



The BERTRAND RUSSELL RESEARCH CENTRE NEWSLETTER

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RUSSELL'S RELEVANCE TODAY

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Every so often something happens which reminds one just how relevant Russell's work remains today. One such occasion took place this year when Francis Boyle, a leading American professor and advocate of international law, came to the Peace Studies Centre at McMaster to give the eighteenth annual Bertrand Russell Peace Lectures. Significantly, he entitled his two lectures "The Legacy of Bertrand Russell: Principle Confronting Power" and like most of McMaster's Russell Peace lecturers, he visited the Russell Archives. There he saw Russell's last political statement, written on 31 January 1970, two days before his death, and read the day after his death at a conference of parliamentarians in Cairo. Boyle found the text so germane to his first lecture, on Palestine and international law, that he had copies made and circulated at his talk. I don't think I'd read this statement since it came out, so its contents came as a surprise—and yet were regrettably familiar. In it Russell deplores Israeli bombing raids

on Egypt, pointing out that while bombing invariably causes misery, it rarely results in victory, and pleads for a settlement that would restore the territory occupied by Israel in 1967 to the Palestinians and rescue many thousands of Palestinians from their "precarious existence" in the refugee camps. More than thirty years later, sad to say, this statement is still worth circulating at lectures on the Middle East.

Another example, of a quite different kind, is the recent publication by Oxford University Press of a collection of essays edited by Huw Price and Richard Corry under the title *Causation, Physics, and the Constitution of Reality: Russell's Republic Revisited*, which takes up Russell's claim in "On the Notion of Cause" (1913) that causality has been undermined by physics and survives "like the monarchy, only because it is erroneously supposed to do no harm". Apart from the publication of Erik Gotlind's *Bertrand Russell's Theories of Causation* in 1962, there has been very little interest in Russell's views on causality, despite their importance for philosophy in general and Russell's philosophy in particular. Not that Price & Co. intend to revive Russell's republic—they aim for a constitutional

monarchy, a reconciliation of ordinary notions of causality with physics; but it is good to see the issues Russell addressed once again being taken seriously by philosophers.

A Russellian can, alas, take no satisfaction in the fact that Russell's warnings and lamentations about the follies of humanity are as relevant today as they were when he wrote them, but one can take satisfaction in the fact that some of the philosophical issues with which Russell concerned himself have now, after a long absence, been returned to the philosophical agenda. Of course, some of Russell's issues have never left the agenda: if his views on causality have been widely ignored, his views on reference and definite descriptions have been widely debated, at least since P.F. Strawson published "On Referring" in 1950. One development which was not in prospect then was a revival of Russell's debate with Meinong, whose theory of objects it was widely assumed Russell had demolished when "On Denoting" appeared in 1905. By 2005 both theories clearly remain contenders for the hearts and minds of philosophical logicians. The latest installment in the debate can be found in the summer issue of *Russell*, which is with the printers as I write. Titled *After "On Denoting": Themes from Russell and Meinong*, it is a special double issue edited by Dale Jacquette, Ken Blackwell and myself containing nine papers that were presented at the BRRC's conference to mark the centenary of "On Denoting" in 2005. Dale and I are now going on to prepare a further fifteen papers from the same conference which Routledge are publishing under the title *Russell vs. Meinong: The Legacy of "On Denoting"*. The debate is evidently still going strong.

Having celebrated the centenary of "On Denoting" in 2005, we cannot ignore that of *Principia Mathematica* in 2010, and indeed the very first steps have been taken to organize a conference for the event. More details will be announced in subsequent issues of this newsletter. Meanwhile there is another philosophical announcement to be made. The Department of Philosophy at McMaster has just instituted an annual Russell Visiting Professorship. The idea is to bring philosophers working on Russell to McMaster for at least a semester to work in the Russell Archives and to teach a graduate course. The first incumbent, who is expected in December 2007, is Sébastien Gandon of the Université Blaise Pascal in Clermont-Ferrand, whose paper, "Some Remarks about Russellian Incomplete Symbols", appears in the current issue of *Russell*.

The past year has seen some unfortunate changes in the BRRC due to a pervasive lack of money. Last summer Michael

Stevenson left us after a four-year appointment working on *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell*. I am happy to report that he has a full-time position teaching history at York University in Toronto where he has already won a major teaching award; I am very sorry that we could not keep him at the BRRC. Many subsequent volumes of the *Collected Papers* will bear witness to his hard work and energy, not least Volume 21 which he edited jointly with Andrew Bone and which will go to the publisher this summer. Another sad event is that Sheila Turcon, the editor of this newsletter, left in May. She will continue to work part-time at Archives and Research Collections, but sadly the BRRC has run out of money to keep her working here. The chief legacy of her five years' work with the BRRC will be a wonderfully arranged and annotated edition of the large and very complicated correspondence between Russell and Colette O'Neil. I hope that in the near future we will be able to find the resources to enable her to return to the Centre.

Nicholas Griffin

OF THE MAKING OF BOOKS

In 2008, William ("Bill") Bruneau and Russell Wodell expect to publish their edition of the letters of Bertrand Russell and Gilbert Murray. Bill tells how the Russell Centre and the Russell Archives have aided his and Wodell's work.

Early in our work on the Bertrand Russell–Gilbert Murray correspondence, one of us semi-comedically claimed that we were instantiating the Sorcerer's Apprentice. In Walt Disney's 1940 *Fantasia* magic brooms and water-pails multiply dangerously, as an unfortunate amateur sorcerer gets in over his head. At several stages in the making of our book, we wondered if the Senior Sorcerer would care to rescue us. Of course, he did not and would not. After all, considering Russell's view of magic, we should have known better.

It all began with Bill Bruneau's first visits to the Bertrand Russell Archives in 2002. As any number of researchers have done, Bill toured the over 100 metres of Russell manuscript files and printed books, talked to fellow Russell scholars at work all through the summer, and acquired an idea of the enormous extent of published work on Russell and Russell's friends.

Like many before him, Bill got ambitious. He was sup-

posed to be working on the *Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell* with Stephen Heathorn. Volume 18 covers the years (1927–32) when Russell opened and helped to run Beacon Hill School, with Dora Russell very much his equal partner. During these same years Russell solidified his popular reputation in the United States and Canada; all the while, his views of science and society were taking an important turn.

Bill was tempted. For in those thousands of files and letters he found materials whose historical and cultural interest simply could not be denied. One was a 56-year-long correspondence with Gilbert Murray, after 1905 a Fellow of New College, Oxford, and then (1908–36) Regius Professor of Greek in that university. Russell was meanwhile at Trinity College, Cambridge until his dismissal in 1916. Their letters are at McMaster in original manuscript (Murray's manuscript and typescript letters), in photocopied originals (of Russell's letters and some of Murray's), and transcriptions (both sides, typed twice over, first by Russell's valiant secretary in 1949—with the addition of annotations in Russell's hand—and again by typists at the Bodleian Library in Oxford).

Russell was cousin to Murray's wife, Lady Mary Carlisle. They lived just after 1900 in the same region, and between 1900 and the Great War the two writer-teacher-scholars were in nearly constant touch. They both opposed the Boer War, and both were committed to the grand project of a civil, peaceable, and literate world order. Russell loved Murray's translations of Euripides, and Murray tried to love Russell's studies in mathematical logic. By September 1902 the letters (we have a dozen of them for 1901–02) had swung to logic and ethics, and away from literary matters. On 16 September 1902, Russell announced he was “deep in proofs and symbolic logic”. Russell was at the last stages of his *Principles of Mathematics*, a book for which Murray had honest, if amateur (his word) admiration. Said Murray on Russell's technical work in philosophy:

“I am so glad about the symbolic logic. I wonder if I have any prospect of understanding it. I always imagine that I understand metaphysics, the ordinary sort, Hegel etc, but sometimes the thought occurs to me that I don't at all, and can pretend that I do only because of the loose untechnical language. As soon as it gets to really hard mathematics, I know quite well that I don't understand.” (RA1 710.053459)

By 1910 Russell and Murray were seeing each other perhaps a dozen times each year, despite their geographical separation during term time. All the while the correspondence grew denser. Murray's comments on Russell's marital dif-

ficulties showed honest sympathy and fellow-feeling, as did Russell's on the ups and downs of Murray's life as father of a growing brood. Murray was a lifetime teetotaler and a non-smoker, whereas Russell was a determined and content enjoyer of alcohol and tobacco. Because they valued intelligence, free thought, and thoroughgoing liberality, Russell and Murray could and did make compromises, in daily life and occasionally in matters of high principle.

In compromises and meetings at various political half-way houses, we see the “real” Murray and the “real” Russell. From 1897 on, Murray sought to convey the significance and the power of ancient Greek thought and literature to “ordinary folk”. It was his explanations of all this, in letters to Russell, that suggested to Bill what might be the crucial features of Murray's Hellenism, and of his liberalism. Similarly, Russell's discussions of his patriotic anti-nationalist views in 1914 and later, showed the roots of his pacifism, his internationalism, and his reasoned politics on authority and liberty. In their friendship, their similarities, and their differences, the ideas and the world-views of each and both men were perhaps clearer than they could be in their writing and action.

Murray became Russell's editor-publisher in 1912. The year before, as Editor-in-Chief of the Home University Library, Murray asked Russell to do a book on mathematics or logic “for shopkeeper assistants”. Russell in 1911 supplied *The Problems of Philosophy* for the Library, to which manuscript Murray responded with pleasure and even, if Murray's letters are to be taken at face value, something approaching glee.

By 1914, having established their pro-worker, anti-imperialist credentials, and collaborated on books and arguments in history, politics, literature, and philosophy, it gave both of them a shock of surprise that they could not agree, or even *hope* to agree, on the greatest political problem of the century: the rights and wrongs of the Great War.

By January 1915 Murray was acting as a vigorous propagandist for British participation in World War I, whereas Russell had gone down the pacifist, anti-conscriptionist road that finally took from him his lectureship at Cambridge, and then his personal liberty, with his imprisonment in 1918. Murray and Russell agreed on the psychological and cultural sources of war, and the historical reasons for it. Yet Murray could readily commit himself, heart and soul, to the League of Nations, and later to the United Nations, whereas Russell was sceptical of a world governance system that would not, and could not, govern anybody. Although the correspondence al-

most dried up in late 1914 and through most of 1915, there was never a complete drought. Lady Mary anxiously asked in the spring of 1915 if Bertie was “angry”, and she obviously sought to mediate a re-opening of correspondence and personal visits.

But finally it was Murray’s energetic campaign to keep Russell out of prison in 1918 that opened the floodgates, so that from January 1918 the letters grew again in frequency and interest until many decades later. In the 1920s and early 1930s, when their paths diverged (Russell in China and active at Beacon Hill School, Murray closely tied to the development of the League of Nations and the UK League of Nations Association), the letters were not so numerous as after 1935. But there was no pause until near the end, when Murray pre-deceased Russell on 20 May 1957.

We have the help of BRACERS, the computerized record of Russell’s correspondence. It’s not complete, but still allows us to follow branching pathways in Russell’s literary output and political work, and with relative ease. Comparable documents for Murray are harder to come by, and sometimes have disappeared. The Murray archives are mainly at the Bodleian Library in Oxford, well maintained by the Keeper of Western Manuscripts. Because the great body of Russell *and* directly pertinent Murray manuscripts available at McMaster, we found it possible to write our book.

The Russell Research Centre draws together permanent staff and associated researcher-writers, and these friendly colleagues make even the most obscure problems look soluble. The problems are sometimes *not* easy of solution, of course. But the thing is, the existence of the Centre and of those associated scholars, committed to collegial work and to outreach in the Canadian and international academic community, is an encouragement to make books like the one we’re doing.

It was partly the reputation of the Centre that led Christopher Stray to ask Bill to write for his new collection of papers on Gilbert Murray,* and to attend a conference in London that persuaded all of us to take the risky step of *promising to meet a deadline*. After that meeting, Bill had a lengthy conversation with a Vancouver freelance writer and editor, Russell Wodell,

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*C. Stray, ed., *Gilbert Murray Reassessed: Hellenism, Theatre, and International Politics* (O.U.P., 2007): Bruneau, “Gilbert Murray, Bertrand Russell, and the Theory and Practice of Politics”, and Bruneau and Wodell, ““Yours Obediently, Gilbert Murray”: Letters to *The Times*”.

with whom he has worked for nearly twenty years on various scholarly projects. We agreed to try a first collaboration on an edited group of Murray’s letters to *The Times*. With that experience in hand, we turned to a full-scale study of the entire body of letters between the two men.

The Russell–Murray friendship deserves to be far better known than it is. Both men worked for transparently humane and democratic politics, a politics of international civility and liberality and reason: as usual, and perhaps more than usual, we have need of their ideas and plans.

Of the making of books there is no end; our experience of the Russell–Murray volume makes us think this is no bad thing.

William Bruneau

SPOTLIGHT ON COLETTE

Russell’s correspondence with Lady Constance Malleson (stage name, Colette O’Niel) has been somewhat neglected. The reasons for this are varied. There are many more letters to Lady Ottoline Morrell, and she as the doyenne of the Bloomsbury Literary Circle has cast a huge shadow. Ottoline was Russell’s first grand passion. She published a memoir and has had more than one biography written about her. A book of her photographs has also been published. Colette’s letters, on the other hand, were edited but never published. Colette wrote two autobiographies, but there are no biographies of her.

Colette was an aristocrat, born Lady Constance Annesley, the daughter of the fifth Earl Annesley and his wife Priscilla, in 1895. She was raised mostly in Ireland at Castlewella in County Down, although the family also kept a home in London. Colette did not follow the traditional path for young women of her social status—she decided early on to be an actress and married very young, in 1915, to another actor, Miles Malleson. The couple married only so that they could live together which would not have been possible until Colette turned 21. They planned a life of sexual freedom and never wavered from that decision. In 1916 she met Russell through the No-Conscription Fellowship (NCF), and their great love affair—which ebbed and flowed over the decades—began. Throughout it, Colette remained fiercely independent, continuing to act despite Russell’s initial disapproval, always maintaining a separate residence, and setting her own course in life.

Editing the correspondence between them has been a huge challenge. First of all, Russell, in an attempt to divert Colette from acting, encouraged her to write. Colette did begin to write, but she did not give up her career as an actress. He had a short story that she wrote under a pseudonym accepted by the *English Review* in September

1919. Colette's next writing project was a series of "Letters: Posted and Unposted", which was also published by the *Review*. Russell, after reading a few of these fictitious letters, proposed that they write and publish their own letters. Colette agreed. She went back and re-wrote many of the letters already written, making them more literary, deleting sections, putting in fake addresses (the same addresses that she used in "Letters: Posted and Unposted"), and changing some dates.



Russell was to write some letters while he was in Russia in 1920; too busy there, he wrote them upon his return but with fake dates. When he left for China in the autumn of 1920, their letters project was still underway, and he was to write further letters for the project from there. Colette continued with the editing, and sent him typescripts. She, of course, had to possess both sides of their actual correspondence in order to do this. However, in November 1920, he decided that the project had to be abandoned—none of his love letters could be published while he was alive—and that seems to have scuttled the project, even though he held out hope that more impersonal letters could be published. He was soon to marry his second wife, Dora, and in 1921 all contact between Colette and Russell ended until 1925.

The remains of this literary project are in the Russell Archives, as is a set of typescripts done of their first letters written in 1916, and various typescripts of the letters he wrote to Colette while in prison. Many of these documents are in different boxes, and thus have to be linked through BRACERS, a challenging task since dates have been changed and texts altered. The linking has been done on print-outs but not yet added into the BRACERS database. In addition, most of Colette's letters are no longer extant—they burned in a fire in

Sweden—at least that is what Colette wrote to Ken Blackwell, Russell Archivist, in 1968. Oddly enough, Russell's letters to her survived. The original letters that remain from her to Russell are those that were never returned to her. Before her letters were destroyed, a highly edited and annotated typescript was prepared as "Letters to Bertrand Russell from Constance Malleson, 1916–1969". We know they are highly edited because things that Russell asks about are not mentioned in the letters that he references. And in some cases, both an original letter remains as well as an edited letter—Colette and Phyllis Urch must have been working from a copy—and the differences are clear to see.

Another wrinkle thrown into this mix of letters is the prison communications from 1918. Colette communicated with Russell in a variety of ways—first as "G.J." in *The Times*, and then via messages, using the pseudonym "Percy" in official letters written by Russell's brother, Frank, and by Gladys Rinder who filled in when Frank could not write. Percy was a nickname that Colette used with her family; the significance of G.J. is not yet known. The letters also contain messages using her stage initials "C.O'N", and under her own name, Lady Constance. Lady Ottoline suggests in her memoir that Russell was so anxious for these messages that Miss Rinder sometimes made them up! Russell, of course, replied to these messages in his letters to Frank and Gladys Rinder. In addition, he wrote letters in French to Colette, disguised as letters from Mirabeau to Sophie de Monier and Buzot to Madame Roland. He then began to smuggle letters in and out of prison between the uncut pages of books. These letters are often undated, fragmented—different pages of the same letter were placed in different parts of the book—and out of sequence. Then various typescripts were made of them with textual changes. Unfortunately, when the letters were being collected and prepared for Russell's *Autobiography*, he used a set of these typescripts.

Apart from love and passion, and the agonies of jealousy suffered by Russell—he was not able to embrace emotionally the freedom that was Colette's touchstone, although he often was in intellectual agreement—what makes this correspondence of value? Colette was Russell's "Heart's Comrade", as he called her, and he was able to pour out his innermost thoughts to her. Their correspondence is one of Russell's longest correspondences, lasting from 1916 until shortly before his death in 1970. She was his inspiration—he writes that *Roads to Freedom* is full of "memories of you to me". The early days contain letters about the NCF, people they knew, and

politicians. Colette gave up a role in the film made about Lloyd George in 1918 because of Russell's disgust. Unfortunately, there are no known copies of the two films she did make but *The Life Story of David Lloyd George* was found in 1994 and restored. Colette played "Helen" in Gilbert Murray's translation of *Euripides* at the Old Vic in 1919—Russell, of course, knew Murray and there are letters about the staging of this play.

They resumed their love affair briefly in Cornwall in the summer of 1930, but Russell's third wife, Patricia, also entered the scene that summer as a governess to the children of Russell's second marriage. Colette wrote to Russell extensively during the years of World War II, first in Finland from where she had to flee the advancing Red Army, and secondly from Sweden, and he wrote from the relative safety of the United States. It is amazing that these letters were delivered half-way around a globe which was engulfed in conflict. Colette became a tireless advocate on behalf of Finland. The couple resumed their love affair in 1948 in Stockholm—she wearing the dress that she had made to welcome him back from China in 1921 and never wore, and he with the coin on his watch chain that she had given him in 1919—but again the reconciliation was brief. Colette was badly damaged in the conflagration that ended his third marriage, and they parted in 1949 never to meet again. Their correspondence resumed in 1955, and although the letters were brief, he could still toss off pithy retorts such as "Ben Gurion says 'admirable, but why save the Arabs?' Nasser says 'admirable, but why save the Jews?'" in 1963.

Hopefully a book will result from my efforts—their long-lost literary endeavour finally brought to fruition. Russell's side of the correspondence should appear eventually in the planned online edition of his letters. It is hoped that Colette's side will not continue to remain confined to the Archives.

Sheila Turcon

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Since the Centre was opened in 2000, over thirty undergraduate students have worked at researching annotations, proofreading, and scanning letters. I contacted two of them and caught up on what they have been doing since graduation.

You can see Lindsay Holdsworth in the group photograph

in the first issue of this *Newsletter* in 2002. She had planned on going into teaching. Instead, deciding that marking was not for her, she worked as a library clerk at London Public Libraries to finance her Master of Library and Information Science degree at Western which she began in January 2006. She is now working as the Children's / Young Adult Librarian at Masonville Branch where she is also Assistant Branch Supervisor.

Sarah Hipworth's photograph appears in the second issue of this *Newsletter* in 2003. Sarah enrolled in a master's degree in publishing at Simon Fraser University. She has begun a three-month internship at Coach House Press in Toronto. She will then write her thesis and hopes to have all the requirements for her degree done by December 2007. Sarah's interest in publishing was encouraged by her work at the Russell Centre, as she either participated in or observed the entire process of creating camera-ready copy of volumes of the *Collected Papers* to send to our publisher, Routledge, for printing. Her work here had a direct relationship on her choice of career. (S.T.)

WHAT'S NEW



Website Our website contains information on editors, staff, and visitors as well as the all-important progress of volumes: <http://russell.mcmaster.ca>.



Publications Vol. 21, *How to Keep the Peace, 1935–38*, edited by Andrew G. Bone and Michael Stevenson, is forthcoming in 2008. A special issue of *Russell*, titled *After "On Denoting"*, was published in June 2007.



Students Last summer Tara Michaluk worked for us, this summer we have Emily Varga. During the past academic year, Massoud Abbasi was our student assistant. Dominique Déry continued her valued work on BRACERS input. She has graduated and Ateeka Kahn has begun her training under Ken Blackwell.

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Russell portrait by Carola Spaeth Hauschka

