

Other missing (or recently found) writings of Russell's

by *Kenneth Blackwell*

THE INTENSIVE WORK on Volume I of *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell* during the past three years has turned up several new writings by Russell. At the same time the work has turned up the titles of several other writings whose texts are missing. I shall first describe the successes of the editorial work in this regard, and then set out what is known about the missing texts. The question of the manuscripts for Russell's free-trade lectures in 1904 has been discussed in the preceding article by Richard Rempel. If any further manuscripts are extant, it is urgent that they be reported to me in the near future. Even manuscripts of Russell's published writings would be a desirable find. For example, we have no manuscripts of his many contributions to *Mind*, and therefore almost no idea of what revisions he may have made in proof.

It is pure joy to describe the successes. Sixteen years of bibliographical research on Russell have not dimmed the excitement felt in helping to bring to light new writings by him, and the intensification of this labour as the Russell Editorial Project moves forward promises to result in discoveries as pleasurable (if not as plentiful) as those in the past. Each discovery brings us certainly one step nearer to that admittedly uncertain goal of a complete bibliography of Russell's writings, published and unpublished.

Recent successes have been concentrated in two periods: the period covered by Volumes I and XII, *Cambridge Essays, 1888-1898* and *Politics and Religion, 1902-1914*, and the period covered by Archives II, approximately 1962-1970 (but going back as far as the late 1890s). This article will confine itself to the earlier period.

Indisputably first must come the discovery that the "locked diary" Russell kept as a young man is extant. I quote the headnote drafted

for its inclusion in Volume I, where it is editorially titled "Journal, 1890-1894":

In his *Autobiography*, Russell mentions that at the time he proposed to Alys Pearsall Smith he "kept a locked diary, which I very carefully concealed from everyone" (I, 82). This is that diary, or rather what remains of it. For Russell went on to say: "In this diary I recorded my conversations with my grandmother about Alys and my feelings in regard to them." The diary now contains no entries of such a character. It seems likely, though it cannot be verified, that a number of leaves were removed from it.

The diary falls into several parts. Only three are printed here, for the rest are in Alys's hand. The first of Russell's parts is untitled. It consists of entries from 18 May 1890 (Russell's eighteenth birthday) to 5 December 1892, ending at the bottom of page 34 (actually the 35th page, there being two pages numbered 27). The second part, which begins at the top of the next page (which is unnumbered), is titled "A History of my Friendship for Fitz." The third part begins on 21 July 1893 and is titled "Occasional Journal". On 6 February 1894 entries by Alys begin. They begin on the bottom half of a page on which Russell has carefully written a poem—in contrast to the handwriting of the page that probably marks the end of the entry of 16 September. Thus one or more leaves may have been removed from the diary at this point. There are no entries by Russell between 16 September 1893 and 20-21 July 1894, yet this is the period (particularly between 16 September 1893 and 6 February 1894) that ought to contain the record of his conversations with his grandmother about Alys. Hence we must assume he was no longer concealing the diary from "everyone". This observation is of some importance. Again in his *Autobiography*, Russell quotes some reflections that he says he "showed to nobody, not even Alys, until a much later date" (I, 84). The "reflections" are dated 20-21 July 1894 and are virtually identical with his diary entry of that date. As the annotation to this entry points out, Alys commented on the entry in an entry of her own on the 21st. Thus, at least by February 1894, the diary was no longer a completely private one. While in Paris in September, Russell asked Alys to send him the diary so that he might make entries in it. He made only one at that time. His final entry is a sonnet by Shakespeare entered shortly before his marriage to Alys on 13 December 1894.

Subsequent parts consist of entries by Alys. She restricted herself almost entirely to recording trips, publications and the like. She also kept formidable annual lists of books she and Russell read, but they merely duplicate the information in *What Shall I Read?* But after the break-up of their marriage in all but name in 1901-2 there are two intensely personal entries by Alys. They are quoted in Barbara Halpern's forthcoming book on her family, *The Ogresses*. Russell, for his part, resumed keeping a diary in 1902, but in another notebook. It will be found in Volume XII.

The "locked diary" is a black notebook, the clasp being now removed from the front cover and hanging on the back. The flyleaf is inscribed "Bertrand Russell/Pembroke Lodge." The notebook is in the possession of Barbara Strachey Halpern, Alys's grandniece, who also has several hundred letters from Russell to Alys, as well as a similar number from Alys to Russell. A microfilm of these documents is in the Russell Archives. The text has been proofread against the original, which is in Oxford. [©K. Blackwell, A. Brink, N. Griffin, R. A. Rempel, J. G. Slater, 1980]

It might be added that the new journal is of inestimable research value, though that counts as interpretation—which we eschew in our headnotes.

The "locked diary" is only the first of four writings recently added to Volume I.¹ The Alys Russell papers yielded two minor items as well as the journal. In 1893 Russell gave Alys two essays, both of which were kept by her. They were "Die Ehe", concerning marriage, and "On the Foundations of Ethics", concerning the views of T. H. Green. The fourth writing was a published one. This spring I saw Samuels' biography of Bernard Berenson (reviewed by Andrew Brink in this issue). One of the index references to Russell was to a discussion of a contribution by him to an extremely obscure and rare journal edited by Berenson and Logan Pearsall Smith and privately printed by the Clarendon Press. The journal was *The Golden Urn*, which ran for only three issues, in 1897-8. Samuels said Russell wrote an article for it under the title "Self-Appreciations. I. Orlando", and in fact he did, in the first issue (March 1897). The article, while short, is sheer autobiographical revelation and justifies, to my mind, Russell's own account of his pre-conversion character.² It is the first pre-1900 publication of his to be discovered in well over a decade.

¹ For the original table of contents, see *Russell*, no. 12 (Winter 1973), 22-4.

² *Autobiography, 1872-1914* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967), p. 146.

The other discoveries are of two reviews in *Tribune* in 1906. *Tribune* was an excellent London daily, which lasted only two years (1906-8). The two reviews are of J. S. Robertson's *A Short History of Free Thought* (4 June 1906) and H. W. B. Joseph's *An Introduction to Logic* (7 July 1906). While the Robertson review is the second review we now have by Russell of that book,³ the review of Joseph constitutes for Russell scholars a new writing by him on logic.

The discovery of *missing* writings counts as neither a success nor a failure. What has happened is that the Russell Editorial Project, in carefully sifting all known sources for Russell's writings, has uncovered leads to manuscripts which did exist at one time. Whether they do so now remains to be discovered. The best we can do is hope that by publicizing the information we have someone will be led to the discovery of the documents.

It is—or should be—no surprise that Russell wrote essays that he did not keep. In my opinion, he probably wrote a good deal in the years 1890-3, for which (up until “Die Ehe” in August 1893) nothing is extant besides the new journal. The new work on Moore and the Apostles⁴ tells us that Russell became a member of the Society in February 1892, but the first Apostolic paper we have is dated November 1893. He surely wrote Apostolic papers before this late date. Probably he also wrote papers for criticism by Logan Pearsall Smith, whose tutelage in composition we know he accepted. We know, too, that Russell engaged in debates before the Cambridge Union, and he *may* have written out his debating speeches.

Other papers have more specific evidence in favour of their existence. On 3 September 1894 Russell asks Alys to send him his paper on “Elizabethan Lyrics”. There is mention of another one, on Axioms or Space (or both). He apparently also wrote a paper on “Copulation not Lustful when there is Spiritual Love”. In February 1898 he read a paper on “The Constitution of Matter” to the Cambridge Moral Sciences Club.⁵ The next month he tells Alys of another paper he has read, “to an audience of about 18 people”. In late 1902 he tells Gilbert Murray of a paper he has written on, or inspired by, Thomas Carlyle's story, “The Diamond Necklace”. None of these papers, the existence of most of which at one time is sure, has come to light. Russell's correspondence with Alys contains

indefinite hints of other papers as well.

While Russell hardly published anything of a political nature in the 1890s besides *German Social Democracy*, he did address the Graduate Club of Bryn Mawr on “Socialism as the Consummation of Individual Liberty” on his visit to the United States. It was summarized in the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* for 23 November 1896. The address may just be the same as an article he seems to have sent off to an editor recommended by Carey Thomas.⁶ Also during the 1896 visit Russell delivered a series of six lectures on non-Euclidean geometry. Though unlikely to be very different from his *An Essay on the Foundations of Geometry* (1897), it would be reassuring to have the texts.

One more lacuna is in undergraduate publications. We do not know of a single publication by Russell as an undergraduate, though we know his friends wrote for such papers as *The Tennyson* and *The Cambridge Observer*. The difficulty is that contributions were often in those days published anonymously or pseudonymously, and Russell's early style may not be distinctive enough to recognize.

Finally, Rupert Crawshay-Williams records that Russell “told us once he had written masses of extremely purple passages in his early twenties, and had destroyed them all.”⁷ Possibly Russell was thinking of his early *thirties*, when he wrote what we call the “Texas fragments”. If so, he did not destroy all of them.⁸

The Editorial Project is rapidly running down any leads we have to the possible continued existence of these writings. Because we will have explored all active leads, we are confident in proceeding to publish Volume I of the *Collected Papers*. If, however, the increased attention that the publication of Volume I will give to Russell's early papers results in the discovery of additional early papers, I for one will not be disappointed. It seems to be one of the functions of any serious bibliographical or editorial attempt at completeness to result in discoveries that show the attempt to be incomplete. Besides, editorial projects traditionally reserve the last volume for newly found writings, and the Russell Editorial Project is no exception.

The Bertrand Russell Archives

³ The other is in *The Speaker*, Lon., n.s. 14 (4 Aug. 1906), 402-3.

⁴ Paul Levy, *G. E. Moore and the Cambridge Apostles* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1979).

⁵ See Ronald W. Clark, *Life of Bertrand Russell* (London: Cape/Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1975), p. 69.

⁶ See Russell's letter to her of 1 December 1896. The late Edith Russell, biographer of Carey Thomas, was unable to say who the editor might be.

⁷ *Russell Remembered* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 47.

⁸ For a list, see *Russell*, no. 14 (Summer 1974), 31-2.