## Lady Constance Malleson, "Colette O'Niel"

F ew in this (or any other) century have been well enough known by their 35th birthday to persuade a publisher that the public was ready for their autobiography. Lady Constance Malleson, or Colette O'Niel as she was known to her public and as she preferred to be known, and who died 5 October 1975, was among their number. So in 1931 Jonathan Cape brought out After Ten Years. Her public did prove to be large; the first printing sold out almost immediately and two more were required before demand was satisfied. Obviously she had touched many people during her short career on the stage.

Her choice of career was, perhaps, an odd one given her birth. She was born 24 October 1895 in Castlewellan, County Down, Northern Ireland, the youngest child of Hugh, 5th Earl Annesley, and his second wife (and cousin) Priscilla Cecilia Moore. His first marriage to Mabel Wilhelmina Frances Markham had produced two children, Viscount Glerawly, who succeeded him, and Lady Mabel, before his wife died. His second marriage yielded two daughters, Lady Clare and Colette. Taught by tutors at home until her father's death in 1908 Colette was then sent to a boarding school in England. The school was Downe House in Kent, which she promptly christened "Dammed Hell". Darwin had spent the last years of his life there, and Colette was assigned his room. Her reaction to this school, "I hated it like hell",<sup>1</sup> was another early indication that she would not be content to follow the usual course of artistocractic young ladies.

Lady Clare, who survives her, had been sent to a finishing school in Dresden and Colette subjected her mother to a steady stream of propaganda until she was sent there too. Just fourteen when she arrived she spent eighteen happy months there during which she decided upon acting as a career, a decision she had no occasion to question until she was

4

<sup>1</sup>After Ten Years (London: Cape, 1931), p. 35.

twenty-four. When her best friend, Martha Allan, whose family owned the Allan line of steamships to Canada, moved to a finishing school in Paris, Constance followed her and spent another eighteen happy months learning French and exploring Paris.

Her mother insisted that she must "do" a London season, so in the spring of 1913 she was duly presented at Court and attended the usual series of lunches, tea-dances and balls. She found them oppressive but was saved from complete revulsion by the men from the Embassies, the only intelligent men in attendance. Early escape from the season was provided when she and her mother were invited for a summer's cruise to ports in Norway, Denmark and Germany. Their host, Sir Max Waechter, had connections in the highest circles, and they entertained and were entertained by King Haakon, King Christian and Kaiser Wilhelm II. On two occasions Constance was seated on the Kaiser's left, "and so came in for his famous pink champagne which is served only to the ladies on his immediate right and left."<sup>2</sup> At close range she thought he looked like "an over-dressed stock-broker".<sup>3</sup>

The highlight of this cruise came in the person of Emilio Reggio, a dashing Italian captain, who swept her off her feet -- and very likely into bed. He had no English, so she was obliged to tell him she was Irish in French, the remembered piquancy of which led to her choice of a stage name -- Colette O'Niel. A shaky grasp of spelling gave it its peculiar form.

In the autumn of 1913 she enrolled as a student in the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Miles Malleson was a fellow student, in Colette's opinion, the only one with genius; they were attracted to each other and began spending their spare time together with the consequence that they "slipped into" love. By 1915 they both wanted to spend much more of their time together, but they knew that Colette's family would never allow it outside of marriage; so, although neither of them wanted marriage, they decided to circumvent her family's disapproval of their relationship by secretly marrying. The expected storm was violent but brief. It ended when they agreed to her mother's demand that they be married a second time, this time following all the forms. After the public ceremony they lived together, but agreed to give each other the freedom -- a blessed word in her vocabulary -- to cultivate other relationships.

Malleson, in a burst of patriotism, enlisted when war came in 1914, but was soon invalided home. His experience made him a pacifist.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 30.

Colette opposed the war from its start. She wanted to work against it and the opportunity came when Clifford Allen (later Lord Allen of Hurtwood), who had been with Malleson at Cambridge, helped found the No-Conscription Fellowsnip. The N.-C.F. tried to keep an up-to-the-minute record of every conscientious objector's case; it was Colette's job to go to headquarters each day and bring the elaborate index up to date. She grew fond of Allen and when he was charged in 1916 she went to the hearing at Lavender Hill police station. There for the first time she saw Bertrand Russell. Both she and Russell recorded their memories of that day:

Bertrand Russell was there. I had not met him before. He was sitting at the other end of the bench where I was sitting. A small man, with a fine brow, aristocratic features, silver-grey hair, and a passionate expression. He was conventionally dressed in dark clothes and he wore a high, stiff collar. He sat very still, his hands inert upon his knees. He seemed detached in mind and body -but all the furies of hell raged in his eyes.<sup>4</sup>

I noticed Colette in the police court, and was introduced to her. I found that she was one of Allen's friends and learned from him that she was generous with her time, free in her opinions, and whole-hearted in her pacifism. That she was young and very beautiful, I had seen for myself. ... On these data, I naturally took steps to get to know her better.<sup>5</sup>

They met next at a pacifist dinner where Russell told her of a lecture he was giving a few days later. When he took the lectern he saw her in the front row. They went to dinner, then to her flat, and became lovers before morning, although physical consummation had to wait, because "there was too much to say".<sup>6</sup> She would soon be 21; he had recently turned 44.

It is not going beyond the available evidence to state that from then until the very end Russell was far and away the most important person in her life. Her love for him was profound and unshakeable. No matter how unhappy he made her, she could forgive him. He also fell deeply in love with her, but his love did not possess him in the way hers did her, although he did return to her several times after their first break. They talked of marriage in their early days together, but she was opposed to it. Anyway, since both were then married, two divorces had to be won at a time when only adultery was admitted as a ground. Then there was the question of children which he wanted but she did not. We now know that during this period she became pregnant a number of times (the identities of the men responsible are not known),

<sup>5</sup>The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell, 1914-1944 (London: Allen & Unwin, 1968), p. 25.

6

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 26.

and each time procured an abortion.<sup>7</sup> One suspects her position on both marriage and children would have altered had Russell actually asked her to marry him but he never did.

Why didn't he propose? His reasons seem to have been two: Colette was too promiscuous and she took her work too seriously. Russell always found it difficult to accept that a woman with whom he was having sexual relations was also having sexual relations with another man, even her own husband. Lady Ottoline Morrell found herself subject to Russell's demand that she stop sharing a bed with her husband, Philip Morrell, after she and Russell became lovers. Russell suspected Colette of having other lovers, and the evidence bears him out. When she ignored repeated demands to cease seeing other men, he came to doubt her fitness as a prospective mother of his children.

Russell's other reason seems ironical given the enormous importance work had in his own life. But he seems to have thought of work as a male function and did not take seriously women who claimed to have a vocation outside the home. And Colette took her work very seriously indeed. This fact by itself bothered Russell, and it was made worse by the nature of her work. "B.R. thought acting was a worthless sort of occupation. He thought it brought out the worst in one's character: personal ambition, love of admiration. He used to write me denunciatory letters."<sup>8</sup> And in the novel she wrote about their relationship, *The Coming Back*, she offered this judgment.

Deep in his heart, Gregory [Russell] deplored the importance Konradin [Colette] attached to her work. It was out of all proportion to the value of the work itself. She was so desperately engrossed in her own affairs. She had the hard combativeness of extreme youth. She wanted, above everything, to make her mark in the world: to succeed. And all that seemed a little futile to Gregory. He judged her; and in so doing, often forgot how great a part personal ambition had played in his own youth. "Personal ambition," he had often said, "is the only thing strong enough to overcome really difficult work. Without personal ambition, at least half the important work of the world would never get done." Nevertheless, personal ambition was a thing he could not tolerate -- in Konradin.<sup>9</sup>

It was unthinkable that the mother of his children could be an ambitious actress. It is worth noting in passing that Dora, Russell's second wife and the mother of two of his children, has complained that Russell never accorded her work the respect she thought it deserved.

Marriage being out of the question at least so long as Russell was young enough to want to father children, their relationship gradually

<sup>9</sup>The Coming Back (London: Cape, 1933), p. 105.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Constance Malleson to K. Blackwell, 1 February 1975.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>After Ten Years, p. 122.

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became less intense, but it was never extinguished. At the breakup of both his second and third marriages Russell turned again to the faithful Colette. She had divorced Malleson in 1923, so that he could marry Joan Graeme Billson who, Colette writes, "was a much nicer person than I was".<sup>10</sup> Free then to marry Russell had he proposed it, one gathers from her unpublished writings that she hoped he would, but he didn't. What is worse, he didn't keep her as fully informed of his plans as she trusted he would: she found out about his new marriages from the press.

She saw him for the last time in 1949 when she watched him turn the corner out of Tavistock Square after spending the afternoon with her in her sister's house. There were some angry letters and then peace descended. For his ninetieth birthday she sent a message to be published in the programme, but, although invited, she did not attend any of the ceremonies. There is no trace in the message of the heartbreak he had caused her. Its first sentence, "Russell, to some of us who were young in 1916, was the sun which lit our world",<sup>11</sup> set its happy tone. The same spirit of forgiveness pervades her poignant little essay, "Fifty Years: 1916-1966," in *Bertrand Russell: Philosopher of the Century*, published in 1967. All the positive things were clearly recalled, and the only hint that there had been a negative side appeared in this passage.

H.N. Brailsford once wrote of Burke (in *Shelley*, *Godwin and their Circle*), that "the evil which caused his mind to blaze was nearly always cruelty", that "he had a nerve which twitched with a maddening sensitiveness at the sight of suffering". Exactly the same could be said of Russell; and said even when he had caused the suffering.<sup>12</sup>

In his last years she sent him a dozen red roses on his birthday in memory of those he had sent her after their first night together. She continued to send them even after his death.

Colette's career as an actress was short. She completed her study at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in the spring of 1915 to generally favourable comment. Her first engagement, at £2 a week, was to understudy the leading lady in the wordless play, *L'Enfant Prodique*. The leading lady soon left and Colette was offered the part. "Nothing worse could have happened to me. I was totally lacking in the experience necessary to handle a very difficult, very important,

<sup>10</sup>After Ten Years, p. 76.

<sup>11</sup>Into the Tenth Decade: Tribute to Bertrand Russell ([London: 1962]), p. [31]; message reprinted in Constance Malleson, "Fifty Years: 1916-1966", in R. Schoenman, ed., Bertrand Russell: Philosopher of the Century (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967), p. 24.

<sup>12</sup>Schoenman, p. 17.

leading part. Of course I took it."<sup>13</sup> Reviews were mixed and Colette proved over-sensitive to the bad ones. But she worked at it and success seemed assured when she heard that the management was secretly rehearsing a replacement for her. Her pride was hurt and she decided to find another job; she secured one and took great pleasure in sending in her notice before they could sack her.

Other parts came her way and Lewis Casson who saw her in them chose her to play Helen in the new production of Gilbert Murray's translation of Euripides' *The Trojan Women* he and Sybil Thorndike were planning. The play was given first in Oxford. Colette -- the opinion was universal -- was superb. A month later the play was to open in London:

All that next month I walked on air; dreamed dreams; planned plans. I felt my chance had come at last. It was going to be the occasion of my life. I felt so certain, so confident. And what happened at the performance at the Old Vic? Exactly what happened at Oxford. Only it happened the other way round: something outside myself took hold of me: everything I did turned out wrong. Helen meant nothing, she didn't exist, she meant absolutely nothing at all.<sup>14</sup>

This was her first taste of failure. Sybil Thorndike had played Hecuba, and had swept everyone else, Colette included, off the stage.

Colette lowered her sights, accepting the role of leading lady -in the provinces. And she went with Casson and Thorndike on a long tour of Africa. But by her standards she had failed, and characteristically she faced up to it in print.

I watched the [Humber] river and I thought of the first time I had seen it: when I had come home from Norway with my mind full of Emilio Reggio and the gold braid on his uniform and the life in his eyes. That was in 1913. This was 1925. Then, I had thought I would become a great actress. Now, I knew I had become a provincial actress. I hadn't become what I'd set out to become. I had only stuck to my job. I warded off the bitterness of failure by telling myself I might have remained an understudy at two pounds a week. Or I might have been obliged to give up the stage altogether. I had done neither. I hadn't done much, I hadn't climbed very high, but I had climbed ALONE. It didn't make failure any less bitter or defeat any less real. It didn't save me. But it showed me I was still alive. Glamour had gone and high hopes had gone. But I'd be damned if independence had gone. Nor the love of my craft, of my job.<sup>15</sup>

She continued to act for another five years, her tour of Africa came in 1929, but her thoughts were turning to another career -- that of playwright.

This new career was both shorter and more disastrous than her acting

<sup>13</sup>After Ten Years, p. 95. <sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 232-3.

career. She wrote one play, The Way, which had one performance at the Arts Theatre Club on Sunday, 25 March 1928. She had sent a draft of an earlier play (possibly The Way, the evidence is unclear) to St. John Ervine who, because she was an Ulster woman, read it but wrote her a devastating critique of it. "Roughly, what's wrong with your play is that it isn't *about* anything. All your people are waving their arms and striking attitudes and making impotent gestures, and we don't know why they're behaving like that, and, what's worse, we don't care."<sup>16</sup> He went on to advise her that she would have to learn to discipline her emotions before she could expect to write a successful play, asking her rhetorically, "Can you keep some of it in?" Two critics of the performance of The Way found similar fault with it. The Times' critic called it "a world of pretentious sham", <sup>17</sup> and J.T. Grein in the *Illustrated London News* wrote: "A strange manifestation of unreality, or artifice, of situations most seriously intended, yet bordering on such improbability that even the earnest, friendly audience of listeners now and again broke into titters."<sup>18</sup> Colette, of course, attended the performance and saw after only fifteen minutes that her play was a hopeless failure: "... the rest of the evening was a nightmare. I hope I shall never have to face such another."19

In his review Grein speculated that Colette had set out to write a novel but been tempted by the stage, suggesting that her plotting (and perhaps her imagination too) was more suited to the writing of novels than plays. The idea of writing a novel had also occurred to her. Indeed, in 1925 she had returned from a six-month visit with her half-sister, Lady Mabel Annesley, who lived in Castlewellan, with the final draft of *The Way* and with 35,000 words of a novel. Whether these formed part of her first published novel is not known.

The Coming Back was published in 1933 with the astonishing disclaimer that "No character in this book is a portrait of any living person".<sup>20</sup> In fact the book is a very thinly disguised account of her relationship with Russell. He appears as Don Gregorio del Orellano, a Cambridge astronomer; Colette is Konradin Waring; Lady Ottoline is Magdalena, the Marquesa de Santa Segunda; C.E.M. Joad is Owen West; Dora Black, Russell's second wife, is Gertrude West; T.S. Eliot is T.C.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 168.

<sup>19</sup>After Ten Years, p. 259.

<sup>20</sup>The Coming Back, p. [8].

Maynard; Clifford Allen is Jevons; and Maurice Elvey, a director of silent pictures in whose *Hindle Wakes* Colette starred and with whom she had an affair which caused Russell an acute case of jealousy, is Marcus Beazely. Nearly every important episode in their relationship finds its way into this book. As a novel it has little merit, but as autobiography it has its fascinations. Colette seems to be saying that a permanent union with Russell was precluded by her insatiable desire for freedom; she calls it "a fanatical belief",<sup>21</sup> and indeed the reader is at times embarrassed by the emotional rhetoric used on its behalf. Russell was possessive and jealous, stifling creativity and freedom, so she rejected him. But the bittersweet character of the rejection comes through.

She puts into Allen's mind her own shrewd assessment of Russell.

As for Gregory ... A sudden hostility towards Gregory rose in him. For an instant he saw him as many people saw him: a man exhausting other men by his intellect; exhausting women by his intensity; wearing out his friends, sucking them dry, passing from person to person, never giving any real happiness -- or finding any.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless when it came to assessing blame for the failure of their relationship, she had Konradin say, "It's my own fault."<sup>23</sup> And, five years later, she cried out to Russell, as the train pulled out from Oxford where she had gone to visit him and his family before their departure for the United States, "It was my fault. It was my fault!"<sup>24</sup>

In later years Colette disowned *The Coming Back*. Her *Who's Who* entry after 1959 omits mention of it. When asked she acknowledged having written it, but she said she wished it forgotten since it was "a very *feeble* first effort".<sup>25</sup> And she went on to say that she had destroyed all copies of it in her possession. What is most surprising about the book is the fact that none of the critics realized that it was a *roman* à *clef*; one suspects they didn't read it.

Her second, and last, novel is called *Fear in the Heart*. Published in 1936, it is a love story set in the west of England, an area where Colette lived for a time and which she was very partial toward, between a woman, Lady Auriel Mallory, no longer young, who has inherited and must manage a farm, and a middle-aged man, Hilary Barnes, who rents a cottage from her. It is very likely that the model for Lady

- <sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 142.
- <sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 307.
- <sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 328.
- <sup>24</sup>In the North (London: Gollancz, 1946), p. 76.

<sup>25</sup>Letter to author, 10 November 1972.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>The Times, London, 26 March 1928, p. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>Illustrated London News, 7 April 1928.

Auriel is her half-sister, Lady Mabel, whose autobiography<sup>26</sup> Colette was later to edit, and who inherited Castlewellan and farmed the land. Lady Jennifer, her younger sister, is almost certainly Colette herself -- the characterization fits and the incidents related are most of them there in Colette's and Lady Mabel's autobiographical writings. Hilary Barnes, a painter, seems pure fiction, but he may be modelled upon someone Colette met during her long visits with Lady Mabel. *Fear in the Heart*, as fiction, is much better constructed than *The Coming Back*, but, although the reviews of it were not unfavourable, it too failed to establish Colette as a novelist. Her imagination seems to have been too closely tied to her experience to give her much scope in the construction of stories.

It is in autobiography where Colette is at her best as a writer. Both *After Ten Years* and *In the North* (published in 1946) have a freshness about them which establishes their author as a personality worth one's attention. The passages already cited show her to be a woman who knows when she has failed to meet her own standards and who has the courage to admit it. She never appears to feel sorry for herself, calling self-pity "the most disgusting of vices".<sup>27</sup> Indeed, she seemed to court danger and hardship, for example, when she returned to Finland after the outbreak of World War II in order to suffer along with the Finns. In June 1941 she was forced to flee Finland in an open boat, rowing the twenty-five miles to Sweden herself.<sup>28</sup> She always wanted to make her own choices -- that is what her doctrine of freedom seems to mean -- and to establish them as indisputably her own she frequently, one suspects, chose the least attractive alternative.

In 1924 she "shook the dust of London from [her] feet"<sup>29</sup> and moved to the country. She never lived again in London, and never regretted the decision. After her retirement from the theatre she travelled abroad, first in the Middle East and then in Scandinavia, which she grew to love. As has been noted, she spent the war years there, returning to England when it appeared that Russell and she might finally live together. He went so far as to encourage her to look for a cottage near his in Wales. When that last chance evaporated she

<sup>26</sup>Mabel M. Annesley, As the Sight is Bent: An Unfinished Autobiography (London: Museum Press, 1964).

<sup>27</sup>In the North, p. 152.

 $^{28}$ "Earl's Daughter Rows 25 Miles",  $Daily\ Express,$  London, 8 August 1941, p. l. I have to thank Mr. Bennitt Gardiner for leading me to this item.

<sup>29</sup>After Ten Years, p. 205.

returned to Scandinavia for extended visits. In the 1950s she bought an ancient cottage in Lavenham, Suffolk, where she lived alone until dire illness forced her hospitalization.

Her health had been good in her early years, although an illness in 1921 left her permanently deaf in one ear. After World War II she gradually became deaf in the other ear too. Her head, she told sympathetic inquirers, was always filled with the roar of the sea, a frightful din which shut out all sound from the outside. She was also, through much of her later life, afflicted with rhustoxicodendron blood poisoning, caused by contact with a plant of the sumac family. Attacks of it were frequent and made even the writing of letters nearly impossible. To these incurable troubles another was added in 1964: she had what she called "a small stroke" which left her paralyzed on the left side.

Her account of the stroke, which she published just 19 days after it happened, gives a good idea of the grit and fortitude with which she faced her declining years. She fell on 11 December but seemed to have suffered only a sprained wrist. By the next morning the pain in it had abated, but then her whole left side would go dead and then partially recover. She managed to get downstairs to try to scramble an egg, but her left leg gave way before she succeeded. She dragged herself upstairs to bed and assessed her situation. She would be alone until 24 December when she expected a visitor, so she decided to take no food or drink until then, hoping her bodily functions would stop.

By early on December 14 I began to wonder could I hold out until the 24th or not; and I began to doubt it (I had not slept). I would have to construct an SOS. (It was 4 a.m.) I would have to smash a pane of glass and hurl the SOS into the street before the char knocked off work next door at the luncheon hour. I would have to use my chin instead of my dead left arm and hand in order to Sellotape the latchkey of the cottage into a tall Bath Oliver tin, together with the SOS. It took me from 4 a.m. until nearly twelve o'clock to do it. A heavy Denby pottery lid by my bedside smashed the window to perfection. Falling glass made a splendid clatter. Out went the SOS tin after the Denby lid. Sweating with efforts and exhaustion (the day was cold and the room was entirely unheated), I slumped back to await results.<sup>30</sup>

She was immediately rescued and felt greatly elated. "But I had the grace to wonder how many thousands of England's impoverished old women are in similar plight."

Permanently paralyzed in her left side, she returned to her cottage and lived alone, moving about with the aid of a stick and dragging herself up and down stairs with her right arm. A public health nurse visited her every fortnight, and various villagers who knew of her

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup>"A Small Stroke", The Guardian, London, 30 December 1964.

plight kept an eye out for her. But they would act only after their suspicions had been aroused, and that would take time. Consequently, when she fell and broke her hip and leg in late July 1973, she was "four days and nights on my back without food or drink when the police broke in and brought me to hospital".<sup>31</sup> This time there could be no return to her cottage, so after release from hospital she went to live in a nursing home in Thurston, near Bury St Edmunds, which she had once described as a "shoddy, godforsaken town".<sup>32</sup> Her stay there appears to have been relatively comfortable after allowance is made for her afflictions, and her death on 5 October 1975, caused by a coronary thrombosis, came swiftly, for on 30 September she wrote Katharine Tait, Russell's daughter, one of her typical, delightful letters full of concern for others.

Her letters in the last years contain many references to her impending death. She seemed to have no emotional reaction to it at all, accepting it (perhaps even welcoming it) as inevitable, so not to be fussed about. She appears never to have had any religious beliefs; in *In the North* she explicitly states that she had no belief in God.<sup>33</sup> It is likely that, with Russell, she regarded religion as a refuge of the weak and the fearful. "It was enough to make a man take to drink -- or to religion", she wrote in *The Coming Back*.<sup>34</sup> She never took to either, but she did smoke heavily, up to fifty cigarettes a day at some periods in her life,<sup>35</sup> which may have contributed to her health problems in the last years.

A number of the reviewers of Ronald W. Clark's *The Life of Bertrand Russell* have remarked how well Colette comes out when the full story of their relationship is told. Passionate, impulsive, generous and loyal almost to a fault, it was probably the combination of her virtues which made her ineligible to become Russell's wife. The impulses she felt made it impossible for her to confine her passion and her generosity to him, although he does seem to have commanded much more of her loyalty than did the other men who also aroused her. And so she got shunted out of his life for long agonizing periods; her passion was banked but it would spring instantly aflame with the fresh draft brought by a letter from him. Then the pain of banking would

- <sup>32</sup>After Ten Years, p. 138.
- <sup>33</sup>In the North, p. 44.
- <sup>34</sup> The Coming Back, p. 183.
- <sup>35</sup> In the North, p. 116.

come again. But there was a period, after Russell's death, when the pain had finally been dispelled. In this emotionally tranquil time she saw to it that her typescript, "Letters to Bertrand Russell from Constance Malleson, 1916-69", was put into safe hands with instructions regarding its publication. She responded generously to young correspondents who asked for information on her relationship with Russell, quickly assuring them that no question on that topic could possibly be an impertinence. And she sold McMaster University all of Russell's letters to her as well as a large number of mementoes of their days together. These actions ensure that as long as the Russell Archives exist users of them will be able to reconstruct the story of Colette's rather splendid devotion to him. It is what she wanted more than anything else.

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## From Colette's last letter to Katharine Tait:

I'm so delighted to hear that your "Style of life" is NOT "permanent chaos". Neither was mine, when I had one. With love, Colette

## CONSTANCE MALLESON'S BOOKS

- After Ten Years: A Personal Record. London: Jonathan Cape, 1931. 320 pp. At least three impressions were issued. Colette's "file copy" is in the Russell Archives and contains extensive revisions in her hand and many photographs.
- The Coming Back. London: Jonathan Cape, 1933. 328 pp. The Russell Archives' copy is inscribed from Colette to "darling Elizabeth" [i.e., Russell's brother's third wife] and dated January 1933.
- Fear in the Heart: A Novel. London: Collins, 1936. 368 pp. The Russell Archives' copy is inscribed from Constance Malleson to St John Ervine and dated 24 August 1936.
- In the North: Autobiographical Fragments in Norway, Sweden, Finland: 1936-1946. London: Victor Gollancz, 1946. 189 pp. Chapter XXX is called "Letters from Bertrand Russell".
- (Editor). Mabel M. Annesley, As the Sight is Bent: An Unfinished Autobiography. With 35 engravings on wood by the author. London: Museum Press Limited, 1964. 157 pp. Colette gave a copy of this scarce book to the Russell Archives.
- "Letters to Bertrand Russell from Constance Malleson, 1916-69". Edited by P.M. Urch. Unpublished typescript. 2 vols. 668 pp. 17 photographs. In the possession of the Russell Archives.

14

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup>Letter to K. Blackwell, 25 August 1973.