to do with Bertrand Russell’s work and come from the 20th and 21st centuries. But the 16th century is no less revealing for my argument than recent European and American examples. It is a stretch to make the context so long as that, but there are reasons why it is worth making it. It’s true that a “great library” is likely to have complete editions of Walter Scott (at least three “almost-complete” editions, including one during Scott’s lifetime, two after—at Oxford and Edinburgh), J.M. Keynes (one edition so far), and Virginia Woolf (two or more, depending how one counts). Often enough those editions sit cheek-by-jowl with 16th-, 17th-, and 18th-century writers. In the history of scholarly publishing, one thing leads to another.

² McMaster University, “The Collected Letters of Bertrand Russell: Project Overview,” occasionally revised, 13 pages: see <https://russell.humanities.mcmaster.ca/brletters.htm#overview>.

³ I. K. Skrupskelis, et al., eds., *The Correspondence of William James* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992-2004).

⁴ Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *The Collected Works of John Dewey, 1882-1953* (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972-2008), 37 volumes; supp. index in one vol., ed. L. Hickman, 2008.

⁵ L. Hickman, ed., *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871-2007* (InteLex Past Masters/Southern Illinois University Press, 2008, online publication), 4 vols. The Dewey letters are at just over 2008, all transcribed. Some Dewey letters have been scanned for presentation facsimile online.

⁶ P. A. Bogaard and J. Bell, eds., *The Edinburgh Critical Edition of the Complete Works of Alfred North Whitehead: Vol. I: The Harvard Lectures of Alfred North Whitehead, 1924–1925—Philosophical Presuppositions of Science* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017).

The CPBR has long since joined the “club” of significant scholarly editions. Since the 1973 appearance of a “Prospectus of the Edition,”⁷ and publication in 1983 of the first CPBR volume,⁸ there has been a flood of papers and books relying on the Archives, the *Collected Papers*, and on accumulated specialist knowledge in Russell’s thought and politics.

Yet a puzzle remains. Each time the Archives expand – with the arrival of the Second Russell Archives in several stages after 1972-3, or the later accession of the third Archives, or the fourth Archives from the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation⁹ – new ventures are announced at the Bertrand Russell Research Centre [BRRC]. One might say that this is a straightforward matter of putting a superbly organized archive at the disposal of researcher-writers from all over the world – the effect is predictable – new projects arise and old ones revive. But there is more to it than the concatenation of papers and minds.

2018 was the year of the Brixton Letters. Readers of this *Bulletin* know the essentials.¹⁰ The letters Russell wrote from his Brixton prison cell in 1918 appeared¹¹ through the McMaster Library site, one by one on the hundredth anniversary of their composition.¹² Each letter was published electronically with a clear facsimile, an

⁷ John G. Slater and Kenneth Blackwell, “Prospectus of the Edition,” *Russell: The Journal of the Bertrand Russell Archives*, 12 (Winter 1973-4): 4-10.

⁸ Bertrand Russell, *Cambridge Essays, 1888-99*, eds. Kenneth Blackwell, Andrew Brink, Nicholas Griffin, Richard Rempel, and John G. Slater (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), xxxiv+554 pages.

⁹ Erica Balch, “Acquisition offers new insights into the legacy of an intellectual giant,” *McMaster Library News*, November 19, 2018: see <https://library.mcmaster.ca/news/acquisition-offers-new-insights-legacy-intellectual-giant>.

¹⁰ Two online periodicals have this year published essays about the Brixton letters project. One is the American (but international in tone and reach) *Open Culture*, “Bertrand Russell’s Prison Letters Are Now Digitized and Put Online (1918-1961):” see [http://www.openculture.com/2020/02/bertrand-russells-prison-letters-are-now-digitized-put-online-1918-1961.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A%20OpenCulture%20\(Open%20Culture\)](http://www.openculture.com/2020/02/bertrand-russells-prison-letters-are-now-digitized-put-online-1918-1961.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A%20OpenCulture%20(Open%20Culture)). The other is Clara Vincent’s paper, “La correspondance carcérale de Bertrand Russell – entièrement numérisée,” » *ActuaLitté*, 2020 February 19: see <https://www.actualitte.com/article/patrimoine-education/la-correspondance-carcerale-de-bertrand-russell-entierement-numerisee/99323?origin=newsletter>.

¹¹ Erica Balch, “Newly Digitized Bertrand Russell Prison Letters Reveal Private Thoughts of a Public Intellectual,” *McMaster University Newsletter/Brighter World*, 2018 May 22: see <https://brighterworld.mcmaster.ca/articles/newly-digitized-bertrand-russell-prison-letters-reveal-private-thoughts-of-a-public-intellectual/>.

¹² Bertrand Russell Research Centre, *The Brixton Letters*, 1918 May 2-September 13, published 2018 May 2-September 13: see <https://russell-letters.mcmaster.ca/>.

accurate typescript, and detailed notes on people, places, and events mentioned in Russell's manuscripts. They were jointly edited and produced by Ken Blackwell,¹³ Andy Bone,¹⁴ Nick Griffin, Sheila Turcon, and Arlene Duncan, the latter person being the Russell Centre's highly productive office manager and typesetter *extraordinaire*. All have worked for or with the BRRC for many years.

During the same four and one-half months of 2018, as the Brixton letters came out, the BRRC hosted the annual meeting of the Russell Society. On top of that, in early summer 2018, Ken Blackwell brought out *Bertrand Russell's Commonplace Book*, a copy of a manuscript book (nearly all in Russell's own hand) with poetry that he and Lady Ottoline Morrell had loved. It was an example of fine printing and an instance of a paper-based book analogous to the prison letters collection.¹⁵ Sheila Turcon's book about Russell's various homes and residences also appeared in time for the annual meeting.¹⁶ All the above coincided with the move of the Bertrand Russell Archives from the Mills Memorial Library at McMaster to a new home for the BRRC.

It is noteworthy that the BRRC and more particularly the Bertrand Russell Archives were from 1968 at home in the McMaster University Library. The new Archives building is similarly "home" to archivist-librarians who work at the Library. Library backing has been crucial from the start. It would need substantial comparative historical research to tell whether the BRRC-McMaster tie is unusual or if it is unparalleled. This *Bulletin* and *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies* have provided a decades-long description of that tie.

Now, what of my suggested bridge between Russell and the 16th century? I remember an up-close meeting in 1968 with the nine volumes of the *Opera omnia* of Desiderius Erasmus. Erasmus's image is less bright in 2020 than in 1620. But his memory was green in the Rare Books Room of the University of Toronto in 1968, and greener still in the successor to that establishment, the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library (as it now is in the Robarts Library in the U of T).

¹³ On the letters project, and the Brixton letters, see Kenneth Blackwell, "Two Best Moments in the Bertrand Russell Archives," *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*, 38 (Winter 2018-2019): 170-2.

¹⁴ Andrew Bone, "New and of Note (2018)," summary report of activity at the Bertrand Russell Research Centre in 2018: see <https://russell.humanities.mcmaster.ca/2018note.htm>.

¹⁵ [Bertrand Russell], *Bertrand Russell's Commonplace Book*, "All the Poems We Have Most Enjoyed Together," ed. Kenneth Blackwell (Hamilton, Ontario: McMaster University Library Press, 2018), vi+74 pages.

¹⁶ Sheila Turcon, *The Homes of Bertrand Russell* (Hamilton, Ontario: McMaster University Library Press, 2018), iv+40 pages. This was a condensed version of Turcon's articles written for the *Bertrand Russell Society Bulletin*. She is now revising those articles and adding new content using the same title as her book on the webpage: see <https://russell-homes.mcmaster.ca/>.

The *Opera* were issued by Erasmus's publisher-friend, Johann Froben, in Basel in 1540 in nine stout volumes, four years after Erasmus's death. Sitting next to them were two complete runs of the Dutch edition (1703-1706) of the same *Opera*, printed in Leiden by Pieter van der Aa.¹⁷ The Swiss and the Dutch versions of the *Opera* claimed to include "all" of Erasmus's correspondence, incoming and outgoing. These "completes" were organized and controlled entirely by their publishers, with the help of private donors ecclesiastical and aristocratic.

The claim of completeness did not survive long in the heated atmosphere of early 20th-century academic publishing. An obscure Oxford academic, Percy S. Allen (1869-1933), devoted his life to an edition of Erasmus's correspondence.¹⁸ It was a superb work of humanistic scholarship providing the original Latin letters and multilingual footnotes.¹⁹ The Allen edition almost instantly became world-famous and dominant in its field at a time when most university students still knew enough Latin to appreciate it—even if they didn't often read it.

In 1968-9, an historian-philologist working at the University of Toronto, Ron Schoeffel, became convinced that every Anglophone should have access to all of Erasmus—and certainly the letters. He quickly built scholarly support for an English translation of the whole of Erasmus's output. He acted with the influential help of the international research community and of the University of Toronto Press [UTP]. The edition is nearly done, in recent decades supervised editorially by Professor James K. McConica. Volume 19 of the *Letters* appeared in November 2019, and 83 of 89 projected volumes of the *Collected Works of Erasmus* are available on paper and online (via academic library subscription).²⁰ Between 1970 and 1985, UTP published 14 issues of a newsletter, *Erasmus in English*. The newsletter appeared annually or bi-annually and quickly acquired the sort of high reputation reserved for classy academic journals.

¹⁷ Desiderius Erasmus, *Opera omnia*, eds. Froben and Episcopius (Basel: J. Froben and Episcopius, 1539-42), 9 volumes; and Desiderius Erasmus, *Opera omnia in decem tomos distincta* (Leiden: P. van der Aa, 1703-1705), 10 volumes. The Dutch edition runs between \$Can 11,000 and \$Can 12,000 in 2020. The Froben sells for \$US 200,000 in original bindings.

¹⁸ About this man, see esp. H.M. Allen's lovely edition of *The Letters of P.S. Allen* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939).

¹⁹ Erasmus, *Opus epistolarum*, ed. P.S. Allen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906-47), 11 volumes and an index in a twelfth volume.

²⁰ *Erasmus in English*, various editors (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970-1985), 14 numbers averaging twenty carefully edited (and illustrated) pages apiece. For a taste of the *CWE*, see https://books.google.ca/books?id=6t2_DwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

Analogies between the *CWE* and the *CPBR* are plentiful: the Erasmus edition is connected to an established publisher, whereas the *CPBR* has been published by Allen & Unwin and now Routledge; the support of the Canada Council, later the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council [SSHRC] was for a while held by both projects;²¹ there's the enthusiastic involvement of well reputed volunteer editor-authors throughout the life of the projects; and there are newsletters, although the Russell newsletter long ago split into a full-fledged academic journal (supported by subscriptions, by the BRS, by McMaster University, and by the SSHRC) and, of course, this *Bulletin*.

Several more UTP publishing projects display features that are typical of the *CWE* and the *CPBR*—and indirectly connected to them. For instance, there are the “complete” John Stuart Mill papers, correspondence included. The Mill edition appeared in thirty-three volumes (1963-1991) at the University of Toronto Press.²² The edition is, of course, important for Russell studies, since Mill was a friend of Russell's parents and a presence in Russell's earliest thinking about formal reasoning, ethics, and politics. The editor of the majority of the Mill papers was John Mercel Robson (1927-1995), a lecturer, then professor of English at Victoria College in the University of Toronto. Robson's experiences as editor of Mill²³ are well displayed in *The Mill Newsletter*, conveniently available online.²⁴ If one is looking for the impetus and the momentum behind and before several “completes,” then the *News Letter* has informative tales to tell.

²¹ Mark Crane, “Forty Years of the *Collected Works of Erasmus*,” *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme*, 37, 4 (Autumn 2014): 71-79. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council decided, on rather short notice, to stop funding the *CWE* in 1995. UTP took on the entire financial and administrative burden of the project. The Russell project is supported (the *Russell* journal being one example) partly by the granting council, but also by McMaster University, whose sustained contribution included in 2018 a new physical home for the BRA and the *CPBR*.

²² A convenient list of titles, editorial staff, and the entire text of each volume, is at: <https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/mill-collected-works-of-john-stuart-mill-in-33-vols>. The Library of Liberty has underwritten the cost of putting Mill's collected works online. Few if any “completes” have benefited from such a sponsorship.

²³ John M. Robson, “Editing the *Collected Works of J.S. Mill*,” in J.M. Robson, ed., *Editing Nineteenth-Century Texts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), pp. 96-122.

²⁴ The *Mill Newsletter*, although a University of Toronto production, was digitized by University College London. UCL is closely tied in history and outlook to Mill's writings and political work. *The Mill Newsletter* is available at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bentham-project/journals/mill-newsletter>.

To the Mill edition one might add the *Collected Works of Northrop Frye* under the general editorship of Alvin A. Lee, long a professor at McMaster University and president of McMaster from 1980 to 1990. It is tempting for many reasons to imagine a linkage between and among these “completes.” The reader will decide whether to give in to temptation.

The Russell papers arrived at McMaster in 1968, just as the *CWE* began to take shape. The geography is suggestive: Toronto is just under 70 kilometres from Hamilton. On the other hand, there are no formal connections between the *CWE* and the *CPBR*. One might say they share a context and a tradition but no more. Both editions look to the highest possible scholarly standard, that much can be safely said.

When it comes to correspondence, the *CWE* and the ongoing Russell letters project have similar backgrounds. For Erasmus there were a dozen published collections in the 20th century alone, along with another complete translation into French and another complete Dutch edition. For Russell, there were the several dozen letters published at the ends of chapters in his three-volume *Autobiography* of 1967-1969, nearly all of them new to readers of that day, all enticingly interesting. Thereafter appeared the Feinberg-Kasrils collection, *Dear Bertrand Russell*, Ivor Grattan-Guinness’s *Dear Russell—Dear Jourdain: A Commentary on Russell’s Logic, Based on His Correspondence with Philip Jourdain*, Ray Perkins’s collection of letters to newspaper editors—*Yours Faithfully, Bertrand Russell*, and the philosophically important work of Anne-Françoise Schmid on Russell’s correspondence with Louis Couturat.²⁵ Looming over them are the two volumes of Nicholas Griffin’s *Selected Letters of Bertrand Russell*, a book that should be read by anyone wanting to understand Russell in private and public aspects.²⁶ Here again, the Brixton project and the larger project to publish *all* the letters, are the product of context and editorial tradition (and especially Canadian academic publishing history)—and they are a response to *demand*.

This essay mentions a time “beyond Brixton.” The interview you see below explains why this title makes sense.

²⁵ B. Feinberg and R. Kasrils, eds., *Dear Bertrand Russell: A Selection of His Correspondence with the General Public, 1950-1968* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969); Ivor Grattan-Guinness, ed., *Dear Russell—Dear Jourdain: A Commentary on Russell’s Logic* (London: Duckworth, 1978); Ray Perkins, Jr., ed. *Yours Faithfully, Bertrand Russell: A Lifelong Fight for Peace, Justice, and Truth in Letters to the Editor* (Chicago: Open Court, 2002); Anne-Françoise Schmid, ed., *Bertrand Russell: Correspondance sur la philosophie, la logique et la politique avec Louis Couturat (1897-1913)* (Paris: Éditions Kimé, 2001), 2 vols.

²⁶ Nicholas Griffin, ed., *The Selected Letters of Bertrand Russell, vol. 1: The Private Years, 1881-1914* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1992) and Griffin, ed., *The Selected Letters of Bertrand Russell, vol. 2: The Public Years, 1914-1970* (London: Routledge, 2001).

The Interview

In early afternoon 26 June 2018, Bill (William) Bruneau joined Ken (Kenneth) Blackwell, Andy (Andrew) Bone, Arlene Duncan, Nick (Nicholas) Griffin, and Sheila Turcon²⁷ to talk about the production of the Brixton Letters and the larger Letters Project. We met in a sunny second-floor reception area of the new BRRC at 88 Forsyth Avenue North, Hamilton, Ontario.²⁸

An exact transcription, complete with “ums” and “ahs”, did not seem useful. Those verbal excrescences have been removed. For the sake of readability, I have made paraphrases here and there. A few technical exchanges about the workings of computing software have been cut. The aim was to be faithful to the spirit of the conversation but keep the thing to a readable length.

A full record of the interview has been lodged with the BRRC.

My interview questions appear in italics. The interview ended at the 45-minute mark.

[Bill Bruneau/interviewer] Would you remind me what led to the Brixton Letters project, and how it fits with the larger Collected Letters of Bertrand Russell?

[Ken] 2018 was coming and we in the [Bertrand Russell Research] Centre didn't yet have something special for it.

[Andy] Ken's assessment of the origins of the project is broadly correct. We felt the need to make a bit of a splash in 2018, something commensurate with the grand architectural goings-on.

[Sheila] I don't remember exactly how we got started. I wanted editing rules so I could edit Russell's letters to Colette [O'Neil]. We had several meetings to set down principles of editing, using the first five letters he wrote to Colette as our tests. We looked at a

²⁷ For biographies of these five, see <https://russell.humanities.mcmaster.ca/brnames.htm>. Updates appear in [K. Blackwell], "Editor's Notes," *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*, n.s. 39, 2 (Winter 2019-20): 99.

²⁸ For description of the building and a tour, see <https://dailynews.mcmaster.ca/articles/new-bertrand-russell-archives-and-research-centre-to-be-a-hub-of-intellectual-activity/>.

great many letters, there were a lot of meetings, and much to discover. Later, the Brixton Letters took the stage.

[Andy] We had begun discussion of rules for the Russell Letters writ large. I felt a need to re-start that larger project and its constituent parts. They lacked focus; without focus they wanted commitment and enthusiasm. The narrowing-down to Brixton did that, producing a cache of content [for the Letters project], content that has stand-alone qualities.

[Bill] Was it a practice run of sorts?

[Sheila] The first five letters to Colette were the practice run, the basis for making a set of editing rules. We established our rules and then we stopped meeting and it seemed to come to an end.

[Bill] *Nick, out of general interest, did you do similarly detailed work in preparation for [the two volumes of your] Selected Letters? Were there scanning, typing, annotation, and so on?*

[Nick] No, the *Selected Letters* were much more sketchily annotated. They have a connecting narrative to link them together. The *Selected Letters* were limited by space. I tried to get the publisher to extend it to three volumes, but was restricted to two reasonably sized volumes. Annotations were occasionally lifted from the *Selected Letters* for the Brixton project, but were then expanded beyond recognition. References couldn't be given in full in the *Selected Letters*, but rather given concisely. Otherwise the volumes would have become much too long. I was very much constrained by space in that work.

[Sheila] ...you were not required to establish exact rules for transcription of the letters in doing the *Selected Letters*.

[Bill] *Would someone describe the larger Collected Letters of Bertrand Russell? Will they involve scanning, reliable transcription, and annotation for all 40,000 letters in the BRA? Will the project's duration exceed the lifespan of us in this room?*

[Nick] Well, if you're promising immortality... The *Collected Letters* project is going to take a very, very long time. I didn't expect it to be finished before the middle of the century.

[Andy] I think the way forward is to do a bunch of other Brixtons, that is, projects that have a beginning, a middle, and an end.

[Bill] *Will any of the letters in the project have a life beyond the web, on paper?*

[Sheila] Has anybody tried to calculate the length of any such a publication?

[Nick] Especially with annotations, these Brixton letters already come to about 160,000 words.

[Ken] And we *saved* tens of thousands of words by having a glossary of important people. A person is "important" if he or she is mentioned three times in the letters.

[Bill] *There's a comparison with the Erasmus project at Toronto, which is published entirely on paper. To read the nineteen volumes of letters means travelling to one's library and borrowing the books. Then there is the Mill edition, with its six volumes of letters. Are there other comparable projects?*

[Nick] There's Voltaire, of course. I mean, Voltaire is half the size of Russell, 20,000 letters. In the initial Voltaire edition the letters came to 107 volumes. My initial estimate is that the Russell letters would come to 180 to 200 volumes. Given the scale of our annotations, you're going easily to triple that total.

[Andy] We might consider constraining or restraining the annotations.

[Nick] But in the present arrangement, people have the choice of reading the letters they choose and not bothering with the annotations. If people want to know Russell's plans for getting out of jail quick, it's there. We've got more information than most people would want....As for rules, we need them, as this project will outlive the working lives of most of us, and parts of the project will be farmed out to others. We need uniformity of treatment, relying on written rules. This is quite different from my *Selected Letters*,

which was my own project. I went my own way, and wouldn't say I treated every letter in the same way.

[Ken] The 1,900 letters to Ottoline were typed over a period of two years; then there was the proofreading of them. We discovered three letters written on a single day; that puzzle led us to contact Texas [the Ransome collection] to see if they'd help us out. The question sometimes is how to get good scans of letters. With the Brixton letters we managed to get high quality scans.

[Andy] The scanning for the Brixton letters was done by students with some technical assistance from the [McMaster University] Library. But at the scale of the entire Russell Archive, the scanning of letters—like the editing of them—would never end. It took a long time for several students to do a hundred for the Brixton project. That leads me back to the wisdom of compartmentalizing the task.

Naming the scans, cropping them, and yet making the letters available to researchers visiting the BRA...it's not an easy matter. We had automated scans of the microfilm backup copies of Archives I in the 1970s, but the quality was far from good enough.

[Bill] Arlene, did you notice any special difficulties with the Brixton letters, or earlier letters for that matter?

[Arlene] We had some difficulties with software, particularly the way our input screens functioned [as contrasted with the eventual output that BRA users would see].

[Bill] Were there differences in the content each of you brought or contributed to the project? What was the division of labour?

[Andy] Sheila [the letters to Colette, for instance] and Nick made contributions of content, even as the rest of us worried about editing, formatting, and so on. All four of us did work on annotations to keep the thing going.

[Ken] I've just calculated that between the five of us, there are 200 years of experience in Russell editorial work. We all go over all the annotations, and have gone over them multiple times.

[Ken, Andy, Nick, Sheila] [*Interviewer summarizes a brief exchange:*] [The labour involved is great, even with distribution of the work. Sometimes Nick would serve as a kind of “outside reader” of annotations, or Andy and Ken would meet with the IT people concerned with actual production of letters. There were regular meetings of us four researchers, routine progress reports, but...]

[Nick] It took an enormous amount of time to get the electronic technology to do what we wanted it to do.

[Andy] And there are still features we’d like but don’t yet have—the ability to do various searches online, for instance. We resolved only very late the question how the project would be delivered to end users. Eventually a beta model emerged, within days of the publication of Letter 1 on May 2 [2018]. The incremental aspect of the project turned out to be a reason for its success. People reading Brixton Letter no. 11 could reasonably hope and expect to see Letter no. 77 a few months later.

[Ken] We still have a long way to go. We are at the present time maintaining two separate databases. There’s BRACERS but there’s also a new copy of selected data in another system—MPS.

[Andy] Updates have to be made in both systems at the moment, a duplication we’d like to avoid in future.

[Bill] There’s a political aspect to all of this. Projects like this cost money and require broad institutional commitment. The Brixton Letters made a splash at the opening of the new BRRC building. The aim will be, I suppose, to publicize the Letters Project, building for now on the Brixton experience—and to keep the University “on side.”

[Nick] The Brixton Letters are a tremendous trove of detail about Russell. The letters come from one of the rare times when we can track Russell day by day, knowing he isn’t going anywhere.

[Ken] We’ve answered every question except whether he grew a beard!

[Nick] Philosophically speaking, [May-September 1918] is a moment where Russell's philosophy changes quite dramatically. The philosophy that took him to 1918 was quite different from the philosophy that followed that year.

[Ken] The value of these letters was recognized at the time, immediately. The letters were typed and circulated among a small group of friends, something that had not happened before and wouldn't happen again during Russell's life. But there are tens of thousands of letters awaiting the attention of writer-researchers.

[Andy] The editors of *CPBR* volumes have made transcriptions of letters because of their interest in specific periods and problems. I have done this, so has Michael Stevenson. These smaller collections could be developed without scanning them all, but maintaining the scholarly integrity of the work. These would attract attention and build support for the larger letters project.

[Bill] Would you comment on your feelings about the project, your attitudes to it as it grew to take up as much time and energy as it finally did?

[Sheila] I can pick up on this. I found it congenial to do the work we set ourselves. We four had intensive discussions, but resolved differences in every case. There were battles royal between editors in the distant days when the *CPBR* began to appear. Those days are done.

[Nick] I've enjoyed working on it, especially because it led to new understanding of the importance of the Brixton period as a moment of philosophical change for Russell. There's little of my work that has taken me so far into the back reaches of *Principia Mathematica*, in this case mainly through his correspondence with his student Dorothy Wrinch. She was interested in transfinite set theory.

[Ken] Unfortunately, we have finite, not transfinite lives. It would be lovely now to edit the letters that Russell *received* in prison.

[Bill] Our time is up. Thank you.

The Current State of Play

Twenty months have passed since the group interview presented in this article.

Since then:

- 6,006 transcriptions have been entered into BRACERS. Because they have not been completely formatted nor annotated—and because they are not yet reliable enough—they are stored in hidden transcription fields;
- transcriptions proceed, as and when staffing and institutional resources permit;
- in the near future, some transcriptions may be associated with archival-preservation standard digitized images of the letters;
- some if not most of the technical problems hinted at in the interview remain: the BRRC still awaits the realisation of a fully functional and readily useable platform for the editing and the presentation of the *Collected Letters of Bertrand Russell*.

*William Bruneau is preparing, in collaboration with Stephen Heathorn, volume 18 of the CPBR.
He is professor emeritus of the University of British Columbia.*

Mathematics *Against* Its Metaphysicians: Oddities (?) in *Principia*

Gregory Landini
gregory-landini@uiowa.edu

In a recent article in the *Bulletin*,¹ Nicholas Griffin has offered some engaging remarks on what he calls the “Intriguing Oddness” of Whitehead and Russell’s *Principia Mathematica*. Nick makes an excellent point against those who have mistakenly viewed the work as if it were in quest for an epistemic foundation for mathematical results governing numbers as abstract particulars. He mentions theorem *110.643 $\vdash 1 + 1 = 2$ which awaits presentation until vol. 2 and remarks that we surely cannot imagine that all those theorems needed to prove it were regarded as intrinsically more credible. In truth, there can’t be anything *more* foundational than mathematics itself. But it enjoys this remarkable status *precisely* because the revolution *within* mathematics revealed that it is *not* a study of the metaphysics of abstract particulars. The diminished status of *110.643 reflects this. The Russell community owes Nick a debt of gratitude for his pioneering leadership enabling a better understanding of the wonder that is *Principia*. And seeing more by standing on his shoulders, it is time to emphasize the distinctly non-Fregean agenda of the Logicism that is Whitehead and Russell’s *Principia Mathematica*, according to the revolution, is the study of relations, not abstract particulars. Once we fully appreciate this, we have taken the first step toward realizing that the so-called “intriguing oddities” of *Principia* are by no means odd – to those embracing the revolution Whitehead and Russell so lauded. With a nod to Nick, who is quite right that *Principia* has seemed quite odd to many interpreters, I want to explain that it appears odd only from the perspective of metaphysicians who intrusively impose abstract particular upon its branches.

Whitehead and Russell learned of the revolution by mathematicians *within* mathematics at a 1900 congress in Paris. They quickly embraced it. Russell incorporated it into his draft of *The Principles of Mathematics*, securing Whitehead’s collaboration on a planned second volume. (*Principles*, in accepting an ontology of *propositions*, accepts logical abstract particulars as the subject matter of *cpLogic*. But propositions are not the subject matter of any branch of mathematics and thus this ontology of *cpLogic* is

¹ Nicholas Griffin, [“The Intriguing Oddness of *Principia Mathematica*: Some Scattered Remarks”](#), Bertrand Russell Society *Bulletin* No. 160 (Autumn 2019): 30-35.

perfectly consonant with the revolution against abstract particulars in the branches of mathematics.) *Principia Mathematica*, like *Principles* before it, wholly agrees with the revolution *within*. It did not invent it or impose it. Let's quote from the 1901 "Mathematics and the Metaphysicians":

One of the chief triumphs of modern mathematics consists in having discovered what mathematics really is ... All pure mathematics – Arithmetic, Analysis, and Geometry – is built up by combinations of the primitive ideas of logic [i.e., the study of relational structures] (in *Mysticism and Logic* (1917), pp. 75-76).

The solution of the problems of infinity has enabled Cantor to solve also the problems of continuity ... The notion of continuity depends on that of order, since continuity is merely a particular type of order. Mathematics has, in modern times, bought order into greater and greater prominence ... The investigation of different kinds of series and their relations is now a very large part of mathematics, and it has been found that this investigation can be conducted without any reference to quantity, and for the most part, without any reference to number. All types of series are capable of formal definition, and their properties can be deduced from the principles of symbolic logic by means of the Algebra of Relatives [i.e., the impredicative comprehension of relations and the study of relational structures] ... nowadays the limit is defined ... This improvement also is due to Cantor, and it is one which has revolutionized mathematics. Only order is not relevant to limits ... Geometry, like Arithmetic has been subsumed, in recent times, under the general study of order (ibid., pp. 91-92).

Russell explains that the revolution was largely inspired by Cantor and that mathematicians have finally realized that the field is the study of relational structures, not quantity (number) or any other abstract particulars (spatial figures, etc). Russell regards Cantor as leading the revolutionary transformation of mathematics that comes from holding that relations of bijection are the heart of the mathematical notion of *number* and that well-ordering relations are the heart of the mathematical notion of *ordinals* and *order type*. The key point is that the revolutionary mathematicians working

within are those with the authority to characterize the subject matter of the fields of mathematics.

The burden is not on *Principia* to emulate results of the metaphysicians which, from the perspective of the revolution, may well be derived only from their “muddled” views about abstract particulars, as Russell puts it in *A History of Western Philosophy*, (p. 829). The so-called “oddities” of *Principia* are, I fear, question-begging confabulations of the metaphysicians themselves. That includes critiques offered by Zermelo, Putnam, Quine, and a host of others, including Frege himself! Indeed, Frege’s Logicism is antithetical to Whitehead and Russell’s Logicism. Frege does not belong to the revolution *within* mathematics. He belongs with the metaphysicians of abstract particulars. He belongs with Zermelo, who never doubted that sets (of some kind) are indispensable. Frege disagrees with Zermelo, of course, because he thinks that numbers are purely *logical* particulars that are value-ranges correlated with first-level functions. Zermelo thinks his sets are distinctly mathematical entities governed by a distinctly mathematical kind of necessity. Zermelo-sets are, nowadays, conceived in terms of Cantor’s power-set operation starting from an empty Zermelo-set. The two are in significant disagreement. Yes. But it is a disagreement between disputants who *reject* the revolution within mathematics against the metaphysician’s abstract particulars. Frege was not pursuing a project of “logicism” in the same sense that Whitehead and Russell were. What they have in common is one thing – to be sure an extremely important thing – namely, that *logic* (i.e., *cpLogic*) embodies (or is able to emulate) the impredicative comprehension of functions.

The upshot is that it is the metaphysician of abstract particulars, not the Whitehead-Russell Logicism, that is imposing itself on mathematical practice. *Principia* is not imposing any agenda on the practice of mathematics but following the revolutionary mathematicians themselves in holding that only the study of kinds of relational structures matter to mathematics. *Principia* does not have the burden of emulating what the metaphysicians of mathematics think is necessary. The question of what is properly a mathematical study and what is an arithmetic or geometric necessity is, quite obviously, *not* to be determined by the very metaphysicians of abstract particulars guilty of “muddles”. *Principia* accepts the theses of the revolutionary mathematicians concerning what mathematicians have been studying all along – namely relations. It is the revolutionary mathematics that offers the light post. *Principia* is adhering to the revolution *within* mathematicians.

Principia conceives of logic as the synthetic *a priori* study of relational structures. It is synthetic because it embraces impredicative comprehension assuring that there are

relations (independently of their exemplification), and it is *a priori* because it is conducted by studying the way relations structure their fields independently of the contingencies of their exemplification. Rejecting the metaphysicians' claims concerning distinctive geometric "necessities" governing abstract particulars (e.g., Euclidean right triangles), *Principia* accepts the revolutionary non-Euclidean geometries, realizing that the fields of geometry properly concern relations of various sorts (projections, groups, and transformations of various sorts). The case is similar in the theory of cardinals. The metaphysicians of mathematics think, e.g., that *Hume's Principle* is a distinct metaphysical necessity governing cardinal numbers as abstract particulars. *Principia*, in stark contrast, finds that Cantor's power-theorem has the result that *Hume's Principle* has exceptions in descending cardinals. In the style of *Principia*, it is this:

$$Nc'\alpha = Nc'\beta \equiv \alpha \text{ sm } \beta.$$

Principia denies it in vol. 2, *100.321. *Hume's Principle* holds only for homogeneous and ascending cardinals. *Principia* has:

$$\text{Homogeneous } *103.14 \vdash N_{\circ}c'\alpha = N_{\circ}c'\beta \equiv \alpha \text{ sm } \beta.^2$$

$$\text{Ascending } *104.231 \vdash N^1c'\alpha = N^1c'\beta \equiv N_{\circ}c'\alpha = N_{\circ}c'\beta .$$

$$*100.321 \vdash \alpha \text{ sm } \beta \supset Nc'\alpha = Nc'\beta.$$

Principia is not embarrassed by such a result. It regards it as an important consequence of the revolution *within* mathematics. Take another example. The metaphysician demands infinity be a uniquely metaphysical (arithmetical) feature of natural numbers as abstract particulars. *Principia* finds that nothing in cardinality relations of similarity assures that there are infinitely many natural numbers (as finite cardinals). Following the revolution, *Principia* boldly accepts this. It is not embarrassed by it. The revolution *within* mathematics reveals that not all of the Dedekind/Peano Postulates – postulates contrived under the intuition that natural numbers are abstract particulars – ought to be emulated.

As Griffin nicely reports, *Principia's Infin ax*, (*120.03) is not an axiom of *Principia*. (It is nice to know, by the way, that any starred number ending in a .0*n* is a definition. So in particular, *120.03 is a definition of the expression "*Infin ax*".) Now *Infin ax* would appear as the antecedent clause in some theorems, including "*Infin ax* \supset Peano 4". But it

² This is part of theorem *103.14.

by no means suggests that *Infin ax* is intended to be a proper (non-logical) axiom for a non-logical theory of natural numbers (finite cardinals). The infinity of natural numbers (which usually is assured by Peano 4) is *not*, according to *Principia*, a truth of arithmetic. It may (epistemically) not be true at all. It may (epistemically) be a logical truth. But either way, it is not an arithmetic truth. This result, I hasten to emphasize, is not a *product* of Whitehead and Russell Logicism, nor is it an oddity or failing of *Principia's* Logicism. It is a result of the revolution *within* mathematics. *Principia* boldly agrees with the revolution and its results. The scandalous assessment of the status of Dedekind/Peano 4 is on a par with the scandals of the non-Euclidean geometers.

Principia seems odd only if one is against the revolution. Non-Euclidean geometry seemed odd only if one is against the revolution. It is always misguided to let metaphysical intuitions of abstract particulars and specialized kinds of non-logical necessity governing them guide one's study. Such metaphysicians have no authority to establish the desiderata that the revolutionaries *within* mathematics are to meet. What then of the status of the *Mult ax* (defined at *88.03) which Griffin shows especial concern? Griffin writes with a wonderful lightness as follows:

The multiplicative axiom seems to me the main, hard obstacle to accepting the logicist thesis. But, that said, it does hardly anything to lessen the value of the logicist project as the rational reconstruction of mathematics (p. 33).

I fear that this suggests that *Principia* fails unless it can "reconstruct" what the metaphysicians are doing with their intuitions about abstract particulars in mathematics. Zermelo imposes upon mathematics his metaphysical intuitions of abstract particulars. But his intuitions about abstract particulars, nor anyone's, have the authority to define what mathematics is, and therefore what Whitehead and Russell's Logicism (as a flagship of the revolution within mathematics) must "reconstruct." Obviously, *Principia* does not fail by refusing to reconstruct the metaphysicians' muddles. There was no attempt at a "rational reconstruction" of what the metaphysicians of abstract particulars were doing and calling "mathematics." *Principia* is simply adhering to the revolutionaries within mathematics that maintain that the subject matter of mathematics – what mathematicians actually have been studying all along – is relational structures.

In the work it does in *Principia*, *Mult ax* is analogous to what Zermelo calls his "axiom of choice". Zermelo took it as an axiom governing Zermelo-sets. Philip Jourdain

spent a good deal of time thinking he could prove choice from weaker principles – showing his work to Russell and being continually confronted with failure. *Principia* by no means regards *Mult ax* as an axiom. And it has no legitimate status as such – given the revolution within mathematics. Interestingly, there is no difference whatever in its status whether from the perspective of a theory of Zermelo-sets or from the revolutionary perspective which makes mathematics the study of relations. Zermelo’s intuitions governing his sets led him to believe there he should embrace selection Zermelo-sets even when no conditions of set existence can be found though his *Assonderung* Axiom (axiom schema of separation). No conditions of membership in such a selection set can be found. Russell felt exactly the same way about the existence of selection relations. Now a selection relation may well exist even if there is no *wff* which could appear in *Principia*’s impredictive comprehension axiom schema *12.1.11. But Whitehead and Russell judiciously understood that it is quite compatible with the revolution within mathematics to accept the existence of such a selection relation (even when selections involve infinity). It is also quite compatible with the revolution (so far as anyone knows) to reject the existence of such selection relations when infinities are involved. Naturally, then, *Principia* wisely took no stand on the matter, leaving it open whether some further proof technique may be found for *Mult ax*. The central point is to resist the temptation to think that embracing Zermelo-sets should favor holding that there are choice Zermelo-sets. Nothing in the notion of a Zermelo-set favors it. The case is just the same with such choice-relations in *Principia*’s conception of the mathematics of multiplication.

There is nothing odd in these results. What then about *Principia*’s grammar? Griffin finds *Principia*’s language “strange and baroque” (p. 30), and speaking of Frege’s *Grundgesetze* he writes: “It is an easier language to learn than *PM*’s. ... Though much less familiar, Frege’s notation is a good deal more straight-forward than *PM*’s (p. 33).” Sadly, almost no one today has, in fact, learned to read the *Grundgesetze*. What passes for “reading” the *Grundgesetze* is reading transcriptions of it based on an incorrect heuristic for translating such as is found at the Stanford Encyclopedia. The translations of Frege themselves contribute to interpretative problems which are unsolvable because they obliterate the philosophical views of the original. Identity signs often inappropriately become biconditional signs, and function terms such as “*fx*” are mistaken as *wffs* as when e.g., Frege’s $\vdash fx = gx$ is transcribed into $Fx \equiv Gx$. Frege’s central theorem $\vdash x^{\wedge} \acute{z}fz = fx$ gets incorrectly translated as saying “ $x \in \{z:Fz\} \equiv Fx$ ” and in this way his $\acute{z}fz$, which is a value-range of a function, is conflated with $\{z:Fz\}$ as if it were a class. Dummett’s influential *Frege: Philosopher of Language* presented Frege as

making the “gratuitous blunder” of slighting the term versus *wff* distinction. The blunder is with Dummett and followers. (For Frege, *wffs* are always of the form $\vdash\alpha$, where α is a term.) There remain scholars today who think Frege has no apparatus for bound versus free variables. To this day, there are still those who (operating under incorrect translation heuristics) cannot find any role for Frege’s infamous “horizontal stroke,” cannot find a role for his centrally important Basic Law IV, cannot see that his contradictory Basic Law V is a violation of a non-homogeneous instance of Cantor’s power theorem. These are just some of the many ways Frege’s notions are extremely difficult to read and understand. To this day, disputants do not agree on the proper transcription.

Principia looks like a Sally-Dick-and-Jane reader by comparison with Frege’s *Grundgesetze*. With x as a sign for an object, Frege has structured variables for his hierarchy of simple levels of unsaturated functions, $f\xi$ and $M_x \Phi x$ and $\Sigma_f (M_x f x)$. The strikingly amazing feature of Frege’s *Grundgesetze* is that its language permits *both* the expression of simple-level scaffolding and simple-level freedom all in the same language. That is because the language uses structured variables for the levels. But as a result, Frege’s language is horrifically tedious. His structured variables for levels of functions make it impossible to express the structural sameness of theorems in the infinitely many different levels he embraces, and axiomatization is impossible. Frege admits that he was relieved to be able to avoid these problems when he rewrote an entire manuscript by exploiting the new notations afforded by his theory of value-ranges. It was by only by means of the notations of his value-ranges that he didn’t need to use any structured variables higher than level-2. But his value-range theory was inconsistent.

Principia’s language of simple type scaffolding cannot express simple-type freedom. But there is a significant benefit. All its variables are “individual” variables and all of them come with simple-type regimentation: x^o , $x^{(o)}$, $x^{((o))}$, and so on, and $x^{(o,o)}$, $x^{(o,(o))}$, and so on. Any “individual” variable whose simple type is not o is a predicate variable. An atomic *wff* looks like this:

$$x^{(t_1, \dots, t_n)}(x_1^{t_1}, \dots, x_n^{t_n}).$$

For convenience one could use $\varphi^{(o)}$, $\varphi^{((o))}$, and so on, and $\varphi^{(o,o)}$, $\varphi^{(o,(o))}$, and so on, and instead write:

$$\varphi^{(t_1, \dots, t_n)}(x_1^{t_1}, \dots, x_n^{t_n}).$$

Then using conventions for restoration and using a shriek (exclamation !) to indicate the bindable predicate variable, this can be replaced by the typically ambiguous

$$\varphi!(x_1, \dots, x_n).$$

This, it must be understood, is starkly different from

$$\varphi(x_1, \dots, x_n)$$

which is schematic for some *wff* or other of *Principia*. That is, the genuinely bindable predicate variables (under typical ambiguity) are such as $\varphi!$, $\psi!$, $\chi!$, $f!$ $g!$ and always have the ! sign. In contrast, the letters φ , ψ , χ , f and g are schematic for *wffs*. *Principia* is quite coherent and easy to read – once one evades the confusions produced by so many writers who altered it to “fix it.” What could be more straightforward?

What, then, of the simple (impredicative) type comprehension axiom schema at *Principia's* *12.1.11? Much to the chagrin of those who think this a blot that undermines the success of *Principia*, it is simply a matter of acceptance. The only known semantics that models impredicative comprehension is a semantics that embraces universals in intension regimented into simple types. You can tell in *Principia's* notation when we have a genuine simple typed scaffolded dyadic relation sign $f!xy$ and when we have a sign that is eliminated by the no-relations-in-extension techniques of *21 which looks like this xRy . So it is important to emphasize that *12.11 renders relations-in-intension:

$$*12.11 (\exists f)(\varphi xy \equiv_{x,y} f!xy).$$

I think Whitehead accepted a straightforward Realist semantics for *Principia*. Whitehead's remarks in the opening of volume 2 make this clear enough – a point James Levine made long ago. Whitehead noted that the number of individuals in a given simple type may well far outstrip the number of classes emulated in that type. This is what one expects from a Realist semantics adopting universals (properties and relations) in intension. Of course, Russell hoped to offer a viable non-Realist semantics in the introduction to the first edition. It was a nominalistic semantics for *Principia's* bindable predicate variables based on a recursive definition of “truth” whose base case is given by a multiple-relation theory of judgment. Whitehead tolerated it, but one must emphasize (as *Principia* itself did) that it is not part of the formal theory. Ramsey

convinced Russell that his nominalist semantics didn't validate *12 and Ramsey quickly concocted a different nominalist semantics (which allowed infinite long disjunctions and conjunctions) while keeping the notions of *Principia's* object-language entirely unaltered. Russell couldn't abide such infinitary semantic ideas. He tried a different approach to a semantics in 1925, altering the grammar and adopting a radical Wittgensteinian extensionality principle. This was, against Whitehead's wishes, included in the new introduction. But no matter, Russell never endorsed it and found it to be a failure (although it seems to recover mathematical induction). These introductory semantics ideas were never intended to be part of the formal *Principia*. Conflating them with the formal *Principia* has led to umpteen confusions about its language and grammar, and to what has come to be called "ramified type theory" which is a confabulation of Carnap and Church that was meant to "improve" it.

It is time to move on. *Principia's* formal theory has impredicative comprehension (*12.1.11) and a simple type regimentation. Indeed, the existence of Russell's hidden substitutional theory of propositions corroborates this entirely because its goal, all along, was to emulate *simple* types of universals. I hold that from *The Principles of Mathematics* to *Principia Mathematica*, Russell's goal was to emulate the formal structure of simple (impredicative) type theory of universals (properties and relations). The substitutional theory emulates it by syntactic method of using several variables for the different simple types. Anything in the formal simple type regimented language of *Principia* can be translated into the type-free language of substitution. One can, as Whitehead and Russell knew, work in the convenient language of *Principia* with the philosophical foundations handled by its translatability into the language of substitution. It was a beautiful vision, not unlike the construction of integers and complex numbers (which one can read about in Whitehead's lovely shilling shocker: *Introduction to Mathematics*). I remain hopeful that a revival of the formal techniques of the 1906 version of Russell's substitutional theory (set out in "On 'Insolubilia' and Their Solution by Symbolic Logic") can succeed. It offers a no-general propositions theory with mitigating axioms that can, I hold, consistently accommodate any *wff* that is the translation from the language of *Principia*. Russell abandoned substitution just as he was about to succeed with it. But no matter, the point is that the revolution within mathematics is very much alive and *Principia* remains its flagship independently whether a deeper analysis can eliminate having to embrace an ontology of simple impredicative types of universals.

Principia didn't fail in its agenda to rid the branches of mathematics from the meddlesome metaphysicians peddling their indispensability arguments for abstract

particulars. It succeeded! But of course the metaphysicians persist. No metaphysician wedded to abstract particulars in mathematics will recant. I don't expect them to. But again, let's not give in to them as if they have legitimate authority to establish an agenda for what Whitehead and Russell Logicians are to emulate. And that includes Gödel, whose famous first theorem (that no consistent axiomatic theory in which every recursive function is representable is negation complete) requires one to embrace a diagonal function that can only exist if numbers are abstract particulars! There are a great many different ways to embrace abstract particulars, including, Quine-sets and Zermelo-sets, and Gödel-sets. And since " ϵ " is defined in such theories by incompatible axioms, we cannot assume they have any "sets" in common – even though each embraces extensionality. Mathematics is far more foundational than any of the many "set-theories." There was a revolution *within* mathematics, by mathematicians, against abstract particulars in any of its branches. *Principia* is its flagship.

This is not to say that there are no important oddities in *Principia*. There is *14.21 (which relies on a pedagogical heuristic only allowed in section *14), and the comments after *32.121 (which forgot that heuristic). There are also oddities concerning Whitehead's notion of the relative types of classes. There is vol. 2 p. 12 and p. 34 which appear to deny Modus Ponens. One finds *103.01 (which fails to define the relation $N_{\circ c}$ in the proper manner as found in *100.01). There is *104.01 (which fails to define the relation N^1c), and *105.01 (which fails to define the relation N_1c). Also, there are *110.03 and *110.04 (neither of which are intelligible when coupled with the other definitions). These are some of the wonderful oddities. Many in volume 2 are misdeeds of Whitehead's work in 1911. It is too bad that Russell didn't try to fix them for the new 1925 second edition. All the same, it is fortunate that *these* many oddities remain. The process of setting them right facilitates our understanding of the implications of the mathematical revolution *within*.

Gregory Landini is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Iowa. Among his many Russell-related publications are Russell's Hidden Substitutional Theory (Oxford: 1998) and Wittgenstein's Apprenticeship with Russell (Cambridge: 2007).

Reply to Landini

Nicholas Griffin
ngriffin@mcmaster.ca

I'm surprised, though gratified, that my little piece on the oddities of *Principia* in the Autumn 2019 issue of the *Bulletin* should have produced such a long and passionate reply from Gregory Landini.¹ It was not my intention to offer a serious critique of *Principia*, but rather to draw attention to some points which a present-day reader, especially one who had not been following recent *Principia* scholarship (to which Landini has been such an important contributor), might find surprising or puzzling or vexatious. Now, however, Landini has drawn me into deeper waters and I am obliged to respond.

First, full disclosure: I'm a neo-Meinongian and thus do not at all share Landini's disdain for abstract particulars. I think that is perhaps our deepest difference and it is bound to shape our differing degrees of affection for the *PM* project. But as a matter of historical fact, I question Landini's reading of the revolution *in* mathematics at the end of the nineteenth century, which he sees as a revolution against abstract particulars. It seems to me that the revolution in mathematics at the end of the nineteenth century, the one that Russell acclaims in "Mathematics and the Metaphysicians", the one that was initiated by Cantor, was the set-theoretic revolution which dominated thinking about the foundations of mathematics throughout the twentieth century, and still to a large extent does. (Think of the work of the Bourbaki group which was expressly disdainful of Whitehead and Russell's approach.) And sets are the pre-eminent abstract particulars of mathematics *as she's been done for the past century*. (There was an alternative revolution in the offing in the late nineteenth century, one which initially attracted Russell before he got on board with Cantor, namely the group-theoretic revolution. But, as a general account of mathematical foundations, it was largely headed off by the success of set theory, which could do things that group theory couldn't until the development of the concept of a category in the 1960s.)

Now, as a neo-Meinongian, I have nothing against sets (in whatever way they are characterized)—indeed, I think they are rather nice. They have well-known properties and they don't produce a metaphysics of mysterious objects (1) because they are not

¹ Gregory Landini, "Mathematics *Against* Its Metaphysicians: Oddities (?) in *Principia*", *Bertrand Russell Society Bulletin* No. 161 (Spring 2020): 41-50.

mysterious and (2) because they do not exist. (If there has been a philosophical mystery about sets, it has been about their ontological status and this is easily dispelled by Meinongianism: they don't have an ontological status.) Moreover, I like the set-theoretic revolution in mathematics, which basically treats the whole of mathematics as an emanation out of set theory, equally well. It throws a great deal of light on the nature of the structures studied by the different branches of mathematics and it gives to mathematics a unity which it didn't previously possess. It is, moreover, well-established and provides the basic, background theory utilized by (I would think) the vast majority of working, pure mathematicians.

The logicist, however, wants to go one step further and show that mathematics is an emanation out of logic. There are two well-known ways of attempting this. The first, and by far the most simple, is Frege's, which is to derive the set theory from the logic. This, we know, fails because of Russell's paradox. The second is Whitehead and Russell's much more complicated attempt to derive mathematics, branch by branch, from an underlying logic of relations. *PM* does offer a response to the paradoxes through the theory of types—though not even Russell was entirely happy with it. And with good reason, I would say; for, as Landini points out, under type theory you can't even prove that there are infinitely many cardinal numbers. To do that you need to assume the truth of *Infin ax*; namely, that for any inductive cardinal, n , there is a set with n members. In *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, Russell famously said that Dedekind's postulation of the irrational numbers had all the advantages of theft over honest toil. Here he is saying: "If you want infinitely many cardinals, you have to steal them (but far be it from me to advocate theft)." The situation is similar with *Mult ax*: you need to assume it is true in order to prove many results, including, e.g., the trichotomy law that, given two cardinals n and m , either $n > m$ or $n < m$ or $n = m$. The difference between *Infin ax* and *Mult ax* is that the former is entirely a creature of type theory; one might hope that an alternative approach to the paradoxes would enable it to be proved. *Mult ax*, by contrast, is entirely a creature of set theory: it postulates that, given any set of mutually-exclusive, non-empty sets, there is a set which has exactly one member from each of the given sets. We know of no way of proving this from general logical principles and we know now (the proof was not known at the time of *PM*) that it cannot be proven from the other axioms of set theory.

That there are infinitely many cardinal numbers and that they satisfy the trichotomy law are not, it seems to me, the intuitions of metaphysicians about numbers, but part of the real revolution, the set-theoretic revolution, *in* mathematics itself. They are part of the data that needs to be accommodated by a successful logicism. Indeed,

Russell himself felt the pressure to accommodate them: before he felt obliged to embrace type theory, he thought he could prove the axiom of infinity and took it to be a matter of “capital importance”.² In the case of *Infin ax* (and also the Axiom of Reducibility, another creature of type theory, but this time one that Whitehead and Russell, despite misgivings, *have* to assume as an axiom) we may hope that alternative responses to the paradoxes might render them unnecessary. But for *Mult ax* there is really no such hope, apart from a fundamental revision of the underlying logic, which is not impossible: paraconsistent logic may yet succeed where classical logic failed. Not surprisingly, paraconsistent set theory yields a theorem of infinity, but whether an equivalent of *Mult ax* can be derived is less clear.³ But, of course, a paraconsistentist logicism is a very different enterprise from the *PM* project. The failure of *PM* to recover these results strikes me as a real failure of Whitehead and Russell’s logicist project.

Yet I don’t regard these failures of the logicist project to be failures of the *PM* project. This is because I see *PM* as aiming primarily for a rational reconstruction of mathematics on the basis of an underlying logic of relations, rather than a complete reduction of mathematics to that logic. The idea was to push the reduction as far as it would go, but no further. In this, the methodology was exactly the same as that adopted by Russell with respect to behaviourism in *The Analysis of Mind* and with respect to extensionalization in the second edition of *PM*. In all three cases, the full reduction failed, but nowhere did it come closer to success than in the first edition of *PM* and nowhere else were such important results obtained in the attempt. Moreover, the first edition makes it explicitly clear where the two recalcitrant axioms, *Infin ax* and *Mult ax*, are needed for a result, by conditionalizing the result upon the truth of the axiom. In fact, I think that *88, where *Mult ax* is treated, is one of the gems of *PM*. At the time it was written, I don’t think there was any comparably concise, detailed, comprehensive, and rigorous account of what can be done in set theory by assuming *Mult ax* (or one of its many equivalents) and what cannot—and I’m not sure that you could find one written since. And yet, were I to go in search of such information, I would not seek it in *88, but in a modern text on set theory. Why? Because of *PM*’s convoluted notation.

I agree that anyone with a normal mathematical upbringing will probably find Part I of *PM* easier to read than Frege’s *Begriffsschrift*, but that is because *PM* notation is

² “The Axiom of Infinity” (1904), *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell*, vol. 4, *The Foundations of Logic, 1903-05*, edited by Alasdair Urquhart (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 476.

³ On the former, see Zach Weber, “Transfinite Numbers in Paraconsistent Set Theory”, *Review of Symbolic Logic* 3 (2010): 71-92; on the latter, Weber, “Transfinite Cardinals in Paraconsistent Set Theory”, *Review of Symbolic Logic* 5 (2012): 269-93.

much more like ordinary mathematical notation, from which is originated and with which they are already familiar, than Frege's "concept-script". The problems that Landini identifies with the concept-script all arise from attempts to translate it into *PM*: the two systems have very different semantics, which makes accurate translation problematic. The inconsistency of Frege's system in the *Grundgesetze* is the fault of the axioms, not the language. It's true that Frege's notation is, as Landini says, "horribly tedious", but this is because, in the absence of defined symbols, almost everything is done in primitive notation. But the absence of defined symbols makes the language much easier to learn.

In *Principia*, Landini says, "[a]n atomic *wff* looks like this: $x^{(t_1, \dots, t_n)}(x_1^{t_1}, \dots, x_n^{t_n})$." But there is not a single *wff* in the whole of *PM* that looks like that! And this matters, because if there were *wffs* that looked like that, Russell scholars would not be having the huge debate that Landini initiated as to whether *PM* has a nominalist semantics (as Landini maintains) or a realist one. That formula is what you get when you take a *PM wff*, impose missing type indices on it, and apply a single style of bindable variable in accordance with Landini's nominalist semantics. If Landini is right about the semantics, then *PM* misleadingly uses two different styles of variables, $\varphi!$, $\psi!$, etc. (including, incidentally, $f!$, $g!$, etc.) and x , y , etc., to range over the same domain (individuals) and, moreover, uses essentially the same style of variable $\varphi!$ and φ to range over different domains (individuals and predicate expressions). At the very least, *PM* notation, even at this very basic level, is not clear. If it were, we would not be having this discussion.

Nicholas Griffin is professor emeritus at McMaster University and Scholar in Residence at the Bertrand Russell Archives.

Bertrand Russell and George Orwell: Their Mutual Influence

Kenneth Blackwell
blackwk@mcmaster.ca

We don't know when the anti-totalitarian Bertrand Russell started reading that great anti-totalitarian George Orwell—maybe he read some of Orwell's novels in the 1930s or his book about the Spanish civil war—but it is clear that Orwell himself was well read in Russell's writings and in his political and religious positions. That "swine" Russell and his "beastly atheist propaganda" feature in Orwell's second novel, *A Clergyman's Daughter* (1935).¹ A famous libel lawyer for Orwell's publisher wanted to remove these epithets, but Orwell kept them because they were "in reality favourable" to Russell.² It is clear that Orwell knew well several books published by Russell in the 1930s, e.g., *The Scientific Outlook*, *Freedom and Organization*, and *Power*, all of which deal with utopian aims, he says. He reviewed *Power* favourably, but not without criticisms that became features of *1984*. In *Power* Russell had deprecated rulers who encouraged ignorance, for he hoped their societies would not survive. Ignorance, according to Orwell, doesn't prove that a slave-society will be unstable; the rulers can "deceive their followers without deceiving themselves."³ It was a long time before Russell discarded this illusion in relation to Stalin, and everyone knows Russell hated illusion. Russell, however, Orwell declares, is "one of the most readable of living writers". His "decent intellect" shows a kind of "intellectual chivalry" that is rarer than "mere cleverness". Orwell saw Russell, quite truly, as holding very different political views over the years, and that his vision of the future "has been almost uniformly pessimistic."⁴

¹ Chapter 1. I thank BRS member Sergio Setién for pointing this out on BRS-list. For the novels, I use an electronic edition, *The Complete Works of George Orwell* (Delphi Classics, 2013).

² Orwell to Victor Gollancz, 10 Jan. 1935, in Orwell, *The Collected Non-Fiction: Essays, Articles, Diaries, and Letters, 1903-1950*, edited by Peter Davison (Penguin/Kindle edition, 2017), item 223. The first eleven titles in this edition were originally published as volumes 10–20 of *The Complete Works of George Orwell* (1997-98). The Penguin/Kindle edition incorporates a supplementary volume, *The Lost Orwell*, edited by Davison (2006).

³ Orwell, review of *Power: A New Social Analysis*, *The Adelphi*, Jan. 1939; reprinted, with an introduction by Peter Stone, in [The Bertrand Russell Society Quarterly](#) no. 130-1 (May-Aug. 2006): 38-40, and in Orwell, *The Collected Non-Fiction*, item 520.

⁴ Orwell, review of *Power*.

Both men are outstanding writers, but their prescriptions for good writing are very different. Orwell tells writers to “efface one’s own personality” so prose can be as clear as a “window pane”.⁵ Orwell was obsessed with the particular, the details of life; Russell’s writing is on a more general, even grander, plane. On the personal aspect, Russell holds that writing is “an intimate and almost involuntary expression of the personality of the writer, and then only if the writer’s personality is worth expressing.”⁶ This is unexpected, for Russell usually recommends an impersonal approach.

In 1947 Orwell remarked on the political value of *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* and wished Russell would reprint it because he foresaw “the whole process [of the Russian revolution] ... from the very nature of the Bolshevik party.”⁷ The next year Russell took steps to do just that. When Orwell worked for the BBC, he commissioned a broadcast on Russell from an Anglo-Indian, Cedric Dover, but the script seems not to have survived or been published. Their personal contact can’t be dated prior to April 1945. The war was still on, although it was obviously concluding in Europe, when three anarchists were tried for breaching the Defence of the Realm Act by appealing to soldiers with their magazine, *War Commentary*. A Freedom Press Defence Committee was formed, and Russell and Orwell joined it. Orwell was to play a rare leading part in the committee. If his name had been unknown to Russell before that time, he surely saw it on the list of influential supporters. Supporters were much needed, for the case was prosecuted by none other than the UK’s attorney-general. The accused got nine months, however, instead of a possible fifteen years.⁸

That summer, on 17 August, *Animal Farm* was published. A few months later Arthur Koestler told Orwell that Russell had read and liked the book and was anxious to meet the author. Russell later wrote that it was by Orwell’s political writings, and especially *Animal Farm*, that he would be remembered; *1984* took second place in Russell’s opinion. As late as 1965 Russell stated in a film interview: “And, oh, I liked an earlier work of his, *Animal Farm*, even better. It was a very good piece of work.”⁹ There could be more to Russell’s view of *Animal Farm*. In 1945 there was an exchange of correspondence that is lost (I hope not forever). It’s clear that Orwell’s widow had two letters by Russell before her in 1967. She gives the dates (30 August and 17 September

⁵ Orwell, “Why I Write”, *Gangrel* no. 4 (Summer 1946), *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 3,007.

⁶ Russell, “How I Write”, *London Calling* no. 607 (10 May 1951): 12; reprinted as 44 in Andrew G. Bone, ed., *Collected Papers* 26 (Routledge, forthcoming 2020): 307.

⁷ Orwell, letter to Dwight Macdonald, 15 April 1947, *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 3,215.

⁸ Orwell *et al.*, “Anarchist Trial”, *Tribune*, 4 May 1945; reprinted in *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 2,663.

⁹ Emile de Antonio, film interview, November 1965. Transcript in RA Rec. Acq. 680.

1945) and says they look as if Orwell replied to them.¹⁰ Russell's archives are thin for the 1940s. What happened to Orwell's files in this respect? I have asked around, including the website of the Orwell Society,¹¹ and there is no trace of the two letters. We may suppose that *Animal Farm* was one topic. Perhaps the recently deployed atomic bomb was another. Orwell read the left-wing paper *Forward*, where Russell published his first anti-nuclear article on 18 August; Orwell published his own "You and the Atom Bomb" article two months later with this prescient conclusion about the bomb: "If, as seems to be the case, it is a rare and costly object as difficult to produce as a battleship, it is likelier to put an end to large-scale wars at the cost of prolonging indefinitely a 'peace that is no peace.'"¹² That's the cold war, which, because of nuclear readiness, is still with us.

By early 1946 Russell, Orwell, and Koestler were planning a political campaign. There is a manifesto (to which Russell did not contribute) and a point-by-point petition (to which he did).¹³ We have Koestler's account of his initial meeting with Russell, in a letter to Orwell, as summarized by his dedicated editor, Peter Davison:

Russell thought it was too late for any sort of ethical movement, because war would soon be upon them, and that more direct political action was necessary. He proposed a conference of experts representing different regions of the world and various disciplines. He did not wish to be the convener but would read a paper. Russell was, said Koestler, "tired and overworked ... he is frightened of the burden of work but at the same time very anxious to do something." Koestler thought such a conference could be fitted into their plans, and that those attending might well favour "initiating an organisation on our lines."¹⁴

¹⁰ In a letter to Chris Farley of 4 April 1967 (RA2 710.111415A).

¹¹ "Wrote Russell to Orwell", orwellsociety.com/wrote-russell-to-orwell/. My query reproduces an image of Sonia Orwell's letter to Farley.

¹² *Tribune*, 19 Oct. 1935; reprinted in *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 2,770.

¹³ "Draft for a Petition (to be signed by at least a hundred leading personalities" (1946), RA2 710.111034. Associated with the petition is a manifesto that is sometimes credited not only to Orwell and Koestler but also to Russell (e.g., in David Smith's new edition, on the occasion of his "discovery" of the manifesto, of *George Orwell Illustrated* [Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2018], pp. 222ff.). It is the petition that has verbal input from Russell. The two documents are often confused. Both appear in Appendix XV of Russell's *Collected Papers* 24 (forthcoming). The manifesto is not in Orwell's *Collected Non-Fiction*.

¹⁴ *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 2,837 note.

A meeting between Orwell and Russell was in the offing. Orwell was willing to travel to Cambridge for it. On 18 January Russell thanked Orwell for another letter which, too, is missing:

I should like very much to meet you, both because of the matter you write about and because I have very much enjoyed your writing. ... [T]he first favourable date for me is Tuesday, February 12th. If that suits you would you suggest a meeting place?

For my part, I think Koestler is perhaps a little premature, and that what is wanted at the moment is that a small group of us, who have a generally similar outlook, should meet to discuss the possible programme for the world, so that before approaching a wider circle we should know more or less what to advocate.¹⁵

That similar outlook is best described as anti-totalitarian.

Orwell told Koestler on 11 February that he was seeing Russell the next day. To his son's nanny (the Canadian Susan Watson), he referred to Russell as "The Old Earl" and asked her to switch her day off to accommodate the meeting.¹⁶ I like to imagine their lunch at the Ritz (an extraordinarily upscale hotel in Mayfair, the venue mentioned by T.R. Fyvel,¹⁷ a close friend of Orwell's). There is Russell in his customary well-tailored, three-piece suit with Lord John's gold watch and chain, and Orwell in his "herringbone tweed"¹⁸ which looked to [his nanny] like a working-man's best suit. [He liked to dress as a prole.] He [had] sent her out with precise instructions to buy him a pair of working men's braces...."¹⁹ All that Orwell, and Russell, too, would have had in common with the other diners would have been their Etonian and aristocratic manners, respectively, and their current anti-Communism, jointly.

Orwell told Koestler he would write him about the meeting. No such letter survives, and Russell's appointment diaries are missing for these years. Thus, we can't

¹⁵ Russell to Orwell, Orwell Archives, U. of London; copy in RA3 Rec. Acq. 125.

¹⁶ Watson, "Canonbury Square and Jura", in Audrey Coppard and Bernard Crick, eds., *Orwell Remembered* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1984), p. 220.

¹⁷ T.R. Fyvel, *George Orwell: A Personal Memoir* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1982), p. 150.

¹⁸ Russell did praise the Scottish tweed industry in his *Authority and the Individual* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1949), Lecture 4, p. 84f.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

prove that the meeting took place. We are left with the shaky inference that it did, only because nobody said it didn't. Much later, when asked about meeting Orwell, Russell said he only met him "once or twice in a numerous company",²⁰ so this meeting evidently made no lasting impression on his memory. However, consider this. Two days later Orwell's new book, *Critical Essays*, was published. Russell later quoted²¹ from the essays on Dickens and Wells collected in that edition. Did Orwell present him with a copy? If so, it is no longer in Russell's library.

Orwell and Russell were frequent contributors to an upstart, quality periodical called *Polemic*. It was the organ of their nascent political group of which Orwell called Russell "the chief star in the constellation."²² Besides a number of philosophical contributions to *Polemic*, Russell contributed a major political piece, "The Atomic Bomb and the Prevention of War". More on it later.

Still involved with the Freedom Defence Committee (its name was shortened in mid-1945), Russell and Orwell in 1946 signed a letter to President Truman along with Bernard Shaw, T.S. Eliot, and others of considerable eminence.²³ They requested the release of American conscientious objectors.

In commenting on Russell in a 1949 letter, Orwell was evidently privy to an inside document also received by Russell. "I see by the way that the Russian press has just described B. R. as a wolf in a dinner jacket and a wild beast in philosopher's robes."²⁴ How did Orwell get to see that document? Russell received his copy titled "B.B.C. Monitoring of Moscow Radio in English, 17 January 1949", following the fourth of his Reith lectures, from the BBC.²⁵ Given his work for the Information Research Department, perhaps Orwell's came courtesy of the Foreign Office.

In the last year of his life Orwell tried to read *Human Knowledge*,²⁶ whose philosophy Russell had aimed at the general educated public. Orwell argued against

²⁰ Russell to David Astor (of *The Observer*), 28 June 1959, RA1 750. Astor had been a good friend of Orwell's.

²¹ Russell, "George Orwell", *World Review* n.s. no. 16 (June 1950): 5-7; to be reprinted as 8 in *Collected Papers* 25 (in progress).

²² Orwell to Andrew S.F. Gow, 13 April 1946, *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 2,972.

²³ "Freedom Defence Committee Letter to President Truman", *Freedom—through Anarchism*, 18 May 1946; reprinted in *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 3,000; Blackwell and Ruja, *A Bibliography of Bertrand Russell*, revised ed., new addition F46.01c, to be reprinted in an appendix to Russell, *Collected Papers* 25 (in progress).

²⁴ Orwell to Richard Rees, 4 February 1949, *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 3,540.

²⁵ W.M. Newton (of the BBC) to Russell, 18 January 1949, RA1 430.

²⁶ Orwell to Rees, 3 March 1949, *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 3,560.

the treatment of the terms “some” and “all”. He couldn’t follow it and felt that philosophy should perhaps be “forbidden by law”.²⁷ Such reactions (although not necessarily this one) led Russell to title his next book *Unpopular Essays*.

Orwell, late in 1948, suffering from tuberculosis, took a turn for the worse. Still, working in isolation in northern Scotland, he managed to produce the final draft of *1984*, typing it himself from an incredibly crowded earlier draft. Almost immediately he told his publisher, when the proof stage was reached, to “get some eminent person who might be interested, eg. [sic] Bertrand Russell ... to give his opinion about the book.”²⁸ Two months later he put Russell at the top of the list for proof copies.²⁹ By 8 March Russell’s blurb letter had arrived. In it he wrote:

... the high expectations which I had derived from my great admiration of *Animal Farm* were not disappointed. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* depicts, with very great power, the horrors of a well-established totalitarian régime of whatever type. It is important that the western world should be aware of these dangers, and not only in the somewhat narrow form of fear of Russia. Mr. Orwell’s book contributes to this important purpose with great power and skill and force of imagination. I sincerely hope that it will be very widely read.³⁰

The book was published in Britain on 8 June 1949.

Let us examine Russell’s interpretation of *1984*’s political slant. In later years he regretted that readers took the book’s message as merely anti-Soviet. Late in 1949 he wrote of *1984*: “I liked the philosophic developments, such as the possibility of altering the past, all of which result inevitably from the pragmatist’s rejection of the concept of ‘fact’, which, in turn, comes of supposing Man omnipotent. The connection of politics with philosophy has seldom been more clearly set forth.”³¹ At this time Russell was renewing his campaign against pragmatism, which came to the fore in his Matchette lectures at Columbia University in 1950.³² He praised *1984* for the last time in 1965:

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Orwell to Roger Senhouse, 26 December 1949, *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 3,513.

²⁹ Orwell to Fredric Warburg, 5 February 1949, *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 3,542.

³⁰ The blurb will be reprinted as 6 in Russell, *Collected Papers* 25 (in progress).

³¹ “Books of the Year—II: Chosen by Eminent Contemporaries”, *Sunday Times*, London, 25 Dec. 1949, p. 3; to be reprinted as 7 in Russell, *Collected Papers* 25 (in progress).

³² *The Impact of Science on Society* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952), Chap. 6.

He foresaw the future and dreaded it, and since he wrote *1984* the world has marched on step by step towards that end and is getting very near it, and I think we shall be there completely presently and then the human race will perish. That is not my firm conviction. I hope to be able to see that many people combined will be able to avert that, but that is the way the world is going at the moment. And I think Orwell did very valuable work in that in his writing *1984*.³³

In an "Afterword" to *Animal Farm*, Orwell echoed Russell's advice to Koestler. Authors who are in agreement in their opposition to Russian Communism and what he (and Dora Russell before him) called the Machine Age, are not enough for a political movement. It's better that authors work by themselves.³⁴ Evidently Russell withdrew this advice when it came to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the Committee of 100, for there he worked with many others of his profession.

In an important essay, "Toward European Unity" (summer 1947), Orwell cited Russell on overcoming apathy and the conservatism of people everywhere: the problem is "[A]s Bertrand Russell put it recently, the unwillingness of the human race to acquiesce in its own survival."³⁵ This paraphrase of Russell derives from "The Atomic Bomb and the Prevention of War", which was to be his contribution to the meeting of intellectuals that Koestler and Orwell were rounding up for a North Wales strategy meeting at Easter 1946. Orwell's essay is important because in it he addresses the issue of preventive war. Russell's position at the time was definitely not one of "unadulterated pacifism", as he himself says in the paper.³⁶ Orwell finds the Soviet Union's opposition to the new Marshall Plan as involving "the danger of preventive war [by the USSR], with the systematic terrorizing of the smaller nations, and with the sabotage of the Communist parties everywhere." But what if the US decides to use the A-bomb while they have it and the Russians don't? Orwell's view is that it would be a "crime", one that is "not easily committed by a country that retains any traces of

³³ Interview by de Antonio, cited at note 9.

³⁴ Russell to Koestler, 13 May 1946, RA3 Rec. Acq. 1,093; original in Koestler papers, Edinburgh U. Library.

³⁵ Orwell, "The Future of Socialism: IV: Toward European Unity", *Partisan Review* 14 (July-Aug. 1947): 346-51; reprinted in *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 3,244.

³⁶ Russell, "The Atomic Bomb and the Prevention of War", *Polemic* no. 4 (July-Aug. 1946): 15-22; reprinted as 68 in *Collected Papers* 24: 372.

democracy.” Thus Orwell could not consistently have been party to Russell’s recommendation in his paper “to use any degree of pressure that may be necessary” to achieve an international or world government.

Again towards the end of Orwell’s life, it appears that he listened to or read Russell’s 1948 broadcast on “Scepticism and Tolerance” (also known as “Why Fanaticism Brings Defeat”).³⁷ Orwell criticizes the view that “we can only combat Communism, Fascism or what-not if we develop an equal fanaticism.”³⁸ This echoes Russell’s reference in his broadcast to “Those who hold that fanaticism can only be defeated by a rival fanaticism....”

Orwell’s personal life was what Russell, in an obituary contribution in 1950, called “tragic” — “partly owing to illness, but still more owing to a love of humanity and an incapacity for comfortable illusion.”³⁹ Orwell’s early hopes of Russia were destroyed without replacement. Combined with illness, Russell believed, this led to “the utter despair” of *1984*. Such loss of hope brought Russell to imagine a Buchenwald in which Goethe, Shelley and H.G. Wells were confined. Orwell was like them, he says. All four would surely have succumbed to death-camp conditions.

In Russell’s summation, in his life Orwell “preserved an impeccable love of truth, and allowed himself to learn even the most painful lessons.”⁴⁰ He was a “prophet” of what he feared.⁴¹ Yet hope is needed. To dispel the gloom⁴² is why I think Russell’s new book, published the following year, was called *New Hopes for a Changing World*. In this regard Orwell seems to have influenced Russell.

*Ken Blackwell is Secretary of the BRS and Honorary Russell Archivist at McMaster University.
He is editing volumes 24 and 25 of The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell.*

³⁷ Russell, “Scepticism and Tolerance”, broadcast on the BBC’s European Service, 1 September 1948; as “Why Fanaticism Brings Defeat”, *The Listener* 40 (23 Sept. 1948): 452-3; to be reprinted as **12** in *Collected Papers* 25 (in progress).

³⁸ Orwell to Rees, 3 March 1949, *Collected Non-Fiction*, item 3,560.

³⁹ Russell, “George Orwell” (cited at n. 21).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Russell, “John Stuart Mill” (1955), **66** in *Collected Papers* 11: 501.

⁴² There is a serious typo concerning this word at the end of Russell’s 1950 article on Orwell. As published, the phrase occurs in a sentence soon after his claim that Orwell “lost hope.” Russell is said to have written: “For my part, I lived too long in a happier world to be able to accept so glowing a doctrine.” There are no known prepublication documents, but Russell surely wrote “gloomy”. In “Symptoms of George Orwell’s *1984*”, Russell called the book “gruesome”; the author seemed to “enjoy gloom” (**33** in Bone, ed., *Collected Papers* 29: 160).

"Changing Beliefs and Unchanging Hopes": Bertrand Russell on Capitalism & Socialism¹

Adam Stromme
adamstromme@gmail.com

Of all of the venerable public intellectuals of the 20th century, few had the range of specializations of Bertrand Russell. Russell's concerns stretched from the most remote considerations of philosophy — set theory, formal logic, epistemology — to the most pressing of current events. These interests, in turn, were merely a reflection of his own many preoccupations. He had direct experience as a mathematician, philosopher, journalist, publisher, schoolteacher, professor, public intellectual, and statesman (albeit, without a state). In sum, the divisions between theory, practice, and entire disciplines were for Russell more of signposts to be noted in passing than any real check on the range of his intellectual ambitions. "If any twentieth-century author is a polymath" wrote the philosopher John G. Slater "then Russell is one". This judgement is, viewed in light of Russell's extensive *corpus* and life's work, unchallengeable.²

In addition to the range of his interests, the depth and nuance of his political analysis is particularly worthy of note. Although always displaying his signature combination of skepticism and empiricism, like most great minds probing complex social questions, Russell's worldview changed emphasis over the years. Like any diligent scientist, he was careful to fine-tune his political philosophy in the face of the dynamic changes that defined the 20th century. For Russell, consistency was only a virtue to the extent that it conformed with the most persuasive interpretation of reality, something that is often forgotten in the fog of ideological warfare. "I am in no degree ashamed of having changed my opinions" he once famously observed. "What physicist who was active in 1900 would dream of boasting that his opinions have not changed?"

A question then naturally arises: how did Russell's own views change on the big political questions he engaged with over his long and intellectually prolific life? What lessons can be taken from the changes that did occur, and how do they relate to the panoramic view of human history that he kept at the fore of his mind when conducting

¹ Russell's description of how the evolution of his worldview might best be described. Interview with Romney Wheeler on 18 May 1952. "Wisdom Series". NBC. Accessed at: <https://csl4d.files.wordpress.com/2018/09/transcript-interview-bertrand-russell-at-80.pdf>.

² Bertrand Russell, *The Basic Writings of Bertrand Russell*, Robert E. Egner and Lester E. Denonn, eds., with an introduction by John G. Slater (Routledge, 2009), p. ix.

political analysis? This essay hopes to tackle this question head on, and on a topic that promises to grant new insight into political developments confronting us in the 21st century.

Perhaps the biggest question of Russell's age was the defensibility of the capitalist system based on private property, and the desirability and feasibility of a transition to socialism. While this question formed a preponderant part of the intellectual backdrop of the Cold War, its roots go back to the very origin story of industrialization. In the 20th century, how one answered it often had a decisive impact on their interpretation of everything from the various European colonial projects, to the First and Second World Wars, to the Bolshevik, Hungarian, Spartacist, and Chinese Revolutions, to the Korean and Vietnamese wars. Today, after more than a half-century of concerted plutocratic retrenchment, it is simply unimaginable to contend that the question of capitalism or socialism—or, as Rosa Luxemburg framed it just over a century ago, with an ominous tone in the face of the rapid environmental degradation we face today, “socialism or barbarism”—is not at least as central as the very first time it came onto the stage.

As will become clear, Russell's own strident belief in the desirability of the transition to socialism was visible from an exceedingly early age, and, despite some qualifications, remained a constant through to the end of his life. But even more interestingly than the consistency of his desire for a socialist transformation of the economy, Russell's critical engagement with the rest of the socialist movement also has lessons which any serious participant in political life can appreciate. For socialists in particular, his barbed critiques of Marxism come from a place of fundamentally affirming socialist principles *as against* their practice in so-called ‘actually existing socialist states’ like Soviet Russia and Maoist China. Thus, while Russell unquestionably wrote vociferous criticisms against fellow socialists and communists, once famously writing “I am completely at a loss to understand how it came about that some people who are both humane and intelligent could find something to admire in the vast slave camp produced by Stalin”, he did so from a much firmer footing than either his Tory critics from the Right or Stalinist apparatchiks from the Left now stand.³

This essay contends that Bertrand Russell essentially retained the views on capitalism and socialism he developed early on in his life, but that he modified and changed his emphasis in response to the critical issues of his day. Exploring this subject will take the following structure. First, we will propose a novel periodization of

³ Russell, “Why I am Not a Communist”, in *ibid.*, p. 458.

Russell's intellectual work on the subject into four distinct timeframes which provide the points of emphasis while also helping to unify his sprawling commentaries into a single intellectual project. Next, we will elaborate on the background in which Russell's conversion to socialism took place, careful to identify the core of Russell's meaning of 'socialism'. After this, we will identify the two most prolific periods, pointing out how Russell's analysis across each of these fit into the panoramic view. Finally, we will close on some thoughts on Russell's sense of socialism, both constructive and critical, careful to tease out their relevance in the present day. What all of this will demonstrate is both the unity of Russell's political philosophy around socialism, as well as how Russell's advocacy of socialism was simultaneously attentive towards accomplishing concrete priorities he faced as he wrote.

In his autobiography, Russell gives the famous description of his political life as having been defined as "in turn a Liberal, a Socialist, or a Pacifist", while confessing that he always held reservations about each of these labels.⁴ Perhaps the best way to further interpret this very broad generalization in light of Russell's socialism is to give the four general intellectual periods across the latter two that Russell took the most interest in, as encapsulated in the issues he was dealing with in his own time. These were, stated in the most concise terms, first, the intellectual incubation of socialist principles during his period of study at the University of Berlin, culminating in his lectures at the LSE; second, the period leading up to and through the First World War, especially while in prison as a result of his antiwar activism; third, his interwar analyses of socialism, partly inspired by his trips to Bolshevik Russia and China; and finally, his postwar pacifist socialism, preoccupied with ending the Vietnam war and definitively aligned with the Left wing of the Democratic Socialist movement. These can be colloquially called the German Phase, the War Years, the Interwar Interlude, and the Postwar Period. Each of these shifts reflects Russell's own changing focuses during the roughly three-quarters of a century Russell was an active commentator on international politics.

Before proceeding to analyze the first three of these periods, a word on Russell's outlook. Ever the skeptic, one should see him as aspiring to avoid "the qualities possessed by the founders of sects", and to be, as he described Adam Smith, "sensible, moderate, unsystematic", careful to "always admit limitations" in any analysis, even if the propositions that remain ultimately maintain the most radical of prognoses.⁵ This is particularly helpful to bear in mind in the realm of Russell's political philosophy, as it

⁴ Bertrand Russell, *Autobiography* (Routledge, 2000), p. 260.

⁵ Bertrand Russell, *Freedom and Organization, 1814-1914* (Routledge, 2013), p. 93.

helps couch the changing emphasis behind Russell's political philosophy while also encapsulating the bedrock of the political philosophy he advocated for most forcefully across the four periods. The analysis relevant to the question set out above starts at the turning point between Liberalism and Socialism in the schematic Russell gives.

This moment marks the beginning of the German Phrase. After this period of study, he almost immediately produced a book length analysis of German Social Democracy, a well-developed political and social movement by that time, which he gave in a series of six lectures at the London School of Economics he had recently helped to found.⁶ In it, one finds many potent criticisms of Marxian socialism, but of greater interest here is the reasons Russell gives as of greatest significance in favor of socialism. Here, in an embryonic form, we find references to Russell's desire for a greater public control over production, as well his identification of a prudent socialism as attempting to encompass the new and more expansive middle class in its appeal.⁷

Russell's quick conversion to socialism is best understood in light of his godfather.⁸ As he notes in his more personal writings, Russell was intimately familiar with the political economy of J.S. Mill and this familiarity undoubtedly flavored how he came to engage with the work of the German Social Democratic movement. Mill, previously a skeptic, was in his middle-career years won over by the merits of the socialist position.⁹ In turn, his *Principles of Political Economy*, the economics textbook for a generation of British economists after its first publication in 1848, quickly reflected his new position on socialism across more than seven editions, and eventually even makes

⁶ Bertrand Russell, *German Social Democracy: Six Lectures* (Longmans, Green, and Co., 1896).

⁷ Listing errors in Marx's reasoning, Russell notes: "[S]econdly, a new middle-class is created by large firms and the use of machinery – e.g., foremen, engineers, and skilled mechanics – and this class destroys the increasingly sharp opposition of capitalist and proletariat on which Marx lays so much stress". See *ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

⁸ Writing of the formative influences of his early childhood, Russell writes tellingly: "The man with whom I most nearly agreed was Mill. His *Political Economy, Liberty, and Subjugation of Women* influenced me profoundly." In light of the timeframe he was speaking of, it is quite likely he carried with him one of the later versions of *Principles* (on which, see more below). In summing up his early intellectual influences, Mill is placed next to Darwin, having just said of the latter that his influence at that age was such that when told to choose between Christianity and Darwin, he "was always clear that, if [he] had to choose, [he] would choose Darwin." See Russell, *The Basic Writings of Bertrand Russell*, pp. 4, 13.

⁹ This change is documented by the respected economic historian Joseph Schumpeter, who identifies three phases in Mill's view of socialism: first, as "a beautiful [but impractical] dream", second, as a belief in socialism as "an ultimate result of human progress", albeit one still impossible due to "the unprepared state of mankind", and a final stage where socialism is again held out as the ultimate goal, albeit one that will have to be willed into existence and not simply inaugurated as a result of capitalism's internal collapse. See Joseph Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis*, (Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 532-533.

explicit his belief in the efficaciousness as well as the desirability of an imminent transition to a socialist economy. It comes as no surprise then that if Mill's own views formed an integral part of Russell's point of departure, then the latter would quickly come to see the importance of the socialist movement.

We find plenty of Millian sentiments in Russell's analysis of German Social Democracy which are worth elaborating, in no small part because they form constants in his later analysis. The first of these could be described as a positive recognition that some elements of the existing order give greater impetus to equity or efficiency than is sometimes recognized by Socialist proponents. In Mill's work, this takes the form of criticizing Socialist thinkers who fail to appreciate the spur to productive enterprise occasioned by some forms of limited competition.¹⁰ In Russell's case this manifests as an undogmatic sensibility towards either limited competition or some forms of small-scale enterprise, in sharp contrast to the more bombastic proclamations of figures like Marx about the necessity of total communization of production being necessary to abolish the commodity form, and other similarly draconian, pseudo-Hegelian pronouncements.¹¹

The second of these is the essential role of democracy in any transition to, and administration of, a socialist society. In light of Russell's later engagement and criticisms of the Communist movement, especially during the interwar years, the importance of this point is hard to overestimate. In the same lines where Mill advocates the socialist turn, his first point of emphasis is that its chief merit lies in empowering "the best aspirations of the democratic spirit, by putting an end to the division of society into the industrious and the idle". Elsewhere he casts skepticism on the ideas of Louis Blanc, whose view of a dictatorial transition he thought made socialism appear "to the common modes of judgement, incapable of being realized."¹² For Mill, like Russell, socialism was the political philosophy of mass-politics *par excellence*, and to attempt to inaugurate socialism without the active participation of the working class

¹⁰ "If competition has its evils, it prevents greater evils ... Instead of looking upon competition as the baneful and anti-social principle which it is held to be by the generality of Socialists, I conceive that, even in the present state of society and industry, every restriction of it is an evil ... To be protected against competition is to be protected in idleness." See John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume III: Principles of Political Economy*, John M. Robson, ed. (University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 795.

¹¹ Compare, for example, Russell's comments that "As a competitor and a rival, it might serve a useful purpose in preventing more democratic enterprises from sinking into sloth" with Mill's observation that despite "[agreeing] and sympathizing with Socialists in the practical portions of their aims" he must "utterly dissent from the most conspicuous and vehement part of their teaching, their declamations against competition." See Bertrand Russell, *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (Routledge, 1997), p. 95; Mill, *Principles*, p. 794.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 775.

was a non-starter. In his later work Russell would extend this analysis to far greater depths, and with far richer material than was possible for Mill.

For it would be a mistake to regard Russell as a mere disciple of Mill. Russell also developed and superseded Mill, in novel ways. At the time, this manifested chiefly in Russell's much more diligent analysis of the constitutional questions involved in encouraging socialism specifically, and mass-party politics in general. There was also a difference between them as to who exactly the most representative proponents of socialism were: whereas Mill analyzed Saint-Simonism and Fourierism (having a great degree of sympathy with the latter),¹³ Russell was overwhelmingly preoccupied with analyzing the work of Marx and Engels. Mill's socialism spoke French, Russell's German.

Finally, and of decisive importance in his later years, Russell did not share Mill's illusions as to the nature of colonialism and the international system, and would develop his own views on the topic in several places.¹⁴ Whereas Mill, a former administrator in the British East India Company, would go to his grave leaving uncorrected comments like "There needs be no hesitation in affirming that Colonization, in the present state of the world, is the best affairs of business, in which the capital of an old and wealthy country can engage", Russell's flirtation with support for the British Empire was vanishingly short. Equally, his understanding of the catastrophic effects of colonization was already developing, although it would take decades to fully develop.¹⁵ This focus on the international situation would mark out Russell from many other socialist writers preoccupied with domestic reforms to the end of his life.

The next phase in Russell's thought is intensely engaged with the question of ending the Great War and preventing the recurrence of anything like it again. Indeed,

¹³ "The two elaborate forms of non-communistic Socialism known as St. Simonism and Fourierism, are totally free from the objections usually urged against Communism ... The most skilfully combined, and with the greatest foresight of objections, of all forms of Socialism, is that commonly known as Fourierism." See Mill, *Principles*, pp. 210-212.

¹⁴ Elsewhere Mill would, in 1859, contend, incredibly, that the "the declared principle" of the British Empire's foreign policy was "to let other nations alone". See Mill "A Few Words on Non-intervention", in *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XXI: Essays on Equality, Law, and Education*, John M. Robson, ed. (University of Toronto Press, 1984), p. 111. It is indeed ironic that Mill wrote this during the Second Opium War.

¹⁵ Mill's relative position as an administrator certainly fed illusions of grandeur as to its supposedly greater purpose. For one thing is undoubtedly clear: colonization was exceedingly profitable for the imperial powers, if disastrous by virtually any other metric. For Russell's hostile views on colonialism, see, amongst other places, "Imperialism", in *Freedom and Organization*, pp. 345-368.

the war years would pull questions of political philosophy to the fore of Russell's mind for the rest of his life. Whereas *German Social Democracy* was the only extensive work in the field Russell had produced by the time of the outbreak of the war, within five years of its close Russell had produced over a half-dozen book-length texts on the subject, all of which touched on the "social question" to some extent. From his written correspondence, it is clear that Russell's output in technical philosophy was radically reduced in order to throw himself fully into antiwar activism. In a way, Russell regarded World War I as the original sin of the 20th century. Reflecting back on its significance decades later, he somberly confided to Ralph Miliband "I still hold that view [that the First War was a mistake] and I think England's participation in it was a mistake. I think if that hadn't happened, you would not [have] had the Communists, you would not have had the Nazis, you would not have had the Second World War, you would not [have] had the threat of a third. The world would have been a much better place."¹⁶ This judgement is hard to challenge.

To better subdivide the embarrassment of riches Russell's war years works provide, it is helpful to take the works involved in socialism's possible role in ending World War I and preventing future wars separately from those concerned with socialism, especially in the countries Russell would later visit—Soviet Russia and China. While breaking these two sections apart for analytic purposes, it is important to not fall under the impression that the two were not vitally interrelated for Russell. His interest in and sympathy with libertarian socialism was deeply fostered by his efforts to stop the war, and his collaboration with pacifists, as well as other socialists, communists, and anarchists during the war, was part of a profound exchange of political analysis across the Left. Uniting these multitudinous movements was one demand: end the war. During the height of the war, Russell commented "the greatest force on the side of peace in the world today is the international revolutionary spirit." To ensure his sense of the revolutionary spirit was clear, he immediately stresses that it is embodied in those movements "which had achieved complete victory in Russia, has profoundly influenced the official policy of Austria-Hungary, and is beginning to have a modest measure of success in Germany."¹⁷ Socialism was not merely a means to improve human civilization, it was the creed of those most vigorously trying to save it.¹⁸

¹⁶ "Wealth and Poverty", 1965 interview with Ralph Miliband, Russell Archives, McMaster University.

¹⁷ Bertrand Russell, "Pacifism and Revolution" (1917), in *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell*, Volume 14, *Pacifism and Revolution, 1916-1918*, Richard A. Rempel, Louis Greenspan, Beryl Haslam, Albert C. Lewis, and Mark Lippincott, eds. (Routledge, 1995), p. 203. Henceforth *Collected Papers* 14.

¹⁸ Though of course, as most infamously occurred in Germany, the Social Democrats would crack and fan the flames of war fever. As the participants in the Spartacist uprising would learn, the 'revolutionary

The major works of Russell chiefly reoccupied with the relationship between socialism and pacifism are *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916) and *Political Ideals* (1917). Russell would also pen *Proposed Roads to Freedom: Socialism, Anarchism, and Syndicalism* (1918), though this work is of more limited relevance on the pacifism question.¹⁹ Of these, *Principles of Social Reconstruction* and *Political Ideals* provide the most definite accounts because they deal with questions of war and peace in the contemporary context. He saw *Principles of Social Reconstruction* in particular as "a sort of guide-book to the new radicalism which we shall need after the war", adding interestingly that he would not merely "go in for socialism", but instead advocate a philosophy that made him much "more nearly an anarchist".²⁰ The lesson is clear: the war not only brought Russell much more stridently in to socialism, it also taught him to fear and distrust the state.²¹ The deepening of this current of anti-authoritarianism in Russell's thought was a critical wellspring he would expand upon for the rest of his life.

In *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, Russell argues that the State system is the chief cause of the present war, and that the yoking of State motivation to the interests of plutocratic interests on the one hand, combined with the radical freedom of powerful states in the interstate system on the other, was the overwhelming driving force of the War itself. Because the state system operated largely on the principle that 'might makes right', it follows that any attempt to reduce the propensity to war must regulate and reform the conduct between States through enforceable dictates governed by international law.²² Doing so would reduce the incentive to resort to force to rectify

spirit' would have its eyes on ousting them alongside all other 'bourgeois' politicians.

¹⁹ Although, interestingly, it includes an entire chapter on "International Relations" after a socialist transition, whereas previous socialist theorists in the vein of enumerating the nature of the relations between theoretical socialist states very rarely paid such close attention. This was no accident — Russell's preoccupation was undeniably because of Russia's exit from the war. See Russell, "The Russian Revolution and International Relations", in *Collected Papers* 14, pp. 287-292. For a wider ranging analysis, see Casper Sylvest, "Russell's Realist Radicalism", *International History Review* 36 (5) (2014): 876-893.

²⁰ Russell to Gretchen Warren, 20 July 1915, RA3 1628, McMaster University. Like any anarchist, however, Russell was more than willing to be a stickler for what anarchy entailed. For example, elsewhere he writes: "The primitive anarchy which precedes law is worse than law." See Russell, *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, p. 34.

²¹ In a letter to Ottoline, Russell remarks: "We must try to found a new school of philosophical radicalism, like the school that grew up during the Napoleonic wars. The problem is to combine the big organizations that are technically unavoidable now-a-days with self-direction in the life of every man and woman. There must, for instance, be railways, but those who work on them need not be their slaves. I believe the State ought to cease altogether, and a man ought to belong to different groups for different purposes, each group chosen by himself, not determined by geography like the State. But that is a distant speculation." Russell to Ottoline Morrell, 28 June 1915, RA3 69, McMaster University.

²² "If international law could acquire sufficient hold on man's allegiance to regulate the relations of States,

disputes or make claims. Here, in embryonic form, lay the foundations for Russell's great stress on the need for a World State.

Contrariwise, the motivations within each state within the international system can only be reformed by rendering the State more responsive to the needs of the populace, for whom war is rarely advantageous. On this point, the relation to a socialist organization of industry is obvious. "[T]he abolition of capitalism and the wage system", Russell wrote around the same time, "would remove the chief incentive to fear and greed, those correlative passions by which all free life is choked and gagged."²³ History would ultimately demonstrate the compelling relationship between international warmongering and State oppression—Russell was unable to deliver the indictment laid out in *Principles of Social Reconstruction* himself as he was barred from Glasgow as a result of his antiwar activism, a fact only serving to highlight both their truth and their subversiveness.

But for all the horrors of the war, it also vindicated national planning on a massive scale.²⁴ World War I was the ultimate trial by combat, and those nations unable to achieve total mobilization were swept aside repeatedly on the battlefield. Countries unable to mobilize effectively saw mass hunger, internal revolt, and eventually dissolution. Contrariwise, the major players immediately came to recognize that the powers of the war economy were stupendous. Even conservative politicians took notice of the astounding achievements made possible by national planning, with no less a figure than Winston Churchill remarking that the nationalized ministry of munitions was "the greatest argument for state socialism ever produced."²⁵ And indeed, the figures were formidable: even as a huge swath of its working class was exported to the front, Great Britain went from producing 91 artillery pieces, 200 aeroplanes, and 300 machine guns in 1914 to a staggering 8,039, 32,000, and 120,990 in the final year of fighting alone.²⁶

a very great advance on our present condition would have been made." See Russell, *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, p. 34.

²³ Bertrand Russell, *Political Ideals* (Spokesman, 2007), p. 25.

²⁴ Indeed, in one of his more obscure essays, Russell would go so far as to argue that the war forced many leading officials to recognize that "the peacetime system was inefficient", while at the same time the conduct of cooperating nations "was almost one of international syndicalism" in that "the conflicts were not between nations, but between commodities". For more of this interesting analysis, see Russell, "The Need for Political Scepticism", in *Sceptical Essays* (Routledge, 2004), pp. 108-123. Quote on page 118.

²⁵ Quoted in Chris Wrigley, "Churchill and the Trade Unions", in *Winston Churchill in the Twenty-First Century*, David Cannadine and Roland Quinault, eds., (Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 61.

²⁶ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (William Collins, 2017), p. 345. Figures from Gerd Hardach, *The First World War, 1914-1918*

Yet the causes these productive energies were being marshalled for were monstrous. Though arms and men continued to flow to the front, administered by efficient economic dictatorships like Ludendorff's in Germany, it was all only to ensure millions of men would be at the ready to be swiftly ripped apart by machine gun blasts or pulped by artillery fire. Meanwhile, despite the imposition of 'rationalized' production, by 1917 the average German was barely consuming 1,300 calories a day, fully a third below needed for long term survival: three quarters of a million more would perish from malnutrition as a result.²⁷ All of these things harkened to both the madness of the contemporary world, and the possibilities industrialization had made possible.

In addition to these works, two pivotal essays for Russell helped to tie these facts together into a solution that married pacifism with socialism. The first was a comparatively little-known article published in *Ploughshare* in January of 1917, entitled "The Logic of Armaments". The essay, with characteristically dry wit, opens by musing about "the custom during the nineteenth century to rejoice in material and mechanical progress" which was supposed to "diminish abject poverty and to increase the happiness of the mass of mankind."²⁸ By this narrative, all that was required was for market forces to allocate capital in a reasonably rational fashion in order to continue to develop the productive forces of society. In addition to promoting the social welfare, such a policy would also serve to "bring about a sense of solidarity" between nations.²⁹

"In all of these hopes", Russell noted, "our grandfathers were mistaken."³⁰ The Great War had turned all of the increases in productivity into increases in the means of killing men. Further, it had introduced Total War, a previously unheard of "innovation".³¹ Finally, the intelligentsia, in the form of the press, were only too willing accomplices to the slaughter. The result was that "all progress in social organization and in the technical processes of production must inevitably make wars more destructive when they do occur."³² All this cried out for some fundamental change in society. In addition to the need for reform in the international sphere, as "The Logic of

(University of California Press, 1977), p. 87.

²⁷ Chris Harman, *A People's History of the World* (Verso Books, 2017), p. 408.

²⁸ Russell, "The Logic of Armaments" (1917), in *Collected Papers* 14, p. 32.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "In former days a nation could only spare a small proportion of its men for unproductive purposes, such as war, since one man's labour did not produce much more than was required for the bare subsistence of himself and his family." See *ibid.*

³² Ibid. 35.

Armaments”, alongside a decisive majority of Russell’s output around that time stressed, socializing the domestic sphere along democratic lines remained a vital component. Notably, what was required was not merely socialization along the lines of State Socialism, but effective socialization of decision making, a difference starkly on display during the war, as the State monopolized control of production and cracked down on dissent.³³ In other words, what was needed was not *state* socialism, but *libertarian* socialism. Not statism, but syndicalism. Even before Russell was to visit the USSR, where this debate fiercely raged, it was at the fore of his mind.

Russell would link the two most explicitly in “Pacifism and Economic Revolution”, a short statement issued for *The Tribunal* just six months after “The Logic of Armaments”. Joining cause with Pacifists, here he urges them to recognize that “the same principle of the brotherhood of man which has inspired our stand against war is bound to lead those who think out its implications into a desire for a more just economic system.”³⁴ Here too there is a stress upon the importance of a non-violent revolution, mass participation, and a “pacifist spirit.”³⁵ It seemed that Russell too thought, and with even greater justification before him than Mill, that the war had produced both a proof and an imperative behind the belief that, in Mill’s words, “the time is ripe for commencing [the] transformation” to socialist production.³⁶ Russell the pacifist and Russell the socialist are two titles for the same social analysis.

The years after the Great War presented remarkable opportunities for those seeking to usher in a more just social order. All across Europe, revolution was in the air. Russell himself was at the forefront of this both domestically and internationally when he crossed the border into Russia in May 1920 as part of the British delegation of the Independent Labour Party. More symbolically, Russell’s crossing of this border would mark the crossing into a new and more vociferous era of socialist politics that would continue until 1989, and whose legacy remains hotly contested to this day.

What Russell would find in Russia is a complex picture. His reflections, published upon his return as *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism*, reflect this ambiguity succinctly. Despite the importance of a transition to socialism, his staunch concern with the democratic empowerment of the working class stayed his hand from taking seriously the doctrines of the new ruling class.³⁷ In seizing power by force their fate,

³³ Russell vigorously opposed this at the time. See, for example, “Conscientious Objectors” (1917) and “I Appeal Unto Caesar” (1917) in *Collected Papers* 14, pp. 185-186, 206-211.

³⁴ “Russell, “Pacifism and Economic Revolution” (1917), in *Collected Papers* 14, p. 196.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 197.

³⁶ Mill, *Principles*, p. 794.

³⁷ Russell’s analysis of the “Bolshevik Criticism of Democracy” in *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism*

with much the same sense of “historical inevitability” they often made such great pretenses to understand, would be to reestablish new hierarchies of power and domination on top of the old pillars they had toppled to ruin. In divorcing pronouncement from practice, the Bolshevik’s hypocrisy was such that Russell made a habit of comparing it to religion, straining to think of intellectual or socio-political movements over the broad sweep of history capable of matching Bolshevism’s manic energy. Amongst a number of references Bolshevism is regarded as akin to Medieval Christianity in its intellectual scope, and early Islam in its ambition.³⁸ In the spirit of his other work on religion, the comparison was not flattering.

Russell’s penetrating discussion of the Bolshevik mentality touches on something vital:

The war has left throughout Europe a mood of disillusionment and despair which calls aloud for a new religion, as the only force capable of giving men the energy to live vigorously. Bolshevism has supplied the new religion. It promises glorious things: an end of the injustice of rich and poor, an end of economic slavery, an end of war.³⁹

But it would be wrong to suggest that Russell was not sympathetic to both the Revolution and the possibility it represented. He regularly stressed that he did not believe blame for much of the disorganization and repression could be fairly laid at the door of the Bolsheviks alone, citing the devastation of the war, competition between the town and country, and the hostile international environment as major contributing factors to the country’s malaise.

Russell’s perennial preoccupation with bringing the democratic impulse to industrial civilization also allowed him to discern the growing disconnect between socialism and communism as advocated in the West versus the communism based out of Moscow. He observed that “Friends of Russia here think of the dictatorship of the proletariat as merely a new form of representative government, in which only working men and women have votes”, continuing that these friends “think that “proletariat” means “proletariat”, but “dictatorship” does not quite mean “dictatorship”.” “This”, he

(George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1920), pp. 134-145, elaborates on this substantially.

³⁸ In his conversation with Lenin he writes characteristically: “His strength comes, I imagine, from his honesty, courage, and unwavering faith—religious faith in the Marxian gospel, which takes the place of the Christian martyr’s hopes of Paradise, except that it is less egotistical. He has as little love of liberty as the Christians who suffered under Diocletian...” See *ibid.*, p. 43. His comparison to Islam is even more striking: “Bolshevism combines the characteristics of the French Revolution with those of the rise of Islam”. See *ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

concluded dryly, "is the opposite of the truth."⁴⁰ Though Russell would litter the book with both praise and criticism of the Bolshevik government, administration, education, and outlook, it is no exaggeration to suggest that from this point onwards he would retain a hostility to the Soviet state from the standpoint of a socialist to the end of his life.⁴¹ For Russell, the Communism advocated by Russia was a non-democratic regime which was to be resisted to the extent it replaced a functioning democratic state with a non-democratic one.⁴²

At the root of Russell's own political philosophy was the importance of enlarging the scope of democracy, and his reservations against Soviet Communism slide perfectly into that analysis.⁴³ As stated in the introduction, it is fitting to remark that the deteriorating situation in the USSR resulted in "changing beliefs" of how the situation would resolve itself, but these sat alongside Russell's radical "unchanging hopes." For it cannot be forgotten just how decisively the First World War had moved Russell to the Left. Emerging from prison, it is undeniable that Russell's disillusionment with the inability of the anti-war movement to stop the slaughter affected him deeply and brought a newfound emphasis to reforms that bordered on revolution. We find Russell, for example, writing the following around 1920-1921: "I am a Communist. I believe that Communism, combined with developed industry, is capable of bringing to mankind more happiness and well-being and a higher development of the arts and sciences, than have ever hitherto existed in the world. I therefore desire to see the whole world become communistic in its economic sense."⁴⁴ Thus in no uncertain terms, Russell endorses the principles of both socialism and communism, bearing in mind the

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 27.

⁴¹ Though like any impartial observer (of which there are precious few on the USSR), he acknowledged the miraculous increases in production brought about by the Soviets. "[A]s a national Government, stripped of their camouflage, regarded as the successors of Peter the Great, they [the Bolsheviks] are performing a necessary though unamiable task. They are introducing, as far as they can, American efficiency among a lazy and undisciplined population. They are preparing to develop the natural resources of their country by the methods of State Socialism, for which, in Russia, there is much to be said. In the Army they are abolishing illiteracy, and if they had peace they would do great things for education everywhere." See *ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

⁴² "Civilization is not so stable that it cannot be broken up; and a condition of lawless violence is not one out of which any good thing is likely to emerge. For this reason, if for no other, revolutionary violence in a democracy is infinitely dangerous." See *ibid.*, pp. 144-145.

⁴³ One can find echoes of these throughout his later years. Virtually all of the themes highlighted here can be found throughout the later years, even in works which appear to make Russell appear opposed to a socialistic transformation. The essay "Why I am not a Communist" is a case in point.

⁴⁴ Royden Harrison, "'Science of Social Structure': Bertrand Russell as Communist and Marxist", *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies* (Summer, 1989), p. 5.

technical critiques he levelled at each, and provided that both refer to a democratic project, as it often did before the rise of Stalin. In commenting on this, Royden Harrison notes: "It must be borne in mind that the term "Communist" could accommodate men and women who were libertarians just as readily as it could accommodate friends of revolutionary discipline and the dictatorship of the proletariat."⁴⁵ As his later writings in the war years and especially after his return from Soviet Russia demonstrated, Russell belonged firmly in the former camp.

What does all of this have to teach us today? First, with the spectre of Soviet totalitarianism no longer looming over the international socialist movement, and with the Communist party of China amongst the most enthusiastic practitioners of cutthroat state capitalism, it stands to reason that appeals to socialism today have a far more unambiguously democratic mantle than they have had at any point in the last century. By that measure, the appeal to socialism by political parties across the world have been partially liberated from the ominous opprobrium of neo-McCarthyism and Red-baiting which so systematically hindered their work. This Russell would have regarded as an unmitigated success, even as he would have likely bemoaned the devastation that capitalism would wreak in the former Soviet domains.⁴⁶

Second, Russell's conception of a democratic, decentralized, participatory form of socialism retains great relevance to the present moment. While certain measures broadly classified as priorities under the socialist movement today focused on large-scale national or federal interventions—such as the advocacy on the part of the Democratic Socialist of America for a Medicare-for-All Single Payer healthcare system, or British Labour's proposals before the recent national election in Britain to renationalize critical public infrastructure like railways—these large-scale plans are decisive in helping the winds begin to blow more favorably for more decentralized initiatives like Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs), which could lay the groundwork for a decentralized, democratically administered system of nationalized production not seen since the Meidner plan in the 1970s.⁴⁷ They are also plans where the concern of oligarchic administration of production are far more remote, as unlike in

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴⁶ For more on this, see, amongst others, Naomi Klein, *Shock Doctrine* (Random House Canada, 2007).

⁴⁷ For Jeremy Corbyn's proposals, see James Meadway, "It's a Good Sign That the Financial Times Is Worried About Jeremy Corbyn", *Jacobin*, 2 September 2019. Accessible at: <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2019/09/corbyn-labour-financial-times-ft-worker-ownership-funds>. For Bernie Sanders' proposals, see Matt Bruenig, "Bernie Wants You to Own More of the Means of Production", *Jacobin*, 14 October 2019. Accessible at: <https://jacobinmag.com/2019/10/bernie-wants-you-to-own-more-of-the-means-of-production>.

countries like the Soviet Union they have been proposed in countries with a far richer series of democratic institutions and traditions.

Finally, in addition to the relevance of Russell's sense of socialism to the present moment, there is also a distinct *emphasis* that should be placed on them in light of the challenges we face today. One article written by Russell towards the end of his life, and which is currently set to be printed in Volume 26 of Russell's *Collected Papers*, is entitled "Greater Democracy is Socialism's Purpose". In it, Russell tersely elaborates on the insights of his developed political philosophy which cannot but be read in light of contemporary issues. When we think of the cataclysmic challenges facing us from climate, there we read Russell observing both that "very often the profit motive acts against the general interest" citing the explicit example of "when land is cultivated in such a manner as to destroy its fertility". Simultaneously, when many turn their noses up at radical change despite the ominous signs already on full display, there too do we find Russell cautioning that socialism is precisely the remedy for "an increasing number of projects of public importance which are too big for private enterprise".⁴⁸ Finally, when not just the economic efficiency (defined by the traditional dogmas) but even the democratic credentials of Democratic Socialists come under attack, one finds Russell piercing such delusions with characteristic brevity: "Democracy clearly is incomplete when private corporations are allowed as much power as they have in America".

Recognition of these facts are rapidly developing across the world. Whether the issues are centered on ecology, immigration, inequality, or equity, their interlocking parts fit into a systematic analysis of 21st century neoliberal capitalism. A remedy for them that marries political democracy with economic socialism must be found, and rapidly. In the work of Russell, one finds a gem polished by decades of substantive engagement. It is time this part shines again.

Adam Stromme is a member of the BRS Board of Directors with a specific academic interest in Russell's political philosophy. Originally from Minnesota, he studied in Scotland and currently works at a progressive think tank in Washington, D.C.

⁴⁸ Bertrand Russell, "Greater Democracy is Socialism's Purpose", *The Argus*, 2 August 1950, p. 2.

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