

## “A Locked Diary” [1890–94]

IN HIS *Autobiography* Russell mentions that at the time he proposed to Alys he “kept a locked diary which I very carefully concealed from everyone” (1967, 82). This hitherto unpublished diary enriches the account in his *Autobiography* of his late adolescence at Pembroke Lodge, friendship with Edward FitzGerald, undergraduate years at Cambridge, courtship of Alys Pearsall Smith and stay at the Paris embassy. Interspersed with these topics are numerous references to family members and other aristocrats, political controversies (especially Irish Home Rule), books read, concerts attended, games played and moods experienced.

When Russell wrote of the diary many years later, his memory appears to have played him false on two occasions. He claimed that in the diary he had “recorded my conversations with my grandmother about Alys and my feelings in regard to them” (1967, 82). There are no entries recording these conversations in the diary and no leaves have been removed. Instead of recording these conversations in the diary, he seems to have written them out in letters to Alys (see those of 13 Nov. and 19 Dec. 1893 and 4 Feb. 1894). In the other instance, Russell asserted that the reflections printed in the *Autobiography* had been shown “to nobody, not even Alys, until a much later date” (1967, 84). The reflections are printed there from a single sheet of pencilled manuscript (RA 710.055228) dated 20–1 July 1894 and are virtually identical to the version in the diary. An entry by Alys (who had been keeping the diary since February) on 21 July reveals that Russell showed the diary version of the reflections to her that day.

Russell had left the diary with Alys at the beginning of their three months’ separation, i.e. before he went to Paris on 10 September 1894 to take up the position of honorary attaché at the British Embassy. He wrote her on 28 September: “I am seized with a great wish to see what thee has been writing in the Journal all this time—would it be possible to send me it and its key? I would return it a day or two after getting it.” Alys responded: “I have written very little in our Journal, nothing of interest, but will send it to thee.... Thee might keep it and write it for the remaining (period of their separation), as so much more happens to thee than to me” (30 Sept.). Russell made a very brief entry in the diary on 3 October and acknowledged its receipt to Alys on the 4th, commenting:

I am *so* glad to have the Journal, but I think I shall send it back soon, as I shouldn’t write anything in it—when I’ve written to thee there’s nothing left

to write. But it is lovely to have the heavenly times we've had together in the Book—they all come so vividly before me as I read. I only wish I'd gone on keeping the Journal till I gave it to thee—some chronicle of this time last year would have been very nice.—But it is sad to see how many entries there are since August 17 of thy having cried thyself to sleep, looked at my photo and felt sad and depressed and wept, and so on.

On 12 October Russell wrote Alys: "I am returning the journal ... in today's bag. I have nothing to write in it myself, since I express everything to thee. I send the key with this." He did in fact make one long entry in the diary during the nine days he had it—the entry of 6 October.

The diary falls into several sections. Only three complete sections and part of a fourth are printed here, since the rest are in Alys's hand. (1) The first of Russell's sections is untitled. It consists of twenty-nine entries from 18 May 1890 (Russell's eighteenth birthday) to 5 December 1892, ending at the bottom of the thirty-fifth page. (2) The second section is titled "A History of My Friendship for Fitz." It runs for four unnumbered pages. (3) The third section, which starts at the top of the next page following seven blank pages, begins on 21 July 1893 and is titled "Occasional Journal". Russell's entries run for six pages, the last of the five prose entries being dated 16 September 1893. Alys's many entries begin on 6 February 1894 on the bottom half of a new page on which Russell has carefully copied out the second stanza of a poem—in contrast to the much less careful handwriting of the previous page, which probably marks the end of the entry of 16 September. Hence the poem appears here as a separate, undated entry. (4) The fourth section, beginning on 20–21 July 1894, consists of four entries by Russell scattered among Alys's intentionally "dry" entries (as he characterized them in a letter of 12 April). His final entry, made in Paris sometime between 6 and 12 October, is a Shakespearean sonnet.

Subsequent sections consist of entries by Alys, beginning with her note that she had received the diary at Friday's Hill on 15 October. She restricted herself in these sections almost entirely to recording trips, publications and the like. She also kept formidable annual lists of books she and Russell read, but they duplicate the information in "What Shall I Read?" After the break-up of their marriage in all but name in 1902 there are two intensely personal entries by Alys in 1907 and 1909. They are quoted in Barbara Halpern's book on her family (Strachey 1980, 222–3). Russell, for his part, resumed keeping a diary in 1902, but in another notebook. It will be found in *Collected Papers* 12.

The "locked diary" is a black notebook, the clasp, which is still locked, having been forcefully removed from the front cover and depending from the back. The flyleaf is inscribed "Bertrand Russell / Pembroke Lodge." The notebook is in the possession of Mrs. Halpern. A microfilm is in the Russell Archives (REC. ACQ. 434). The printed text has been read against the copy-text (the original notebook).

SUNDAY MAY 18. 1890. My birthday. One of the pleasantest I have ever spent. A beautiful day. The hyacinths, may, and lilac in full bloom and the nightingale in full song. How delightful, as compared with last birthday, and still more the birthday before last, the feeling of repose in being established at home, instead of having Southgate like a nightmare always before one. My hopes for the coming year are that I shall become less introspective, less shy, more genial, less cynical, more firm and steadfast of purpose. My fears are that I shall become more conceited, more argumentative, more conventional, that I shall lose whatever poetic feeling I may have had, that my conceit will prevent my making friends at Cambridge. Conceit is at present my great danger, and Pharisaism, which is closely allied to it, is another. I have been too happy the last few months not to feel some of the bad effects which happiness always has upon me.— 10

This morning I went to Channing Hall where Mr. Farrington preached one of his usual see-saw sermons, from which very little is to be learnt, though today he did say many very true and useful things, as that it is bad to be always examining the state of one's own soul. Miss Bühler came to luncheon, and in the afternoon Ribblesdale and Addy Lister came, and in the evening a large Burdett party. After dinner we read aloud out of Boswell, from where Uncle Rollo and I had stopped. Mr. Mahoney and his two 20 dreadfully shy boys came early in the afternoon and I played fishponds with them, which seemed to amuse them.—As presents I had from Granny O'Brien's novel, from Auntie, *New Aids to Reflection*, from Miss Bühler *Der Trompeter* by Scheffel. Of course I had no time for reading any of them. I got a letter from Frank at Granny's instigation to say he regretted the old affair of the breakfast-letter. His moralizing sentences did not sound very real; they seemed to come out of the Latin *Principia*. However I dare say it was only a little awkwardness in expressing things he is not used to.

May 19. Did a three-hour conics paper in the morning, and a little of the Rigid in the afternoon. Sat out with Granny in the evening, and played 30 tennis with Miss Fraser. Dined at Lady Sophia Melville's with Auntie and Uncle Rollo, and heard Brandram recite afterwards, which was of course delightful. He recited Henry the V's speech before Agincourt, Macaulay's "Horatius", a very funny piece about a bishop and a caterpillar, and Poor Wichard's proverbs. He seemed to put a totally new life into Macaulay, whom I had never half appreciated before.

May 20. In the morning worked at the Rigid but only got one example out. In the afternoon, ditto. In the evening went to Petersham with Uncle Rollo to see the flags and arches for Dysart's reception, which were certainly very pretty, though the whole affair showed more of the feudal spirit than I like 40 to see. It is really extraordinary that here should be a man who has spent

£40,000 on his own house before doing a thing for the Sanitation of Ham, and that he, when he returns, in spite of his heresy and of his being so destitute of agreeable qualities, should receive all this ovation. Really people ought to learn to look more at the man and less at the wealth and rank.—Granny and Auntie dined with Lord Dysart, as did Lilly Blyth, who is staying here a day or two, and Uncle Rollo went to dine in town, so I was left alone, and read Ruskin's *Modern Painters*. The book is *most* interesting to me as a study of mind; his mind is so exactly the antitype of the mathematical that I have great difficulty in entering into it. He has a certain artistic  
 10 want of logic and sturdiness, which latter I should think must be almost inseparable from such a stationary pursuit as art appears to be, if not retrograde. However, his religiousness and deductive reasoning from the nature of God are delightful after more modern modes of thought. Of the purely artistic parts of the book I can of course say nothing.

*May 22.* Yesterday Rochat arrived to luncheon, having got a few days' holiday from Belgium. I was delighted to see him again after so many years. He is very shy, and owing to his rigid orthodoxy many subjects are excluded from conversation, as I should not like to hurt him by revealing the state of my own opinions. However he has by this time become much more conver-  
 20 sational, and there is always a good deal to say about old reminiscences, etc. I lent him *Past and Present* to read while I was at work this morning, which seemed to amuse him mightily. Yesterday afternoon I wired to Robson to say I wasn't coming and took Rochat out on the Pond in Metrodora and then played tennis with him, which I did again this afternoon with the addition of Miss Fraser. Yesterday evening we read Boswell, and this evening we played lines, which was particularly amusing with Rochat, whose word was almost always obvious from his manner. I have been working at the Newton, having got stuck in Routh.

*May 23.* In the morning rolled the tennis-court and worked. In the after-  
 30 noon went to Robson who elucidated several problems in Routh, by normal and tangential resolutions instead of horizontal and vertical. Most of them however temporarily stumped him. At dinner described to Granny the miseries I used to suffer from being oddly dressed as a child, the subject having come up à propos of Baby. She seemed vexed, and evidently thought I exaggerated.—In the evening read Boswell, and were much amused by a most furious letter from Johnson to M'Pherson.

*May 24.* (Saturday). In the morning did a three-hour Mechanics Paper (Trinity) wherein I did seven out of ten questions. In the afternoon we had tennis, with Mr. Ross the Elphinstones' friend, and Maud Burdett, who  
 40 with Rochat and me made up a four. It was a magnificent day but very hot,

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43: 4 **the birthday before last** At the time of his sixteenth birthday, Russell had just entered Southgate. See the "Greek Exercises", entry 16.

43: 10–11 **Cambridge** Russell wrote his scholarship examination in December 1889 and learned of his success in the same month. An unidentified press clipping, probably from a Richmond paper, recorded: "The Hon Bertram *(sic)* Russell, youngest son of the late Lord Amberley, and grandson of the late Earl Russell, has gained the Open Mathematical Scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, at the exceedingly early age of 16 years. Mr. Russell says that he never worked for more than six hours a day. He passed to the University direct from his tutor at Southgate" (RA REC. ACQ. 434). Actually, Russell was seventeen. In October 1890 he went up to Cambridge.

43: 14 **Channing Hall** The building in Friar's Lane, Richmond, in which the Richmond Unitarian congregation met.

43: 14 **Mr. Farrington** The Rev. Silas Farrington (1830–1911) was an American Unitarian who served as minister of the Richmond Free Church from 1890 until 1904. Countess Russell was prominent among the founders of this church. Among Farrington's publications were *The Ideal of Religion* (1876), a lecture; *The Upper Brook Street Free Pulpit* (c. 1880), sermons; and *Are You Saved?* (1894), a tract.

43: 17 **Miss Bühler** See A7: 10.

43: 18 **Ribblesdale** Thomas Lister (1854–1925), 4th Baron Ribblesdale; nephew of Adelaide Lister.

43: 18 **Addy Lister** The Hon. Adelaide Lister (1827–1911), later Drummond, eldest child of the 2nd Baron Ribblesdale and stepchild of Lord John Russell through his first marriage to Adelaide Lister (1807–1838), Lady Ribblesdale. See Drummond 1915.

43: 19 **Burdett party** The family of Sir Francis Burdett (1813–1892), 7th Baronet, who lived at Richmond. Russell was particularly fond of the younger daughter, Maud Clara Frances (b. 1872), his childhood playmate. He tried to convince her to go to Newnham College, Cambridge, but was unsuccessful, owing to the fierce opposition of her sister, Georgina Marie ("Maie"). Maud represented for Russell a clever woman whose intellect was thwarted by Victorian conventions: "Poor Maud has a Euclid which she keeps hidden behind her other books for fear of being laughed at, and reads in solemn secrecy with all her doors shut—Isn't it pathetic?" (Russell to Alys, 30 Aug. 1894). Russell and Maud periodically wrote each other in later years; their friendship survived a disagreement over his pacifist politics in World War I.

43: 19 **Boswell** *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791) by James Boswell (1740–1795).

43: 20 **Uncle Rollo** The Hon. Francis Albert Rollo Russell (1849–1914), brother of Russell's father. Keenly interested in meteorology, nutrition and atmospheric pollution, he encouraged Russell's scientific interests by talking to him as if he were an adult when he was still a child. In 1892 Rollo Russell published *Epidemics*,

*Plagues, and Fevers: Their Causes and Prevention.*

43: 20 **Mr. Mahoney** Probably Captain Frederick H. Mahoney (1846-c.1929), who joined in the inspection of the 1st Richmond Company of the Boys' Brigade in April 1890.

43: 22 **Granny** Countess Russell. See A9: 13.

43: 23-4 **O'Brien's novel ... *New Aids ... Der Trompeter*** William O'Brien wrote *When We Were Boys: A Novel* (1890). (See also A49: 12-13.) *New Aids to Reflection* (1889) was compiled by J. McGavin Sloan. Joseph Viktor von Scheffel was the author of the best seller, *Der Trompeter von Säckingen* (1854).

43: 23 **Auntie** Lady Mary Agatha Russell (1853-1933). Russell's Aunt Agatha has been seen as an eccentric spinster whose life was dominated by her mother, Countess Russell, and circumscribed by Pembroke Lodge. But she had an independent and constructive impact upon Russell. About her early teaching of English constitutional history, he wrote appreciatively in the *Autobiography* (1967, 25). A woman of strong family loyalty, she remained deeply (though often critically) concerned about his personal and political activities.

43: 25 **Frank** Bertrand Russell's brother. See A14: 10-16.

43: 25-6 **old affair of the breakfast-letter** Unidentified.

43: 27 **Latin *Principia*** Edition unidentified. In 1955 Russell wrote to a number of booksellers: "When I learnt Latin—which was seventy years ago—my text book in grammar was called *Principia Latina*. It contained a number of mnemonic verses.... I shall be very grateful if you can find me a Latin Grammar book containing the above verses. I shall be best pleased if it is *Principia Latina* on which I wasted so much fruitless labour" (Russell 1969, 170-1).

43: 29-30 **conics ... Rigid** During the ten months prior to taking up his minor scholarship at Cambridge, Russell "lived at home, and coached with the man whom the crammer had hired to teach me" (Russell 1967, 43). This mathematical instruction, by H. C. Robson (see A44: 22), evidently included conical sections and the dynamics of a rigid body. It was customary to test one's skill on old examination papers.

43: 31 **Miss Fraser** Probably one of the two daughters, Margaret Carrie and Maria, of the Scottish philosopher and friend of the Amberleys, Alexander Campbell Fraser (1819-1914).

43: 31 **Lady Sophia Melville** Probably Lady Clara Sophia Melville (1843-1898). Her brother was the 11th Earl of Leven and the 10th Earl of Melville. Roehampton House, Petersham, was one of their family residences; it was half a mile from Pembroke Lodge.

43: 32 **Brandram** Samuel Brandram (1824-1892), a popular reciter and elocutionist. On this occasion he presented Shakespeare's *Henry V*, IV.iii.18-67, Macaulay's "Horatius: A Lay Made about the Year of the City CCCLX" (1842), and Benjamin Franklin's maxims from *Poor Richard's Almanack* (1732-46). The piece about a bishop and a caterpillar has not been identified.

43: 38 **Petersham** A village lying just outside Richmond Park and less than half a

mile west of Pembroke Lodge.

43: 39 **Dysart** William John Manners Tollemache (1859–1935), 9th Earl of Dysart. The reception was held to mark Dysart's return to his ancestral home, Ham House, for the summer (*Richmond Herald*, 23 May 1890, 3).

44: 1 **Ham** A hamlet lying immediately to the south-west of Petersham.

44: 5 **Lilly Blyth** Lillian Blyth (1864–1942), close friend of the Russell family and daughter of the Rev. Frederic Cavan Blyth, for many years curate of St. Peter, Petersham.

44: 7 **Ruskin's *Modern Painters*** The most important nineteenth-century study of landscape painting was *Modern Painters* (5 vols., 1843–60), by John Ruskin (1819–1900). From the references on 10 and 16 June 1890 it appears that Russell read the edition of 1888 (see A50: 5).

44: 15 **Rochat** See 45: 38, where Rochat is said to have become “an entire prohibitionist”. This suggests that he was Louis-Lucien Rochat, a pastor from Geneva, who wrote four tracts on the misuse of alcohol between 1888 and 1899. Frank Russell recorded in his journal for 19 December 1883: “Made Rochat's, Bertie's tutor's acquaintance today; he is an ungainly Swiss youth and is soon going”. Russell's letters of 1884 to Frank mention Rochat's taking him on various trips. And in part of a passage deleted from his autobiography, Russell wrote: “I remember a Swiss Protestant tutor, whom I had when I was eleven ...” (RA 210.007050–F1).

44: 21 ***Past and Present*** Thomas Carlyle's *Past and Present* (1843) is a work of historical imagination in which the social obligations of the twelfth century are contrasted with the chaos of modern individualism.

44: 22 **Robson** Henry Cumming Robson (1856–1945), B.A. (Cantab., 1882), M.A. (1885), fellow of Sydney Sussex College and lecturer in mathematics 1890–1923, and college bursar 1896–1923. Between taking his degree and returning to his college in 1890, he taught at Wren's coaching establishment at Powis Square in Notting Hill, London, where Russell went to see him three times a week (see 61: 11–12). *The Times*'s obituary noted significantly that “As a teacher of mathematics he was thorough and painstaking, and his method was well adapted to the needs of all but the ablest men” (27 Jan. 1945, 6).

44: 23 **Metrodora** Probably the name of a boat which was moored on one of the Pen Ponds in Richmond Park. The largest of the Pen Ponds is commonly referred to as “the Pond”. In a passage cancelled from the first typescript of the third volume of his *Autobiography*, Russell wrote: “There were in Richmond Park two large ponds very close together, and on the larger we had a boat. I took my two young friends, Jimmie Bailey (Baillie) and Maud Burdett, to an island in the middle of the large pond, where, after playing for a time, we found that the boat had drifted away. We drew lots as to who should swim to the boat, and the lot fell to me. We made Maud conceal herself while I swam and subsequently dressed” (RA 210.147509–F1, fol. 78).

44: 26 **lines** A word game.

44: 27–8 **the Newton** Isaac Newton's *Principia Mathematica* (1687), possibly in an edition recommended by *The Student's Guide to the University of Cambridge, Part II*,

*Mathematical Tripos* (1880, 16), which lists editions by Evans and Main respectively: *The First Three Sections of Newton's Principia* (Newton 1871) and *Newton's Principia; First Book* (Newton 1883).

44: 28 **Routh** Edward John Routh (1831–1907), fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge. His *Treatise on the Dynamics of a System of Rigid Bodies* (1860), which Russell was studying, came out in two parts in its fourth edition: *Elementary* (1882) and *Advanced* (1884).

44: 34 **Baby** Arthur Russell (1886–1943), Rollo's son by his first wife, Alice Sophia. "When I was fourteen, my Uncle Rollo's first wife died, leaving a new-born son; he, also, was brought up by my grandmother until his father's second marriage in 1891 ..." (Russell and Russell 1937, 1: 32). At 48: 41 Baby is said to be ill, and the kindergarten has to go on without him. The next day, "Arthur seemed to have bronchitis but today he seems well" (49: 15).

44: 36 **Johnson to M'Pherson** The letter belongs to an exchange with James Macpherson, who claimed authenticity for *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* and *The Poems of Ossian*. See Boswell 1887, 2: 298.

44: 39 **Mr. Ross** Probably the son of the East India Company merchant, George Ross, who lived at Edge Hill in Wimbledon.

44: 39 **the Elphinstones'** The family of Sir Howard Elphinstone (1804–1893), 2nd Baronet Elphinstone of Sowerby. Sir Howard lived in Wimbledon and had close connections with Trinity College, Cambridge.



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Three versions of the text exist for the entry of 20–21 July 1894, i.e. 65: 13–66: 14. In addition to the diary itself ("CT"), there is a contemporary holograph document consisting of a single sheet written in pencil (RA 710.055228) and denoted by "94". There are thirteen accidental variants, mostly of punctuation, between 94 and CT, and one substantive variant. The cancellations in 94 and the variants show that 94 preceded CT. Russell included 94 in the first volume of his *Autobiography* (1967), and the relevant pages (84–5) of the first printing of this edition ("67") have been collated with CT and 94. Further impressions and other editions have not been collated; since there is no reason to suppose that Russell read proofs or otherwise specially intervened in the printed texts of these editions. (Indeed, it is doubtful that he read proofs of the first British edition.) CT has been emended at one place (65: 19) to prefer a formal variant from 94. The rest of the text has required various other editorial emendations, such as regularization of the dates of the diary entries.

The covers of the diary measure 198 × 230 mm.; the pages are 187 × 222 mm. Most of the entries are written in ink.

- 43: 14 Channing Hall] Ch. H. CT *Also at*  
49: 20 (*as* Ch. Hall).  
43: 14 Farrington] F. CT *Also at* 45: 13,  
49: 25, 52: 6.  
43: 20 Uncle Rollo] U. R. CT *Also at* 43: 32,  
43: 38, 44: 6, 46: 25, 46: 26, 47: 13–14,  
47: 18, 49: 10, 49: 18, 50: 14, 53: 3, 53: 10,  
53: 14.  
43: 25 Granny's] Gr.'s CT *Also at* 44: 32 (*as*  
Gr.) *and at* 51: 8 (*as* G.).  
44: 5 Lilly Blyth] Lilly Blythe CT  
44: 39 Elphinstones'] Elphinstone's CT  
44: 39 Maud Burdett] Maud B. CT *Also at*  
45: 24, 46: 24–5, 47: 12, 49: 18–19, 49: 32,  
53: 38–9.