

# “NO POVERTY, MUCH COMFORT, LITTLE WEALTH”: BERTRAND RUSSELL’S 1935 SCANDINAVIAN TOUR

MICHAEL D. STEVENSON

History, Lakehead U. / Russell Research Centre, McMaster U.

Orillia, ON, Canada L3V 0B9 / Hamilton, ON L8S 4L6

STEVENM@MCMASTER.CA

Bertrand Russell’s Scandinavian lecture tour in October 1935 has been largely undocumented because of the longstanding embargo on the tour correspondence Russell exchanged with Marjorie (“Peter”) Spence, his lover and future third wife. These archival restrictions ended in 2009, and this paper presents annotated transcriptions of twenty letters sent by Russell to Peter during his trip to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. The tour allowed Russell to test early versions of two important papers in his return to philosophy in the mid-1930s, and his meetings with Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg in Copenhagen significantly enhanced his understanding of quantum mechanics. Additionally, these letters demonstrate the impact of the tour on Russell’s political thought and his evolving views on fascism and pacifism, and they provide the first intimate picture of Russell’s complex relationship with Peter.

“I have been lately travelling in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway”, Bertrand Russell informed readers of the *Sunday Referee* in late October 1935, and “I do not think that any unprejudiced person can fail to be struck by the very high level of general well-being in these countries.”<sup>1</sup> Russell’s brief account of his travels appearing in this

---

<sup>1</sup> “In Lands Where Slums and Wars Are Unknown”, *The Sunday Referee*, 27 Oct. 1935, p. 18; *Papers* 21: 60.

London-based weekly—an account which remained largely silent on his itinerary and instead emphasized the lessons to be learned from the lack of colonies and limited military budgets of Scandinavian nations—is the primary source of one of his most important lecture tours of the interwar period. The paucity of information about this tour stands in marked contrast to the extensive documentation covering Russell’s four American tours between 1924 and 1931.

The reason for this discrepancy was the embargo Russell placed on correspondence with certain spouses and therefore on the extant correspondence related to the Scandinavian tour preserved in McMaster University’s Russell Archives. While Russell’s visits to the United States have been analyzed primarily through his voluminous private correspondence with his second wife, Dora Russell, or close confidantes such as Ottoline Morrell, the letters exchanged by Russell and Marjorie Spence<sup>2</sup>—his third wife, after their 1936 marriage, and commonly known as “Peter”—during the Scandinavian tour were originally closed to academic researchers. Upon Peter’s death in 2004, however, this embargo expired five years later in accordance with the terms of the transfer of Russell’s papers to McMaster, allowing the marvellous correspondence between Russell and Peter finally to be open to the public. To remedy the previously incomplete picture of Russell’s trip to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway between 5 and 28 October 1935, an annotated transcription of twenty letters Russell sent to Peter and preserved in the Russell Archives is presented here.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> She legally changed her name by deed poll to Patricia Helen Spence in January 1936.

<sup>3</sup> The nineteen handwritten letters are still with their envelopes, and almost all the envelopes have a *Lufipost* sticker. All but one envelope was addressed by Russell to “Miss Spence | Telegraph House | Harting | Petersfield | England”. The exception has his name typed as a second line and “England” as the fifth. With the surviving telegram, they are filed at RA2 710.106091–.106110.

At least seven pieces of correspondence from Russell to Peter sent during the trip are missing—a “little letter in the train”, 5 October, on the way to his ship, mentioned by Peter on 7 October; five telegrams (the first arrived on 6 October; those mentioned in **Letters 12** and **18**; and those mentioned by her on 15 October and on 22 October) and the account of his conversation with Werner Heisenberg (see below) that would have been written on 13 October, the day of their meeting, or 14 October, when he travelled to Lund from Copenhagen. Russell also wrote at least two missing letters to his friend and lawyer, Crompton Llewelyn Davies, during the tour: a note from Davies to Peter (710.106374b), attached to a letter Peter sent to Russell on 21 October, states that a “splendid letter from Bertie has come re Zeno”, and Russell sent another letter to Davies

---

Russell initially agreed in April 1934 to a Scandinavian speaking tour following a request from Elias Lunn Bredsdorff (1912–2002), a Danish student who would later teach at Cambridge University from 1949 to 1979 and become a leading authority on Hans Christian Andersen. Russell and Bredsdorff met in London in June 1934 to further discuss the arrangements, and an exchange of correspondence resulted in Bredsdorff proposing a preliminary itinerary in late November 1934. Russell—accompanied by Peter—was to arrive in Copenhagen on 6 February 1935 and deliver four lectures before resting from 12 to 18 February near the Danish coastal town of Elsinore. With Russell arriving in Lund, Sweden, on 18 February, Bredsdorff scheduled two lectures there before Russell would travel to Stockholm to deliver three lectures between 20 and 22 February. Leaving Stockholm for Norway on 25 February, Russell would deliver one lecture in Oslo and one in Trondheim on dates yet to be determined before leaving for England approximately 1 March.<sup>4</sup> Russell subsequently informed Bredsdorff that the “arrangements you propose suit me perfectly”,<sup>5</sup> and he also agreed to deliver a radio broadcast in Copenhagen on 11 February. In mid-January 1935, Russell finalized the five lecture topics for the tour: “The Limits of Empiricism”, “Determinism in Physics”, “The Revolt against Reason”, “Science and Religion”, and “Education and Politics”. Russell had also agreed in late 1934 to travel with Peter to Vienna after the completion of the Scandinavian tour to lecture to the *Kulturbund*, the Austrian branch of the International Association for Cultural Cooperation,<sup>6</sup> although the final confirmation of the Vienna engagement was not secured until mid-January 1935. Initially, Russell had unsuccessfully asked Bredsdorff to cover the cost of the proposed trip to Vienna. “I do not mind you not paying the fares to Vienna in the least”, Russell wrote on 5 January. “I shall not go to Vienna, but I am not very anxious to go.”<sup>7</sup> Shortly thereafter, however, Bredsdorff confirmed the willingness of the Scandinavian tour organizers

---

on 19 October (see **Letter 15**).

<sup>4</sup> Bredsdorff to Russell, 26 Nov. 1934, RA Rec. Acq. I,IIIF.

<sup>5</sup> Russell to Bredsdorff, 5 Jan. 1935.

<sup>6</sup> The 1934–35 *Kulturbund* lecture programme listed Russell speaking in March 1935 on the topic of “Rational and Intuitive Philosophies”. See the leaflet, *Vortragsprogramm 1934–1935*, p. 3, RA Rec. Acq. I,IIIA. No such paper by Russell is known, though the topic fits his then current book project on reason and unreason (see n.27).

<sup>7</sup> Russell to Bredsdorff, 5 Jan. 1935, RA Rec. Acq. I,IIIF.

---

to cover the Vienna trip costs, prompting a grateful response from Russell: "It is very kind to be willing to pay fares to Vienna; please convey my thanks to those concerned."<sup>8</sup>

An intriguing element of Russell's tour concerns his remuneration for the trip. During his four American lecture tours in the interwar period, Russell routinely catalogued his large speaking fees in letters home, wryly referring to himself as a "mental male prostitute"<sup>9</sup> during his 1924 tour. But his letters from the Scandinavian tour are silent on the issue of lecture fees, and no record of Russell's income from the tour is to be found in his income and expenses statement for 1935–36 located in Dora Russell's papers held at the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam. Russell raised the issue of payment on only one occasion in the planning stages of the tour. He was to receive £4.10.0 for the Danish radio broadcast, but he refused a radio interview proposed by Bredsdorff without additional compensation: "Your programme contains enough work", he informed his Danish organizer, "and I will not undertake *any* new items unless paid."<sup>10</sup> The only other cash fee Russell seems to have received was 600 Danish kroner—approximately £27—from a fund provided by the Rask-Ørsted Fund for visiting scholars that also covered travel costs to Denmark (but not accommodation expenses).<sup>11</sup> Bredsdorff's unpublished account of the trip is also silent on the issue of any lucrative tour fee paid to Russell. Bredsdorff had initially contacted Russell about a visit to Denmark on behalf of the *Studentersamfundet*, the Students' Socialist Society, an organization that was "constantly broke".<sup>12</sup> Bredsdorff also revealed that three individuals were the eventual financial

<sup>8</sup> Russell to Bredsdorff, 14 Jan. 1935, RA Rec. Acq. 1,111F.

<sup>9</sup> Russell to D. Russell, 18 Apr. 1924, *SLBR* 2: 242.

<sup>10</sup> Russell to Bredsdorff, 14 Jan. 1935, RA Rec. Acq. 1,111F.

<sup>11</sup> A document in the papers of Jørgen Jørgensen (see *Letter 2*, n.8) held in Denmark's Royal Library shows Russell signing below the typed statement: "Received of Professor Jørgen Jørgensen Kr. 600,00. p.t. Copenhagen, 14 October 1935." Jørgensen had first asked Russell to lecture in Copenhagen in November 1929, a request he repeated in 1930 and 1931. In a handwritten draft of one of his letters to Russell that appears to have been written in January or February of 1930, Jørgensen mentions the fund providing the small 600 kroner fee paid to distinguished visiting lecturers.

<sup>12</sup> Bredsdorff, "Bertrand Russell: Some Personal Reminiscences", p. 1, RA Rec. Acq. 1,111G. This 64-page English typescript—close to one-third of which deals with the Scandinavian tour—was sold to the Russell Archives by Bredsdorff in 1990. A shorter account in Danish of Russell's tour is found in the first volume of Bredsdorff's autobiography, *Min Egen Kurs: Erindringer 1912–1946* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1983), pp. 83–7.

sponsors of the tour—Jørgen Jørgensen and Edgar Rubin, two university professors, and Karsten Meyer, a prominent lawyer and president of the Danish-British Association. Most telling, once the tour commenced, Peter indicated to Russell that “I am distressed that you are so busy, especially as you get no fee.”<sup>13</sup> It seems unusual, but the available evidence indicates that Russell—apart from the two cash payments mentioned above—agreed to lecture in Scandinavia in return only for the full coverage of his travel costs and Peter’s. This arrangement afforded Russell the opportunity to visit Denmark for the first time,<sup>14</sup> test the reception of two new philosophical papers, assess the Continental political situation, and converse with Niels Bohr and Otto Jespersen, Danish academics Russell had been “particularly eager”<sup>15</sup> to meet.

In late January 1935, however, Russell cancelled the planned Scandinavian tour. Various reasons were put forward for this decision. Raymond Streatfeild, Russell’s attending physician, informed Bredsdorff on 19 January 1935 that Russell was “in a state of acute nervous exhaustion” requiring three months of complete rest,<sup>16</sup> and Russell confirmed his doctor’s diagnosis when he notified Gilbert Murray that “I have never in my life before been so tired and had come to the point where I could think of nothing but suicide to avoid further work.”<sup>17</sup> Russell also informed W. W. Norton, his American publisher, that his intense dispute with Dora Russell over custody of his children, John and Kate, had been another factor in his breakdown.<sup>18</sup> But the primary reason for Russell’s mental collapse was later stated in his unpublished “Private Memoirs”—Peter had fallen in love with Richard Llewelyn Davies, the son of his long-time friend and solicitor, Crompton Llewelyn Davies.<sup>19</sup> Russell and Peter left England on 31 January for a much-needed vacation in the Canary Islands, and they returned on 27 March “full of beans”.<sup>20</sup>

Upon their return, the arrangements for rescheduling the Scandina-

---

<sup>13</sup> Marjorie Spence to Russell, 10 Oct. 1935, RA 710.106359.

<sup>14</sup> Russell’s ship had briefly stopped in Copenhagen on his way to visit Russia in 1920 (*Papers* 15: xci).

<sup>15</sup> “Bertrand Russell: Some Personal Reminiscences”, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> Streatfeild to Bredsdorff, 19 Jan. 1935, RA Rec. Acq. 1, III F.

<sup>17</sup> Russell to Murray, 22 Jan. 1935, RA Rec. Acq. 71 E.

<sup>18</sup> Russell to W. W. Norton, 20 Feb. 1935, RA Rec. Acq. 1 A.

<sup>19</sup> See *SLBR* 2: 330. The document is in RA but still under Russell’s embargo.

<sup>20</sup> Russell to Ottoline Morrell, 28 March 1935, RA Rec. Acq. 69.

---

vian tour were quickly confirmed.<sup>21</sup> In May, Peter informed Bredsdorff that the lecture topics to be delivered now in October 1935 would remain the same as those originally proposed the previous year with the possibility of some slight alterations. Peter's expressed desire to accompany Russell during the tour was complicated by her chronic ill health. In August, her appendix was removed in a procedure Russell hoped would "make her a thoroughly healthy woman",<sup>22</sup> and Peter's health had apparently improved enough to allow Russell to inform Bredsdorff in mid-September that she would make the journey with him. On 1 October, however, Russell cabled his Scandinavian tour organizer that Peter had experienced a medical setback and that he would come alone. In the days that followed, Russell was kept "very busy preparing the lectures"<sup>23</sup> for the tour before he left England on Saturday, 5 October, and the first tour letter printed below records his planned arrival in the Danish port of Esbjerg on the North Sea.

Russell's letters to Peter in October 1935 provide important new information for Russell scholars. First, they supply the first substantive and intimate picture of the connection between the two individuals in

---

<sup>21</sup> Russell's cancelled March 1935 lecture to the *Kulturbund* in Vienna was not rescheduled. It is not clear when this decision was finally made, but Peter referred to the possibility of going to Vienna as late as 4 July 1935 in a letter to Russell: "I don't know at all about going to Vienna. I think you might enjoy talking to the Vienna philosophers, and it would be pleasant to see the city, but I doubt whether we should learn much politically, and we don't want to spend much time. Won't you decide?"

<sup>22</sup> Russell to Morrell, 18 Aug. 1935.

<sup>23</sup> Russell to Morrell, 3 Oct. 1935. It is difficult to identify the specific lecture preparations Russell was making in September and October 1935. In January 1935, Peter had provided Bredsdorff with a detailed medical explanation for the initial cancellation of the tour, noting that the preparation of Russell's lectures, "which he has all but finished, has required enormous effort" (21 Jan. 1935, RA Rec. Acq. 1,111C). Since no new lecture topics were developed for the rescheduled tour, Russell must have been revising or updating lectures he had previously drafted.

Russell did not indicate if he would lecture on the five topics he had mentioned in January 1935. In his letters from Scandinavia, four of the original lecture topics are specifically identified, and the annotations to the letters provide bibliographic information concerning these lectures. During the tour, Russell does not mention delivering "Education and Politics" (or "Education and the State", as he also titled this proposed lecture). Russell did not publish an article under either of these titles before or following his tour. It is possible that material prepared on this subject for the Scandinavian tour was delivered to the Union of Educational Institutions in Birmingham on 17 October 1936 as "The Future of State Education" (see *Papers* 21: 337–43).

---

the mid-1930s not based on later reflections by Russell or by external observers. In his *Autobiography*, for example, Russell makes a single passing reference to Peter—“with whom for some time I had been in love” (*Auto.* 2: 193)—as they edited *The Amberley Papers* together in 1935 and 1936, and much more scholarly attention has been paid to the “deceit, rancour, and discord” that Ray Monk believes marked the chaotic final years of their relationship (Monk 2: 308). The letters exchanged by Russell and Peter during the Scandinavian tour certainly reflect their love for each other, but this correspondence also reveals the contesting and competing forces affecting their romance in its early stages. Peter’s seemingly incurable health problems were an obvious source of concern for Russell, and Dora Russell continued to inject an element of uncertainty into their lives, particularly through her interaction with her children with Russell. The letters also highlight Peter’s persistent contact with former lovers such as Richard Llewelyn Davies and document Russell’s tryst during the tour with a previously unknown lover, Grethe Forchhammer (**Letters 8 and 14**). Although Russell and Peter would marry in January 1936, shortly after Russell’s return from Scandinavia, the infidelity and tribulations recorded in their correspondence reveal the shaky foundations of their relationship and provide an ominous preview of difficulties to come.

The second insight provided by Russell’s Scandinavian letters concerns the importance of the tour in his return to philosophy to secure a hoped-for academic appointment. “On Order in Time”, the first of three scholarly papers he published in 1936, had been submitted to the *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philosophical Society* in September 1935, but Russell used the Scandinavian tour to roll out two other papers, “The Limits of Empiricism” and “Determinism and Physics”. The annotations to Russell’s Scandinavian letters provide more detail about these two papers. It should be emphasized that Russell received important feedback from leading scholars and scientists attending his lectures during the tour. It has been asserted that “The Limits of Empiricism” was first delivered to the Moral Science Club in Cambridge on 28 November 1935 (*Papers* 10: 653), but Russell read this paper as his inaugural lecture on 7 October in Copenhagen and received comments on its merits from the leading Danish philosopher Jørgen Jørgensen (**Letter 3**).

Similarly, Russell spoke on “Determinism and Physics” during his Scandinavian tour before the paper’s more prominent delivery to the Philosophical Society of the University of Durham in January 1936.

---

Before lecturing on “Determinism and Physics” in Copenhagen, Niels Bohr expounded his views on quantum mechanics directly to Russell. “The result of his lecture”, Russell noted, “is that what I had prepared on Determinism and Physics won’t do” (**Letter 4**), and Russell revised and delivered this paper for the first time on 10 October in Bohr’s presence “without disgracing myself” (**Letter 7**). The full picture of Russell’s interaction with leading intellectuals is incomplete because it appears that at least one letter Russell wrote to Peter in Scandinavia is lost. On 12 October, Russell informed Peter that he would meet with Werner Heisenberg the next day (**Letter 8**), but Russell’s account of this meeting cannot be located, and his next surviving letter to Peter is dated 15 October. He had clearly provided an account of his conversation with Heisenberg, since Peter informed Russell on 18 October that “Your conversation with Heisenberg dwells in my mind” and on 19 October that “What you say about Heisenberg is extremely interesting”; Russell also referred later in the tour to “that conversation [with Heisenberg] I wrote about” (**Letter 18**).

The interaction with Bohr and Heisenberg is significant in determining Russell’s understanding of quantum mechanics and causality. Scholars have traditionally believed that Russell had an incomplete grasp of this topic because, in his later philosophical writings, he frequently treated causality as relatively unproblematic. Writing days before his departure for the Scandinavian tour, Russell admitted candidly to Bohr that “I must confess, to my shame, that I cannot sufficiently understand quantum theory to have a critical opinion on the point, and in my lecture I shall have to confine myself to generalities.”<sup>24</sup> But Russell’s tour correspondence with Peter reveals that he received comprehensive tutoring from two of the leading physicists in the field, and Russell proclaimed that “I at last understand” (**Letter 4**) after his discussions with Bohr. These master classes were also conducted at a time when Bohr’s controversy with Albert Einstein about quantum mechanics was at its hottest after Einstein, Boris Podolsky, and Nathan Rosen had published their famous attack (known as the EPR paradox) on quantum mechanics in 1935.<sup>25</sup> Russell walked into the epicentre of this intense academic debate during his Scandinavian tour and surely left Copenhagen fully

---

<sup>24</sup> Russell to Bohr, 30 Sept. 1935, RA Rec. Acq. 369A.

<sup>25</sup> “Can Quantum-Mechanical Description of Reality Be Considered Complete?”, *Physical Review* 47 (1935): 777–80.

---

versed in the intricacies of quantum mechanics after his meetings with Bohr and Heisenberg.<sup>26</sup>

The third important insight derived from Russell’s Scandinavian letters is his keen awareness of the worsening international political situation. “The Revolt against Reason”, Russell’s account of the development of fascist ideology beginning in the nineteenth century,<sup>27</sup> was the mainstay of his Scandinavian lecture schedule, and he frequently referred to the “menace of Hitler” (Letter 3) hanging over Scandinavian nations. Russell’s acute interest in the political extremes of fascism and communism is also evident in his regular ideological categorization of many people he met, from the “rather disagreeable” German communist Helmut Gottschalk (Letter 8) to the president of the Anglo-Norwegian Society who was “evidently going Nazi” (Letter 17). The prosperity and vitality of Scandinavian countries deeply impacted Russell and certainly influenced his developing views on pacifism as a response to the spectre of Nazism. When his polemical *Which Way to Peace?* was published in late 1936, Denmark was singled out as the country England should emulate. Danes enjoyed “in every way a higher standard of life in the general population”, and by refusing to maintain a significant army, Russell maintained that they were “defended by their very defencelessness”.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, Russell’s correspondence with Peter written from Scandinavia re-emphasizes his consummate letter-writing skills, his remarkable capacity to observe political, social, intellectual and economic events, and his personal interactions with a fascinating range of characters. Russell’s expansive and thorough declarations of his affection for Peter in many of

---

<sup>26</sup> Russell’s more complete understanding of the controversy surrounding quantum mechanics arising out of his time in Denmark was evidenced in “Science Is Tottering” (*Sunday Referee*, 10 Nov. 1935, p. 12; *Papers* 21: 276–7), which he wrote shortly after his return from Scandinavia. In this article, Russell laments the decline of the influence of scientists, “because recent progress in physics has been such as to accentuate the element of doubt which the man of science should feel as regards his own principles. Ever since the seventeenth century it has been held that all occurrences in the physical world ... are in accordance with invariable laws, which could be discovered by sufficient genius.... Most physicists now no longer believe this, and their disbelief is a direct result of the extraordinary delicacy of their methods of observation.” See also Letter 4, n.10.

<sup>27</sup> Russell had initially hoped to write a complete book on this topic, but the project was abandoned. See Brett Lintott, “Russell’s Aborted Book on Fascism”, *Russell* 28 (2008): 39–64.

<sup>28</sup> *Which Way to Peace?* (London: M. Joseph, 1936), pp. 136–7. He returned to his personal experience of Denmark in response to a review of this book (*Papers* 21: 468–9).

---

his letters are matched by his stark, contrite admission that he had “been a fool to cause you and me unhappiness” (**Letter 14**) for his sexual rendezvous with Grethe Forchhammer. Despite his demanding speaking commitments, Russell commented extensively on a variety of matters from Scandinavia, including the domestic political situation in Denmark and the beauty of the natural and built environments of Scandinavian nations. The detailed and sharp comments on a host of individuals with whom he interacted also are vintage Russell, ranging from remarks on the physical appearance of Niels Bohr and his wife—both having “noses that beat creation for vastness” (**Letter 4**)—to the attempts of the “religious crank” (**Letter 17**) to convert him at the summit of a mountain overlooking the Norwegian city of Bergen.

Russell’s letters printed below are faithfully transcribed, including abbreviations, emphases, capitalization and punctuation, from the original correspondence found in the Russell Archives. Letter numbers and standardized places and dates are placed at the beginning of all letters with editorial insertions in angle brackets. Textual insertions as well as errors made by Russell—such as the misspelling of individual names or places—are noted in the annotations, which also provide detailed commentary on the events described by Russell and extracts of letters written by Peter to Russell during the Scandinavian tour. The author wishes to thank Anders Toffgaard of the Royal Library, Copenhagen, the Editor for his detailed editorial assistance, Nick Griffin for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper, and Stefan Andersson and Carol Keene for identifying some of the people Russell met during his Scandinavian tour.

## Letter 1

On ship

Sunday, 6 October 1935

*My Darling—*

*I hope you are not unhappy & are being entertained by visitors. I am having the most perfect weather imaginable: bright sun, a gentle following wind, & summer warmth. Danish is an odd language. They called a steamer a damp squib & a Co. a self-scab, so that a steamship-Co is a Dampskib-Selscab.<sup>1</sup> The boat is comfortable—most of the passengers are Danes. The food is not so bad as on the Norwegian boat. It is sad that you are not with me—we could have such fun together.*

*I heard the wireless yesterday evening but have heard no news this mg.<sup>2</sup> I am convinced that war with Italy will be avoided somehow. I get to Ejsberg<sup>3</sup>*

---

at 5 & to Copenhagen after midnight. For the moment I enjoy having nothing to do. (The boat vibrates, which makes my handwriting shaky.)

Dear lovely Peter, I feel happier with you & about you than I have felt since your miscarriage.<sup>4</sup> Don't worry about your health—I am sure it will get steadily better. Bless you my Darling.

Your B.

There is a notice up saying letters can't be sent by air-mail, but I hope that doesn't apply to letters from Ejsberg.

<sup>1</sup> Russell refers here humorously to the name of the steamship company or the name of the vessel on which he was a passenger. Neither can be identified.

<sup>2</sup> Italy had invaded Abyssinia on 3 Octo-

ber 1935, sparking an international diplomatic crisis.

<sup>3</sup> The proper spelling of this Danish port is Esbjerg.

<sup>4</sup> In October 1931 (see Monk 2: 130).

## Letter 2

From Copenhagen on Hotel Phoenix letterhead

Monday, 7 October 1935

My Darling—

I have just had a dear little air-mail letter from you,<sup>1</sup> which was a joy, as I did not expect one so soon. I am terribly busy this first day—Bredsdorff duly met me at Esbjerg—we spent some time walking around the place—it is small, incredibly clean, quite modern, & almost all the architecture good. I have seen nothing of Copenhagen yet—we arrived at 12.45 p.m.<sup>2</sup> & this morning I have had Sunday Ref<sup>cc</sup>,<sup>3</sup> a lecture to sweat up (it is given at 4),<sup>4</sup> invitations to answer, & a press photographer. Immediately after lunch I have to see a collection of journalists; I am told they will ask what I think of the Oxford movement,<sup>5</sup> which flourishes here. Bredsdorff is married lately (I haven't seen his wife<sup>6</sup>)—he is a communist, was in Russia this summer, & liked it immensely. He is as charming as ever. The newspapers are full of me—also of Niels Bohr,<sup>7</sup> whose birthday is today. I keep on wishing you were here—the weather is warm & fine. But I think you would find the bustle very tiring.

Your photograph is put up where I can see it when I am in bed. Everybody is most kind—Bredsdorff & Jørgensen<sup>8</sup> both expressed sincere regrets that you couldn't come. The fascists are attacking Jørgensen & trying to hound him out for being a socialist. They print abominable attacks on him. I am very fit.

Now I must stop or I shall get no lunch. All my love, my sweet Treasure.

Your B

---

<sup>1</sup> Dated 5 October 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Russell presumably intended to write “a.m.” here.

<sup>3</sup> Probably “How to Keep Peace”, *The Sunday Referee*, 13 Oct. 1935, p. 4; *Papers* 21: 55–7.

<sup>4</sup> As **Letter 3** indicates, the lecture Russell needed to “sweat up” was “The Limits of Empiricism”, the first occasion he would deliver it to a public audience. Although he was obviously tinkering with his lecture text at this late date, he had been contemplating the topic for some time. Appendix XIV of *Papers* 10 demonstrates the development of this paper from its original notes and outlines, and, in introducing this material, John Slater indicates Russell began working on the paper in the summer of 1935. Based on the correspondence surrounding the Scandinavian tour, however, it seems that Russell might have started developing this topic as early as the closing months of 1934. Responding to Elias Bredsdorff’s suggested schedule of lectures—before the tour’s postponement—for February 1935, Russell asked on 5 January 1935 if he could change some of the proposed lecture topics: “As for lectures: ‘Mathematics and Psychology’ is a very fine subject, but difficult; could you substitute ‘The Limits of Empiricism’ or, if you prefer it, ‘On the Concept of Experience?’” (RA Rec. Acq. 1, I11F). Both of these titles appear combined on an early outline of the paper (*Papers* 10: 659–62).

<sup>5</sup> Russell probably refers here to the Oxford Group, which followers of the American moral reformer Frank Buchman first designated themselves in 1928. Buchman championed an evangelistic brand of Christianity requiring adherents to publicly acknowledge their sins. He focused his efforts on Scandinavia beginning in 1934, hoping a spiritual reawakening there would spill over into Nazi Germany. The Oxford Group reorganized itself as Moral Re-Armament in 1938. What is usually referred to as the “Oxford Movement”, as

distinct from the “Oxford Group”, originated in 1833 at Oriel College, Oxford, where influential Anglicans led by John Henry Newman sought to return the established Church to its conservative pre-Reformation roots. Also known as the Tractarian movement, this reform impulse officially lasted until 1845 when Newman converted to Catholicism.

<sup>6</sup> Bredsdorff had married Amelie Marie Pedersen (1911–1939), an artist also known as Marlie Brande, in 1935.

<sup>7</sup> Niels Bohr (1885–1962) received the Nobel physics prize in 1922 for his work on quantum mechanics. Appointed to the faculty at the University of Copenhagen in 1916, he directed the Institute for Theoretical Physics there from 1920 until his death.

<sup>8</sup> Jørgen Jørgensen (1894–1969), professor of philosophy at the University of Copenhagen from 1926 to 1964. Jørgensen published *Bertrand Russell, en praktisk Idealist og hans Filosofi* [Bertrand Russell: a Practical Idealist and His Philosophy] in 1935. Russell held Jørgensen in high regard, praising the latter’s “excellent and very full discussion” (*PoM* [1937], p. vii) of the relationship between mathematics and logic in the third volume of his *Treatise of Formal Logic* (1931). Jørgensen inscribed the first volume of this book with the following personal message: “To Mr. Bertrand Russell, the great thinker and the great man, as an expression of my gratitude for all I have learned and all the stimulation received from his works concerning moral as well as intellectual problems” (Russell’s library).

Jørgensen appears to have played a major role in organizing the tour along with Bredsdorff. As the Introduction indicates, Jørgensen was one of the tour’s financial sponsors, and he discussed the tour in detail when he met Russell in Paris in September 1935 (see **Letter 3**, n.6). Prior to Russell’s arrival in Scandinavia, Jørgensen also published detailed extracts from Rus-

sell's writings on a variety of topics such as politics, religion, and nationalism in *Kulturkampen* ("Bertrand Russell", no. 3

[Sept. 1935]: 2, 28, 31), a journal sponsored by an anti-fascist organization he had recently established.

### Letter 3

From Copenhagen

Tuesday, 8 October 1935

My Darling—

At last I have a few moments of leisure—hitherto I have been kept just as busy as in America. Yesterday at 2.15 I had a collective interview with journalists: four turned up, but only one spoke. He was a Nazi, a Buchmanite, & had been at Oxford—he asked what I thought of Xtianity, & told me it was out-of-date not to believe in dictatorship. He was an ass.<sup>1</sup>

At 4 I lectured in the university, on empiricism.<sup>2</sup> Jørgensen was a bit shocked, as I expected, & said Carnap had a better way of dealing with my problems.<sup>3</sup> I must read Carnap on logical syntax. I dined with Jørgensen & met Jespersen—a dear old boy.<sup>4</sup> (Mrs. Jørgensen<sup>5</sup> is a pupil of his & knows Anglo-Saxon.) He said he had read many of my books, & likes Freedom & Organization best. He said he had had a few hours at Berlin between trains & had gone into the streets & found himself in the middle of a crowd all shouting Heil Hitler, so he had shouted too, for fear of being made to miss his train. He stated, in extenuation, that he had not shouted very loud. ("It was a very little one.") He doesn't like philosophical syntax—he only likes languages that have really been spoken. He says there are 100 uses of the infinitive in English. I got back at midnight, very tired. But I slept late, & am now quite fresh. In a short time I go to lunch with Niels Bohr.

Tonight I have "Revolt against Reason"<sup>6</sup> to the students. There is a general election going on<sup>7</sup> & they have had mild riots. The peasants want inflation & the socialists don't—it is an inversion of the usual situation, because peasants here live by export & towns don't. Our determination to eat Empire butter & eggs is making the peasants into Fascists.<sup>8</sup> I haven't seen a paper this morning so I don't know what is happening at Geneva—yesterday's news seemed rather good.<sup>9</sup>

The weather here is glorious. The town is one of the pleasantest I have ever come across. Most of the architecture, both old & new, is agreeable—there are canals with ships in the middle of the town, & nice open spaces. People look cheerful & prosperous. But they feel the menace of Hitler hanging over them.

I will telegraph my address in Sweden when I know it. I have asked for it, but it has not yet been disclosed to me. Darling I hope you are well & happy.

---

*My time is interesting, but tiring—I shall be very glad when it is over & we are together again. Bless you, my dearest Treasure.*

*Your B*

<sup>1</sup> This individual is not identified. An interview with Russell conducted by Elias Bredsdorff in June 1934 appeared in the liberal Copenhagen daily *Politiken* on 6 October 1935 (see *Papers* 21: 537–9). No other record of an interview with Danish journalists can be located in the Russell Archives. Russell’s classification of this journalist as a Nazi and a Buchmanite (see his reference to the Oxford Movement (i.e. Group) in the previous letter) is somewhat contradictory, since Buchman’s evangelistic activities in Germany were strongly opposed by Nazi officials.

<sup>2</sup> Russell’s views on empiricism were eventually published as “The Limits of Empiricism”, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 36 (1935–36): 131–50; *Papers* 10: 314–28. This paper, in Ray Monk’s view, was arguably Russell’s “most serious contribution to philosophical debate since the First World War” (Monk 2: 200).

<sup>3</sup> German-born philosopher Rudolf Carnap (1891–1970) was one of the Vienna Circle’s leading exponents of logical positivism. His views on logical syntax that dealt with similar issues addressed by Russell in “The Limits of Empiricism” were published in *Logische Syntax der Sprache* in 1934 (copy in Russell’s library).

<sup>4</sup> Otto Jespersen (1860–1943), professor of English at the University of Copenhagen from 1893 to 1925.

<sup>5</sup> Jørgensen had married Krista Kjær (1900–1965), the daughter of a prominent Danish architect, in 1922. Shortly after their marriage, she had contacted Russell asking for a copy of *The Principles of Mathematics* for use by her husband.

<sup>6</sup> This paper was delivered as a lecture to the Fabian Society on 25 October 1934 and first published as “The Revolt against Reason”, *The Political Quarterly* 6 (Jan. 1935):

1–19; as “The Ancestry of Fascism”, *Papers* 10: 423–35. Jørgen Jørgensen had met Russell in Paris at the International Congress of Scientific Philosophy in September 1935, and Russell had agreed that a Danish translation of “Revolt against Reason” would also be published. It appeared as “Oprøret mod fornuften”, *Kulturkampen*, no. 4 (Nov. 1935): 26–30.

<sup>7</sup> The lower chamber of the Danish parliament had been dissolved on 1 October, and the 22 October general election returned a strengthened coalition government headed by Theodor Stauning and his Social Democrats. As Russell indicates here, the central election issue concerned the government’s determination to avoid currency devaluation endorsed by Danish farmers.

<sup>8</sup> Russell had a long-standing interest in Dominion agricultural preference schemes that prevented pure Danish butter from entering the British market. In *On Education* (1926) Russell claimed that the British government was spending “a million a year on such purposes as inducing people to poison themselves with preservatives in Canadian butter rather than eat pure butter from Denmark” (*OE*, p. 182). The assertion prompted a sharp rebuttal from Canada’s dairy commissioner, who pointed out that preservatives were generally not used in Canadian butter. Russell reduced, in subsequent printings of the book, the stated amount spent directly by the government on publicity campaigns to £650,000 and replaced “Canadian butter” with “Dominion bacon and butter”.

<sup>9</sup> League of Nations delegates meeting in Geneva had adopted a very cautious response to the Abyssinian crisis, refusing to immediately condemn Italian aggression. This caution combined with the decisive

defeat of Abyssinian forces at Adowa had convinced the Paris correspondent for *The Times*, for example, that Italian leader

Benito Mussolini "will now be ready to negotiate a reasonable settlement" ("The League and Italy", 7 Oct. 1935, p. 11).

#### Letter 4

From Copenhagen  
Wednesday, 9 October 1935

My Darling—

No letter came from you yesterday & as yet I have had none this morning. Probably this is due to Sunday—

Yesterday I lunched with Niels Bohr, who has a grand house built by a brewer for himself, & given, on his death, to be the residence of whoever should be the most distinguished of Danish professors.<sup>1</sup> The brewery still supports the university, so the dons drink beer as a public duty. Bohr's brother<sup>2</sup> was there, & I verified the story of him & Littlewood<sup>3</sup> quarrelling over the accounts at the end of a walking-tour, because neither could do the sums.<sup>4</sup> He said it was quite true, but they were drunk at the time. All through lunch, except for this interlude, Niels B. talked about Juan<sup>5</sup> in America & his bro. about *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*.<sup>6</sup> Niels B. has a nice wife,<sup>7</sup> who must have been good-looking, & 3 nice children.

After lunch, I having said I couldn't understand his present controversy with Einstein,<sup>8</sup> he took me up to a blackboard & lectured for 1½ hours, brilliantly. I at last understood, & became entirely persuaded that he is right. The matter concerns causality, & is grave. Bohr has no theological *arrière-pensée*, like Eddington:<sup>9</sup> it is all straightforward science. The result of his lecture is that what I had prepared on *Determinism & Physics* won't do.<sup>10</sup> Bohr is completely delightful—a simple-minded enthusiast, with no egoism, setting forth the merits of men much younger than himself.

In the evg. I lectured to the students on *R v R*—a great success.<sup>11</sup> I met Mrs Bredsdorff, tall, closely shingled, rather good-looking, an artist, & (I should say) a trifle formidable. The chairman<sup>12</sup> was a man who reminded me of Papineau.<sup>13</sup> [N.B. Both the Bohr's have noses that beat creation for vastness<sup>14</sup>—they are not Jews.<sup>15</sup>] After the lecture they had a supper with speeches; I got home at midnight, & fell asleep very quickly. Now I am expecting a Spaniard who has translated 2 of my books;<sup>16</sup> then I go to lunch with a Professor of Psychology<sup>17</sup>—then I must sweat up my speech to the Anglo-Danish Society, & then give it. I am very well, but you would certainly find the fatigue killing.

Goodbye my Darling. I shall be glad when a letter comes. I hope all goes

---

*well with you—I keep looking at your picture, & extracting what comfort I can from it. All my Love.*

*Your B*

<sup>1</sup> This house was constructed by Jacob Christian Jacobsen (1811–1887), the founder of the Carlsberg Brewery. Jacobsen's will had stipulated that, after the death of his son, Carl, the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters would select an eminent Dane to reside in the house; Niels Bohr lived there from 1932 to 1962.

<sup>2</sup> Harald Bohr (1887–1951), Danish mathematician, was also a gifted athlete, participating on the Danish national football team in the 1908 summer Olympics.

<sup>3</sup> John Edensor Littlewood (1885–1977), English mathematician, succeeded A. N. Whitehead at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was the first Rouse Ball Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge from 1928 to 1950.

<sup>4</sup> A published account of this anecdote concerning the inability of two mathematics geniuses to perform simple arithmetic cannot be located in the *Collected Papers* of Harald Bohr, J. E. Littlewood, and G. H. Hardy (Littlewood's primary academic collaborator). Similarly, the autobiographical accounts published by Littlewood and Hardy (*A Mathematician's Miscellany* and *A Mathematician's Apology*, respectively) and their correspondence with Russell located in the Russell Archives do not mention the incident, which probably occurred in 1912 or 1913 while Bohr stayed in Cambridge to work with Littlewood. It is entirely possible that Littlewood or Hardy told Russell the anecdote directly; Russell knew both men very well, and he had lived with Littlewood during the summer of 1919 at Newlands Farm in Lulworth.

<sup>5</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>6</sup> Anita Loos published this novel in 1925; a film version (now lost) was released in 1928. The book served as the basis of a

1949 Broadway musical and the more famous 1953 Hollywood film starring Marilyn Monroe.

<sup>7</sup> Bohr had married Margrethe Norlund (1890–1984) in 1912.

<sup>8</sup> After Heisenberg proclaimed his uncertainty principle in 1927, Bohr and Einstein engaged in a protracted dispute about the nature of quantum mechanics. Bohr's position was published under the same title as the earlier paper authored by Einstein, Podolsky and Rosen in 1935: "Can Quantum-Mechanical Description of Reality Be Considered Complete?", *Physical Review* 48 (1935): 696–702.

<sup>9</sup> Arthur Stanley Eddington (1882–1944), British astronomer and physicist, wrote several popular books linking religion and science, including *The Nature of the Physical World* (1928) and *The Expanding Universe* (1933). Russell demonstrated professional restraint in published evaluations of these books; privately, however, he labelled Eddington's views as "hogwash" (quoted in *SLBR* 2: 297).

<sup>10</sup> Russell's views on this subject that were polished during his Scandinavian tour appeared as "Determinism and Physics", *Proceedings of the University of Durham Philosophical Society* 9 (March 1936): 228–45; *Papers* 10: 68–80. The following passages were written on leaves inserted into Russell's manuscript and seem to be a result of Russell's Copenhagen interaction with Bohr: *Papers* 10: 41–69: 33; 70: 41–71: 36; 76: 41–77: 29; 78: 7–19; 79: 35–80: 13. Perhaps some of the passages were inserted in further revisions to the paper before publication. There are revisions also to the pages that Russell brought with him for the tour.

<sup>11</sup> Bredsdorff reported the lecture at length as "Patriotismen ødelægger den civ-

iliserde Verden; et glimrende og aandfuldt Foredrag i Studentersamfundet af Bertrand Russell” [Patriotism Destroys the Civilized World; Bertrand Russell Gives a Glittering and Brilliant Lecture at the Students’ Society], *Politiken*, 9 Oct. 1935.

<sup>12</sup> Peter P. Rohde (1902–1978), left-wing author and cultural historian.

<sup>13</sup> Papineau was a former boyfriend of Peter’s. He is referred to in a letter of hers of October 1931 (710.106222) and in Russell’s letters of 10 and 12 December 1931.

<sup>14</sup> This observation about noses is consistent with Russell’s use of nasal analogies in his published works. See K. Blackwell, “The Wit and Humour of *Principia Math-*

*ematica*”, *Russell* 31 (2011): 156 n.27.

<sup>15</sup> Niels Bohr’s mother, Ellen Adler, was Jewish, one of several reasons why Bohr fled Nazi-occupied Denmark in 1943.

<sup>16</sup> Probably Julio Huici Miranda. The electronic catalogue of the *Biblioteca Nacional de España* in Madrid lists Miranda as the only translator of two of Russell’s books by 1935—*The Conquest of Happiness* and *On Education*.

<sup>17</sup> Edgar Rubin (1886–1951), professor of psychology at the University of Copenhagen. The reasons for Rubin’s willingness to sponsor Russell’s Scandinavian tour are unclear; no correspondence between the two men is found in the Russell Archives.

## Letter 5

Telegram from Copenhagen  
(*Thursday*,) 10 October 1935

*Address care Professor Tegen<sup>1</sup> Lund Sweden all well love*

<sup>1</sup> Einar Tegen (1884–1965), professor of philosophy at Lund University, 1931–37.

## Letter 6

From Copenhagen  
*Thursday, 10 October 1935*

*My Darling Love—*

*Yesterday I got two letters from you, which was a great comfort—both written Oct. 6. Basil de Selincourt’s review<sup>1</sup> is unfortunate—he never suggests the book is amusing. Dear Child, I was touched by your dreams of my being lost<sup>2</sup>—I think you do like me.*

*Yesterday I lunched with a psychologist about 12 miles out, by a lake in the middle of beech woods, rather nice. In the evening I had the Anglo-Danish Soc. on the advantages of scepticism.<sup>3</sup> A fat English parson was just in front of me, & rather put me off—a young man from the Legation was also there—nevertheless it went off all right. I was tired, but had to go to a supper afterwards, where Niels Bohr talked difficult talk at me till I could have screamed—Today I have to lecture on Determinism & Physics, & must say quite different things from what I had prepared, which is difficult.*

*I sent you a telegram about my address—I shall be at Lund 14th & 15th*

---

16th to 20th *Poste Restante, Stockholm (I will telegraph if I get a better address)*

21 to 27 *BRYNJULF BULL,<sup>4</sup>*

*Uranienborgvej 11, Oslo, Norway.*

*Letters not by air mail will take 4 days.*

*I am wishing I were home again. It is interesting being here but too tiring to be pleasant—& I do miss you dreadfully.*

*Goodbye Beloved—I must prepare my lecture for tonight. All my heart is with you, my Treasure.*

*Your B*

<sup>1</sup> This review of *In Praise of Idleness* appeared in *The Observer* on 6 October 1935. Basil de Selincourt (1877–1966) contributed a regular literary column to *The Observer* in the interwar period and published, among other books, biographies of Walt Whitman and William Blake. In the review mentioned by Russell, de Selincourt spent much of his text criticizing Russell's advocacy of socialism: "The absurdity of the Socialist dream is the notion that huge accumulations of weak and ignorant self-seekers will produce one gigantic bloom of altruistic wisdom."

<sup>2</sup> In her first letter to Russell of 6 October (710.106354), Peter described a dream in which they became separated while walking together: "I called & called & searched & searched, but could not find

you. I think I must have called aloud & waked myself up. I tried to go to sleep again in the hope of finding you, but when I did sleep the search went drearily on."

<sup>3</sup> This lecture was probably "Science and Religion" (*Papers* 10: 238–45), an unpublished paper prepared while Russell wrote *Religion and Science* (1935). On 14 January 1935 (shortly before he postponed the original tour), Russell asked Bredsdorff to change one of the lecture titles: "Please put the title 'Science and Religion' rather than 'The Advantages of Scepticism'; or at any rate that Science and Religion will be in fact what I shall talk about."

<sup>4</sup> Brynjulf Friis Bull (1906–1993), Norwegian lawyer, served as mayor of Oslo on three occasions in the 1950s and 1960s.

## Letter 7

From Copenhagen  
Friday, 11 October 1935

*My Darling—*

*I have had 3 letters from you<sup>1</sup> since I last wrote, which was very nice. I will begin with business.*

*Yes re Sunday Times.<sup>2</sup>*

*As for Nobel House, the matter is difficult.<sup>3</sup> (a) I know no chemistry, & they will have to be told so. (b) It is a very long way. (c) It is, as you say, in the forbidden period.<sup>4</sup> Per contra, I should like to meet the men & see how things look to them; also I should like the fee. I think if they are willing to pay £10 + 3<sup>rd</sup> return fare, I will go; but the relation to chemistry must be such*

as not to involve a knowledge of chemistry.

I quite approve your schemes about the shrubbery etc.<sup>5</sup> I have had your little letter from the Hungaria<sup>6</sup> & a nice long one written next day. I am very glad you have got over your chill—I hope when I get home you won't need to spell dia...<sup>7</sup> I am glad you are having the complete massage & am curious to see your hair. By the way, I Old Pig brush my coat meticulously.<sup>8</sup>

As for sanctions,<sup>9</sup> it all seems going smoothly at present; I don't know whether we are going to be content with ineffective sanctions, or will presently try something stronger. I think presently a compromise will be arranged.

Last night I had to lecture about determinism & physics in the presence of Bohr, which was alarming—but I got through without disgracing myself. Bohr spoke afterwards—I think he is right, but the point is less important than it seems.

Today I went to see a College for Unemployed,<sup>10</sup> where they can go to classes on all sorts of topics—an excellent plan. I had a discussion with them about Abyssinia & they were very intelligent. Tonight I have R v R on the radio, & then a small group of Bredsdorff's friends to argue communism etc.

The Jorgenssens are very kind—they sent me roses & chocolates—but it is tiring seeing only people whose language one doesn't know. I like Bredsdorff, but communism makes something of a barrier. Hitherto I have seen nothing that surprised me, except Bohr's modesty.

Goodbye my Darling. I love you very much & wish I were home. The time passes very slowly.

Your B

---

<sup>1</sup> Dated 7 October, 8 October, and 9 October. The 9 October letter (710.106357) was the first written that day by Peter.

<sup>2</sup> In her 7 October letter, Peter noted that there were "other things of interest enclosed". Presumably, one of these items included a request for Russell to speak at the *Sunday Times* Book Exhibition, a commitment he fulfilled on 8 November 1935 after returning from Scandinavia (*Papers* 21: lxxiv).

<sup>3</sup> In her 7 October letter, Peter had asked: "Tell me what to do about Imperial Chemicals; to lecture to them would be delightful. Remember, they asked you before—in 1932." Imperial Chemical In-

dustries had been founded in 1926 by combining four large chemical corporations, among them Nobel's Explosives Co. Ltd. Nobel's Explosives' main plant had been established at Ardeer, Scotland, and, according to the description of archival records of this entity held by the University of Glasgow, the headquarters of the Ardeer operation were located at Nobel House, 195 West George Street, Glasgow. Russell evidently did not immediately agree to lecture to representatives from Imperial Chemical in Scotland, but he did eventually speak to the Ardeer Chemical Club—probably associated with the ICI plant there—on 25 February 1937. For the text of Russell's 1937 speech, see "Chem-

istry's Power of Life and Death", *Papers* 21: 289–97.

<sup>4</sup> Peter does not mention the "forbidden period"—presumably referring to her menstrual cycle—in any of the three letters referred to by Russell at the start of this letter. It is also unclear why he would hesitate to make the journey to speak in Scotland during this time, although the known severity of Peter's periods might have caused Russell to decline a speaking engagement to remain with her.

<sup>5</sup> In her 7 October letter, Peter had detailed her plans to thin out the shrubbery in front of Telegraph House.

<sup>6</sup> Peter had written her 8 October letter from London's Hungaria Grill Room after having dinner there with Crompton Llewelyn Davies.

<sup>7</sup> The incomplete word here is presumably "diarrhoea". In her first letter of 9

October to Russell, Peter had noted that "My chill is cured & I have no more dia—can't spell it when you are away."

<sup>8</sup> Peter had closed her 9 October letter by admonishing Russell: "Don't forget to brush your coat, you old pig!"

<sup>9</sup> In her 9 October letter, Peter had commented: "I don't know what to think about the [Ethiopian] war—and am wondering about what sort of sanctions, if any, will be imposed."

<sup>10</sup> Probably this was Borups Højskole, a college of adult education, where Bredsdorff says Russell gave "a little improvised lecture and answered questions from some of the students" ("Some Personal Reminiscences", p. 24). The visit was at Russell's request (see Jørgensen's letter to Bredsdorff of 18 September 1935, after discussing the tour with Russell in Paris).

## Letter 8

From Copenhagen

Saturday, 12 October 1935

*My Darling—*

*I am very sorry I worried you saying I was tired—it was only the natural fatigue of many hours talking to foreigners & lecturing. I slept it off each night. Now I have no lectures tonight or tomorrow—Tomorrow I shall meet Heisenberg<sup>1</sup> & spend the day in the country if it is fine.*

*Last night I had broadcasting & then Bredsdorff's party—about 12 young people, male & female, mostly communists, not all—We went over the usual ground. They were all very nice—none of them had the cynical superiority of so many communists, & none were fierce.*

*In the afternoon I had a visit from a German communist named Gottschalk, who has written a scientific book on jealousy,<sup>2</sup> claiming to prove that it is physiologically different in men & women, with a different effect on the glands. Perhaps he is right—you don't seem to know the sensation of goose-flesh that I associate with jealousy—but he was a rather disagreeable man. He left me his MS in hopes I would get it published in England.<sup>3</sup> I get the usual assortment of lunatic letters.<sup>4</sup>*

*Today I have to lunch with Grethe<sup>5</sup> & her husband—I have seen them at my lectures but avoided more than a word or two hitherto. She translates my*

*books into Danish—whether well or badly I don't know.*<sup>6</sup>

*I had a bad dream about the children. They haven't written to me though I sent them stamped addressed envelopes before I came abroad.*

*It seems more like a month than a week since I left home. I wish I were with you again, my Darling. I don't like being away from you. All my heart.*

*Your B*

<sup>1</sup> Werner Heisenberg (1901–1976) had proposed the uncertainty principle of quantum theory in 1927 while working with Niels Bohr at the University of Copenhagen and was awarded the Nobel physics prize in 1932. In addition to his 1935 meeting in Copenhagen, Russell's 1947–48 pocket diary records a meeting with Heisenberg on 3 March 1948 at the Master's Lodge, Christ's College, University of Cambridge.

<sup>2</sup> Helmuth Gottschalk (b. 1902) published *Skinsygens Problemer* [Problems of Jealousy] (Copenhagen: Fremad) in 1936.

<sup>3</sup> Gottschalk's manuscript—with or without Russell's efforts—does not seem to have been published in English, and no mention of the book is found in Russell's correspondence with Allen and Unwin, his British publisher.

<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, only one letter—apart from those written by Peter and the note appended to **Letter 17**—Russell received in Scandinavia is to be found in the Russell Archives, and it is hardly "lunatic". Russell might have kept this letter from a Swede, Ligne Lindquist, dated 17 October 1935, because she mentioned his late aunt, Lady Agatha Russell, at a time when he was beginning research on his family for *The Amberley Papers*.

<sup>5</sup> Margrethe ("Grethe") Forchhammer (née Høgstrom, 1903–1957) played an important personal role in Russell's trip to Denmark. Educated at Copenhagen University, Forchhammer was a teacher at Beacon Hill School. Russell refers to a "Gretha" working at Beacon Hill in 1929 (see "Letter to Dora Russell", *Russell* 11

[1991]: 7), and Christopher Farley, Russell's last secretary, also attached a note to an undated letter from Forchhammer to Russell written in the early 1930s that stated she was a "Teacher at BR's school (Telegraph House)". Russell's sexual tryst with Forchhammer during his Scandinavian tour (see **Letter 14**) was perhaps a continuation of an earlier intimate relationship. In her undated letter, Forchhammer responds to a now-lost letter from Russell that "asked for news of the last months"; she also apparently met Russell away from Beacon Hill School, remembering what Russell said "on an evening in Cornwall" concerning his fear of Dora possibly having children fathered by other men. After moving from Berlin to Copenhagen, Forchhammer wrote a second extant letter to Russell dated 27 Dec. 1934, noting his upcoming lecture tour (that would be postponed) and indicating that "much of what I have to write to you is of a most private nature". The third and final extant letter from Forchhammer dated 8 Jan. 1935 contains a rather bizarre account of her kleptomaniac mother-in-law discovering Forchhammer's affair with her brother-in-law.

<sup>6</sup> Before their marriage, Grethe Høgstrom and Nels Forchhammer translated Russell's *On Education* into Danish in 1927. No other translations of his books can be attributed to them. Forchhammer divorced her husband some time after Russell's 1935 visit and married Olaf Forchhammer—Nels's uncle, with whom she admits having an affair in her 8 Jan. 1935 letter (see the previous note)—in 1941.

---

## Letter 9

From Copenhagen  
 Saturday night, 12 October 1935

*My Darling Love—*

*I am just back from a large formal dinner-party—very dull—Just before starting I got a dear letter written from you from the Berners Hotel.<sup>1</sup> It fitted in exactly with my mood—I mind being away from you far more even than I expected—next time I shall arrange a code word to mean “the pain & grief of separation have surpassed even my expectations”. I get really unhappy, & only half realize that it comes of not being with you. I feel I shan’t be able to face America without you<sup>2</sup>—I have no means of pushing away depressing thoughts—I worry about the children or whatever there is to worry about—*

*Don’t let David<sup>3</sup> persuade you are less agreeable than you were. I think for a time it might have been said, but not since you went to Ireland last December.<sup>4</sup> He of course feels the difference of your not being in love with him, but that is not objective truth.*

*Dear Peter I love you very deeply—you have become a need to me like air & sleep—being away makes me know how much this is so. Now it is 12.30 & I must go to bed. Goodnight sweet love.*

*Your B*

<sup>1</sup> Peter had written this 10 October letter from London’s Berners Hotel after attending a concert.

<sup>2</sup> Russell had scheduled an American lecture tour in 1936 that he would cancel in September of that year after discovering that Peter was pregnant.

<sup>3</sup> The identity of “David” cannot be determined, although he was evidently a former—and fairly recent—lover of Peter’s. In her second letter of 9 October to Russell (710.106358), Peter noted that this individual had spent the evening at Telegraph House and informed her that she “was not as nice as I used to be, that I was

harder. I told him he couldn’t expect me to be as nice & soft as when I was in love with him.” The only letter to Peter from a person with a given name of “David” found in the Russell Archives (dated 8 Sept. 1933) is from David Low, the noted caricaturist, and the letter concerned a request from Low to arrange a meeting with Russell and had nothing to do with a possible relationship with Peter.

<sup>4</sup> Peter stayed near Dublin, writing intimate letters to Russell from Furry Park, Raheny, the home of Moya and Crompton Llewelyn Davies. Their son Richard was also there.

## Letter 10

From Lund on Grand Hôtel letterhead  
 (Tuesday,) 15 October 1935

*My Darling Peter, my poor child,*

*I got such a melancholy letter from you yesterday,<sup>1</sup> about rheumatism & war & Richard—it makes me long to be with you to comfort you.*

*About rheumatism:<sup>2</sup> we must take it very seriously: go abroad in Jan. as soon as the children's holidays are over, & try to manage winter in Malaga (or at least in warmth) always. I don't think there is any reason why it should get worse if we take trouble. We will do whatever is best.*

*As to war:<sup>3</sup> I haven't seen a paper yesterday or today, but I don't believe in war with Italy, any more than I did before. And if there were a war it would be mainly naval, & would hardly call for everybody to fight.*

*As to Richard:<sup>4</sup> If I were you, I should see him, regardless of possible consequences; you might save his life, which is much more important than any personal complications that might result. I am entirely willing that you should ask him to T.H.<sup>5</sup> after I get home, but I am equally willing that you should not wait for my return. I should think Crompton would always be for fighting whenever there is a chance of it.<sup>6</sup>*

*I got here yesterday morning: a small university town with a large cathedral (C.I.).<sup>7</sup> They had a very formal luncheon, at which the host<sup>8</sup> made a speech, saying that he was glad to welcome at his board the Rector Magnificus, the Vice-Rector, the Professor of this & the Professor of that—after which he came onto my merits. We marched in arm in arm, like a dinner party, & marched out the same way. There is endless etiquette about drinking; & after a meal, you shake hands with host & hostess as soon as you get up, & utter words which mean "thanks for the meal". My host, in spite of all these forms, was a thoroughly modern man, a bio-chemist, a friend of Hopkins<sup>9</sup> etc. He says pregnancy can be detected within a week by analysis of the urine.*

*After lunch there was just time to prepare my evening lecture (at which the Bishop<sup>10</sup> was present!); then a vast supper, at which we had a discussion of my lecture in German (it was *Limits of Empiricism*). Tonight I have R v R to the students, who, I am told, are mostly nationalists. The Danish newspapers all quoted me as saying patriotism is worse than drunkenness or theft (wh. I did say); I will say the same here, & see what the result is. I am much less tired than I was. Today I am being taken motoring in the country all day by an Oxford man who writes of F. H. Bradley.<sup>11</sup> Tomorrow I catch a train before 8 & have 8 hours' journey to Stockholm. From here to the north of Sweden, they say, is as far as from here to Rome.*

*My dear Darling, I love you, & I hate to think of you being unhappy. I will do my best to comfort you when I get home. One can't do much without physical presence. Goodbye my Heart.*

*Your B*

---

<sup>1</sup> Dated 11 October 1935, this was the second letter (710.106362) Peter wrote to Russell on that day.

<sup>2</sup> The majority of Peter's letters to Russell lament the debilitating effects of her rheumatism, but this particular letter contained an especially detailed account of her physical infirmities that she feared would turn her into a "useless miserable creature".

<sup>3</sup> Much of Peter's letter detailed the "terribly disillusioning" international situation surrounding the Abyssinian crisis.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Llewelyn Davies (1912–1981) was the only son of Crompton Llewelyn Davies (1868–1935), Russell's long-time friend and solicitor. Peter had fallen in love with Richard late in 1934 or in January 1935, although her affections were not reciprocated. In her 11 October letter, Peter informed Russell that Crompton indicated his son would fight if Britain became engulfed in the Abyssinian crisis. "I want", Peter maintained, "to break away from him", but she hoped Russell would talk with Richard after returning from his Scandinavian tour to dissuade him from entering the military. In the meantime, Peter asked, "is it desirable that I should see him?"

<sup>5</sup> Telegraph House, the 230-acre country estate located on the South Downs near Petersfield built by Russell's brother Frank, the second Earl Russell. Russell and Dora had rented this property in June 1927 to house Beacon Hill School, and Russell assumed ownership in 1934 following the death of a certain Miss Otter, to whom Frank had left his estate after suddenly dying in March 1931. Although Rus-

sell described Telegraph House as "ugly and rather absurd" (*Auto.* 2: 153), he nonetheless loved its tower study and pastoral environment. Russell sold Telegraph House in 1937 (see **Letter 18**).

<sup>6</sup> Crompton Llewelyn Davies shared few of Russell's pacifist views and ardently supported Sinn Fein—his wife was imprisoned for her support of Irish independence and he lost his civil service job with the Post Office as a result. "By temperament", Russell noted, "he was inclined to anarchism ... [and he] admired rebels rather more, perhaps, than was wholly rational" (*Auto.* 1: 58).

<sup>7</sup> The Lund Cathedral was actually consecrated in 1145.

<sup>8</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>9</sup> Presumably Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins (1861–1947), the Nobel prize-winning Cambridge biochemist. Russell and Hopkins were signatories to a recent public appeal from the National Peace Council protesting British air raid defence measures ("Precautions for Air Raids", *The Times*, 18 Sept. 1935, p. 15; *Papers* 21, App. VII).

<sup>10</sup> Edvard Magnus Rodhe (1878–1954), Bishop of Lund from 1925 to 1948.

<sup>11</sup> This "Oxford man" was probably Torgny T. Segerstedt (1908–1999), whose doctoral dissertation at Lund University on the British philosopher Francis Herbert Bradley (1846–1924) was published in 1934 as *Value and Reality in Bradley's Philosophy* (Lund: A. B. Gleerupska Univ-Bokhandeln). Segerstedt's link with Oxford is unclear, but he spent time in England before receiving his doctorate.

Letter II

On Grand Hôtel letterhead  
In train to Stockholm  
(Wednesday,) 16 October 1935

My Darling Love—

Today I am enjoying 8 hours' holiday from politeness while the train travels through a country of birch & pine & lakes. Yesterday the Bishop took me out motoring to a 16 castle inhabited by an old aristocratic widow<sup>1</sup> who was rather nice. Her house was full of beautiful things & her library was divine; she had lovely beech woods, a moat, & all the etceteras. I questioned the Bishop about Hitler's quarrels with the Church,<sup>2</sup> wh. he attributed to H's being an Austrian Catholic! He knows & likes the Bp. of Chichester.<sup>3</sup>

In the evening I lectured on R v R, rather well—The old lady from the Castle was there—then a late supper, with Swedish ceremonies of drinking & 3 hurrahs—bed at 12; train this mg. at 7.58.

I am glad Times Lit Sup & Joad say nice things in their reviews,<sup>4</sup> & that they pick out your remark about the reader being not reassured to learn that I = God.<sup>5</sup>

Scandinavia is clean & tidy & honest—the people are shy & need drink to warm up. They are pleasant but do not seem to have much quality. There is no poverty, much comfort, little wealth.

Sweden, they say, has turned from Germany to England; the universities, especially, can now get nothing out of Germany. But the students, who used to be socialists, are not mainly nationalists. One old philosopher,<sup>6</sup> who upheld Kant in discussion, is, I am told, a Nazi, but he is regarded as a fossil. On the whole, Scandinavia seems a democrat's paradise, reminiscent of the old Middle West.<sup>7</sup> An American & a Swede next to me are discussing the fields of oil in Prussia, & the American is telling of his experiences in oil in U.S.A.

I have bad dreams at night—that you are angry & that the children turn to Dora. I can't sleep restfully away from you—I long to be home again—All your activities with bulbs<sup>8</sup> sound so restful & satisfying. Goodbye dearest Treasure—I love you with all my heart.

Your B

---

<sup>1</sup> Probably Augusta Eleonora Gustava Hallenborg (1857–1936), who married Count Otto Gustaf Erik Thott (1854–1933) in 1879. The sixteenth-century castle Ruseell visited was likely Skabersjö, located about sixteen kilometres south of Lund.

<sup>2</sup> Although Hitler had guaranteed the

rights of the Catholic Church in Germany by signing the Concordat with the Vatican in July 1933, Catholic officials were targeted for persecution and harassment, particularly after Hitler created the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs under the direction of Hanns Kerrl in July 1935.

<sup>3</sup> George Bell (1883–1958), Bishop of Chichester from 1929 to 1958. Russell signed several appeals with Bell after World War II for food relief for Europe. See, for example, “Food Parcels Still Needed”, *The New York Times*, 3 Nov. 1945, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> The first of these reviews of *In Praise of Idleness* appeared in the 10 October 1935 issue of the *Times Literary Supplement*; it was unsigned but written by the poet and artist Alan Francis Clutton-Brock (1904–1976). The second review by British philosopher C. E. M. Joad (1891–1953) was published in the 12 October 1935 issue of the *New Statesman*. While pleased with Joad’s review—which described Russell as “the most lucid expositor of the day”—Russell in 1935 accused Joad of plagiarism in the latter’s *Guide to Philosophy* and commented later that “Joad had no influence upon me whatsoever, and in fact I thought him a charlatan” (to Cyril Clemens, 23 Dec. 1953, RA).

<sup>5</sup> Joad’s review of *In Praise of Idleness* quoted the following passage (from “The Ancestry of Fascism”) to demonstrate Russell’s mastery of understated irony: “Fichte, it is true, explains, after a while, that when he says ‘I’ he means ‘God’; but the reader is not wholly reassured” (*IP*, p. 92). This quotation did not appear in the *TLS* review, and it is not entirely certain to what Russell refers when he tells Peter that Joad had picked out “your remark”, although Peter—whose assistance Russell acknowledged in the book’s preface—playfully rejected the suggestion that she had been responsible for the passage about Fichte, in an 18 October letter to Russell: “As for that remark about I = God, I disown it, though regretfully. Did you attribute it to me because you had dreamt that

I was angry? I am sure that at that time, at the most chaotic stage in the house, I couldn’t have been so witty. No, my dear, it is your own.”

<sup>6</sup> Russell seems to conflate two Swedish philosophers here. The “old philosopher” who supported Kant in his meeting with Russell was probably Hans Larsson (1862–1944), a liberal humanist and Kantian scholar who was a philosopher at Lund University from 1901 to 1927. Russell’s after-the-fact receipt of information about an alleged Nazi who was regarded as a fossil (presumably for his political views instead of his age) probably refers not to Larsson but to Alf Nyman (1884–1968), who succeeded Larsson as professor of theoretical philosophy at Lund from 1929 to 1949.

<sup>7</sup> The Progressive movement in the United States from the 1890s to the 1930s had been supported heavily by the mid-western states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and North Dakota. Immigrants from Scandinavia and Germany had flocked to this region, with 38% of the population of these states born there or having at least one parent born there. After returning from his 1924 lecture tour in the United States, Russell had identified these states as “Politically, the most hopeful part of America” (“Impressions of America”, *The New Leader*, London, 8, no. 8 [22 Aug. 1924]: 5; forthcoming in *Papers* 16).

<sup>8</sup> In her 12 October letter to Russell, Peter noted that crocus bulbs were being planted outside Telegraph House: “Your lordship’s garden ought to look very pretty next spring. There are 2000 crocuses to go in during the next few days. Think how lovely it will be to look down from the tower on such a carpet of crocuses.”

Letter 12

From Stockholm on Carlton Hotel letterhead  
(Thursday,) 17 October 1935

*My Darling Love*

I got a very nice typed letter from you today—written Oct. 14. Don't you know that when I say "I think you do like me" I am adopting my usual device of under-statement, & also trying not to seem fatuous? Your letter made me so anxious to be home that I looked up boats in the Travel-Bureau here & telegraphed to you<sup>1</sup> to make it seem real. I arrive King's X, not L<sup>1</sup> Str.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps we might stay the night in London? Or wd. you rather go straight home? I feel we would be more alone together in London.—How sad you being suddenly sick;<sup>3</sup> I wonder why. I am much pained about the housemaid in "The Way of All Flesh".<sup>4</sup> When the book was first published hardly any one noticed it.

Darling, I am very grateful for what you wrote to the children, & very glad you are going to Dartington.<sup>5</sup> I have been worrying about them a good deal—it comes out in dreams. What you said in your letter to them is admirable.<sup>6</sup> Yesterday's journey was lovely—yellow birch trees mixed with dark pines, very beautiful. Lecture all right in the evening—then supper, at which 4 young men sang, in Swedish & German. The Swedes are conservative in their customs—they have formalities about drinking, wh. they say they got from  France. Today lovely bright weather—a delicious town, with big ships in the middle of it. Lunch with 2 dull Jews,<sup>7</sup> whom I disliked. Tonight dinner with my Swedish publisher,<sup>8</sup> then R v R.

I am no longer tired, but bored. When I get away alone like this, I am troubled by the old feeling of being a ghost, or the Wandering Jew, or a person with a sheet of plate glass between me & the rest of the world—sometimes it grows quite maddening.<sup>9</sup>—In Copenhagen I went to a large luncheon party given by a very successful woman doctor;<sup>10</sup> she gave everybody a little present, & mine was a box of sleeping pills. It seemed an odd choice. I met there a painted lady from Kenya, whom I disliked; I found afterwards that she has written a book called "Seven Gothic Tales".<sup>11</sup> Mrs. Jørgensen gave me her copy (with all the words she didn't know underlined)—it is the kind of book Tiny Grant Duff<sup>12</sup> would write if she could, fantastic & snobbish. The lady, though from Kenya, is Danish. I forget her name, which is not on the book. Some of the stories are rather good, of a bad kind.

The Scandinavians seem to me estimable, but rather uninteresting—I felt Heisenberg's personality made the whole lot of them pale.<sup>13</sup> They are just what I say people should be—reasonable, kindly, prudent, with no inclination for

---

*murder. (Sweden has never been at war since 1815.<sup>14</sup>) It is all very admirable....*

*I Page-Barkered my hair,<sup>15</sup> you will be glad to hear. I had a slight cold—perhaps that was what made me feel so tired at first—but I took great care of it, it never got bad, & now it is completely gone. I shall be much less busy from now on.—I come back from Bergen to Newcastle. I do long for you Peter. All sorts of spectres crawl out of their caves when I am away from you. Now I must think about my lecture so goodnight Beloved. Take care of yourself. I love you.*

## B

<sup>1</sup> Telegram not extant.

<sup>2</sup> King's Cross and Liverpool Street, train stations in London.

<sup>3</sup> In her 14 October letter to Russell, Peter noted that after dinner she had "been suddenly sick all over my frock (quite inexplicable unless through eating too fast)".

<sup>4</sup> In her 14 October letter, Peter indicated that she had been reading Samuel Butler's posthumously published *The Way of All Flesh* (1903), in which the central character, Ernest Pontifex, ends up marrying his parents' housemaid after serving prison time for a sexual assault: "I am shocked to find that the man who wrote and scolded you for saying that Ernest Pontifex seduced a housemaid had right on his side. He didn't seduce her; it was someone else, much later, that he attempted to seduce. Was this altered in a reprint? It is a good book. What did people think of it when it first came out? It must surely have seemed terribly subversive." No reference to Russell's mention of this story was located.

<sup>5</sup> Dartington Hall School, the progressive boarding facility established in 1926 where John and Kate Russell attended beginning in 1934 after leaving Beacon Hill School.

<sup>6</sup> In her 14 October letter to Russell, Peter included a lengthy portion of a letter sent to John and Kate at Dartington Hall; she encouraged them to write to their father to prevent him from experiencing nightmares "that you are falling over preci-

pices and otherwise comporting yourselves in a dangerous manner and suffering serious and unpleasant consequences therefrom, and that on these occasions he is apt to wake up screaming, and, if I am there, to hammer me while he is yet in a semi-somnolent condition, under the impression that I am a wild beast about to devour you, or something of that sort."

<sup>7</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>8</sup> Johan Hansson (1879–1973) founded the influential publishing house Natur och Kultur in 1922 and shared many of Russell's progressive and social reform views.

<sup>9</sup> This confession certainly reinforces Ray Monk's primary thesis that Russell frequently expressed "the feeling that he was a spectre that did not quite belong in the corporeal world" (Monk 2: 319). Russell expressed similar sentiments in a 1948 letter to his daughter, Kate: "I imagine myself behind plate glass, like a fish in an aquarium, or turned into a ghost whom no one sees; agonizingly I try to make some sort of human contact, but it is impossible, and I know myself doomed forever to lonely impotence" (quoted in Monk, "The Madness of Truth: Russell's Admiration for Joseph Conrad", *Russell* 14 [1994–95]: 123).

<sup>10</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>11</sup> Karen Blixen (née Dinesen, 1885–1962), Danish author, moved with her Swedish aristocrat husband to Kenya, where they

established a coffee plantation in 1914. She returned to Denmark after the plantation failed during the Great Depression and published *Seven Gothic Tales* in 1934 under the pseudonym Isak Dinesen. Her autobiographical *Out of Africa*, published in 1937, cemented her literary reputation and served as the basis of the 1985 Academy Award-winning film of the same name.

<sup>12</sup> Annabel Huth Jackson (1870–1944), author of *A Victorian Childhood* (1932), was the daughter of Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, a long-serving British MP and Governor of Madras from 1881 to 1886. She had known Russell as a child at Pembroke Lodge, and Russell noted that he and Jackson “were friends from the age of four until she died during the Second World War” (*Auto*. 1: 25).

<sup>13</sup> It is not clear which specific personality traits of Heisenberg Russell found lacking

in Scandinavians, but Heisenberg’s biographer documents the German physicist’s self-confidence and his “enormous lifelong drive to excel in everything he did—mathematics, music, even table tennis” (David C. Cassidy, *Uncertainty: The Life and Science of Werner Heisenberg* [New York: W. H. Freeman, 1992], p. 15).

<sup>14</sup> In 1813 Swedish forces participated in the victory over Napoleon’s depleted Grand Army that was won by the anti-French alliance at Leipzig. Sweden then attacked Denmark, forcing the cession of Norway to Sweden, a settlement ratified by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Sweden had since then consistently adopted a position of neutrality in European affairs.

<sup>15</sup> Russell refers here to Dr. Page-Barker’s Scurf and Dandruff Lotion, a popular hair care product.

## Letter 13

From Stockholm on Carlton Hotel letterhead  
(Friday,) 18 October 1935

*My Darling*

*I have only time for a short letter today. Norway has made a muddle of my arrangements & the time is taken up in wild telephonings. I may get home a good deal sooner than I expected. (Today I lunch with the publisher Hanson, who then takes me to Upsala.) Alas, no—just had a telephone conversation with Oslo. I have to go from Oslo to Bergen, then back to Oslo, & then back to Bergen—it is a nuisance. I shall be at Bergen 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, perhaps 24<sup>th</sup>. You might send a letter Poste Restante Bergen—I know no other address there.*

*I can’t tell you in advance much of my plans, as I don’t know them. Mrs. Jespersen was ill so I only went there to tea, not weekend.<sup>1</sup> Today Upsala by car, returning tonight. I travel to Oslo by day on Sunday, to Bergen probably on Monday—they are tiresome in not letting me know more.*

*Must stop—Goodbye my Darling, my Love—I love you more & more during this time & long to be back with you.*

*Your B*

<sup>1</sup> Otto Jespersen had married Ane Marie Djørup in 1897; in 1934, they moved to a

home near the Danish (and Shakespearean) city of Elsinore donated by the Royal

Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters for use by a distinguished scholar. The original itinerary for Russell's tour called for the Russells to stay with the Jespersens in Elsinore from 12 to 18 February 1935. It is not certain which day Russell made the

40-kilometre trip to Elsinore for tea with the Jespersens, but the "weekend" mentioned here by Russell refers presumably to 12 and 13 October, when he was still engaged in Copenhagen.

#### Letter 14

From Stockholm on Carlton Hotel letterhead  
(*Saturday*), 19 October 1935

*My Dearest*

*The letter I had been dreading came today & was just as in my bad dreams.<sup>1</sup> I have been a fool to cause you & me unhappiness from a moment's weak good nature. I have no heart to say more at the moment.—Your nice telegram has just come—it was good of you to send it.<sup>2</sup> Thank you. I will write an ordinary letter tomorrow in the train.*

B

<sup>1</sup> This undated letter (710.106368a) which caused Russell such pain was appended to a curt letter from Peter dated 17 October. Whatever the nature of Russell's relationship with Grethe Forchhammer (see **Letter 8**) before his Scandinavian tour, he apparently slept with her while in Copenhagen. No letter from Russell to Peter announcing this tryst is extant in the Russell Archives, but Peter's detailed reply illuminated her sense of anger and betrayal, reading in part: "Of course I feel very sad that you made love to Grethe, & I wept all the way up in the car.... It is no use talking about it. I can only say that I would have minded far far less if you had loved or even liked her.... The contempt & loathing that I have felt for her way of life have been so strong that I feel now you

could not more crudely & flagrantly have hurt me. I have tried so hard to live in a decent & good way, sacrificing little things for big ones—and this seems as if you must have deliberately intended to mock me.... I am sorry that you don't feel genuine remorse, because you ought to—not because you have been wicked, only unworthy. I will try hard to say nothing about it when you come home & you need not fear that I will retaliate. I have no wish to." Both Peter and Russell seem to have immediately considered the matter closed, and the regular affectionate tone of their letters resumed with no further mention of the affair in the extant correspondence from Russell's visit to Scandinavia.

<sup>2</sup> Peter's telegram of 19 October stated simply: "All well. Love".

#### Letter 15

On Carlton Hotel letterhead  
*In train to Oslo*  
*Sunday, 20 October 1935*

*Dearest P.—*

*I am having a less busy time now. No lecture yesterday or today, today all*

day in train. Nice country but all alike. The best thing is the atmosphere wh. is incredibly clear. Yesterday mg. the publisher Hansson took me over Stockholm Town Hall,<sup>1</sup> a magnificent affair, but not modern in style. The aft<sup>2</sup> was spent arguing with a philosopher named Wogau,<sup>2</sup> who belongs to the “Uppsala School”<sup>3</sup> of wh. I had never heard before—

In the evg. I wrote to Crompton about his pie dish<sup>4</sup> & your income.<sup>5</sup> His letter asked a string of questions, all of wh. I have dealt with in my books, but I did my best to answer them.<sup>6</sup>

Hansson is a Henry George Liberal<sup>7</sup> & insisted on my reading a book about “Gov<sup>t</sup> by Social Justice”.<sup>8</sup> He is a masterful man, hard to disobey. There are few communists in Sweden because of the traditional hatred of Russia—most people are Social Democrats, but the institutions are Liberal, & I must say very successful. University teaching is free, & class divisions hardly exist except among a few old-fashioned people like the lady in the castle near Lund—& even she is addressed by her butler as thou.

I have to go to Bergen on Tuesday & then back to Oslo & then back to Bergen on Sunday, & sail Monday mg. It seems foolish, but they pay my fares, & I enjoy the train. It is a very sensational journey through snow mountains.

I suppose everybody is excited about the General Election. I wish the Labour Party was better.<sup>9</sup> I shall be glad to get letters from you at Oslo. I love you

## B

<sup>1</sup> Designed by Ragnar Östberg in the National Romantic style and constructed between 1911 and 1923, the rectangular, red-bricked Stockholm Town Hall is marked by an imposing 106-metre high tower on its southeast corner; it is the location of the annual banquet for Nobel prizewinners.

<sup>2</sup> Konrad Marc-Wogau (1902–1991) completed his doctorate in philosophy at Uppsala University in 1932 and was appointed professor in theoretical philosophy there in 1946. Wogau seems to have been a good arguer, as he probably convinced Russell at this meeting to allow a Swedish translation of “The Limits of Empiricism” to appear in *Theoria*, the journal he co-edited. The translation, “Empirismens gränser”, *The-*

*oria* 2 (April 1936): 107–27, was a significant coup for a fledgling publication.

<sup>3</sup> Founded by Axel Hägerström, professor of philosophy at Uppsala University from 1893 to 1933, the Uppsala school of philosophy rejected metaphysics and subjectivism and was the Swedish equivalent of the Vienna Circle and logical positivism (see Robert T. Sandin, “The Founding of the Uppsala School”, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 23 [1962]: 496–512).

<sup>4</sup> As Russell recounts in the first volume of his *Autobiography*, Crompton Llewelyn Davies referred disparagingly to his manuscript on philosophy as his “pie-dish”. After losing the manuscript on a train in June 1935, Davies spent “most of his spare energy on trying to make up the work that

was lost; but the pie-dish was never finished” (1: 62). Davies—Russell’s last intimate friend from his undergraduate Cambridge days—died on 23 November 1935 shortly after Russell returned from his Scandinavian tour. The pie-dish allusion is to a play of the same name written by George Fitzmaurice, which premiered at Dublin’s Abbey Theatre in 1908. In the play, the central character spends the last twenty years of his life in a futile attempt to make the perfect pie-dish.

<sup>5</sup> This matter seems to relate to the income Peter received from acting as Russell’s secretary. Russell listed his 1935–36 secretarial and typing expenses as £277.3.3; this figure declined sharply to only £29.1.7 in 1936–37, so a different arrangement was clearly entered into as a result of Russell’s intervention.

<sup>6</sup> Neither Davies’ letter to Russell nor Russell’s reply is to be found in the Russell Archives.

<sup>7</sup> American reformer Henry George (1839–1897) advocated the taxation of land values to redress economic and social inequalities, most notably in *Progress and Poverty* (1879). Introduced to George’s ideas as an adolescent at Pembroke Lodge by his Aunt Agatha, Russell strongly supported the single tax until the First World War, when the growth of monopolies and international finance “blurred the distinction between land and other forms of capital” (see “The Single Tax”, *Papers* 14: 432–3). Although Russell stopped seeing

land nationalization as an alternative to socialism, he nonetheless remained sympathetic to George’s general aims, writing in 1960 that “I have always been an admirer of Henry George, with whose writings I became acquainted when I was a boy, but they have not, in this country at least, become the programme of any politically important group. I regret this, but have never been able to do anything about it” (Russell to William Krumreig, 3 Sept. 1960, RAI 720).

<sup>8</sup> Unidentified—Henry George did not publish a book with this title, and a book of the same title written by another author cannot be located.

<sup>9</sup> The 1935 General Election in the United Kingdom took place on 14 November. Under the leadership of Stanley Baldwin, National Government candidates secured more than 53% of the popular vote and nearly three-quarters of seats in Parliament, although these majorities were reduced from the landslide National Government victory in the 1931 election following Ramsay MacDonald’s defection from the Labour Party to lead the coalition. Despite Russell’s negative opinion of MacDonald and the Conservative-dominated government he led before being replaced by Baldwin in 1935, Russell remained surprisingly unenthusiastic about the Labour Party, noting in 1932 that Labour was “doing nothing” to confront the National Government “and has no programme” (quoted in *SLBR* 2: 308).

## Letter 16<sup>1</sup>

On Carlton Hotel letterhead  
(*Monday*), 21 October 1935  
*Bad writing due to shaky train.*  
*In train Oslo to Bergen*

Dearest—

*I have had no letter from you since I left Stockholm, but I had a nice one from John<sup>2</sup> in an envelope you had sent him. I had sent him one addressed to Copenhagen but he hadn’t used it.*

When I reached Oslo yesterday evening, Brynjolf Bull should have been there to meet me, but wasn't. He is not on the telephone so I took a taxi to his address, which turned out to be a students' club with no one about on Sundays. So I went to a hotel feeling rather non-plussed. But presently he turned up. He had got the time of my arrival wrong, & when he had found he had missed me he phoned to every hotel in Oslo till he hit on the right one. He left me at 10, & then I had to do a Sunday Referee article.<sup>3</sup> Today my journey lasts from 9 till 9—fortunately one of the most beautiful railway journeys in the world. Tomorrow I lecture at Bergen to the Anglo-Norwegian Society. Next day I go back to Oslo, lecture there Fri. & Sat. & then start for home via Bergen.

Bull is a nice young man but incompetent—can't quite stand the communists, but finds the Socialists too mild.

I am unhappily wondering what you are feeling about me—I love you very much.

B

<sup>1</sup> Images of this letter may be seen at <http://russell.mcmaster.ca/brletters>.

<sup>2</sup> Dated 16 October 1935 (710.105236).

<sup>3</sup> Probably "In Lands Where Slums and Wars Are Unknown", *The Sunday Referee*, 27 Oct. 1935, p. 18; *Papers* 21: 60–2. This

article provided an overview of Russell's impressions of Scandinavia to that point of his lecture tour—the *Sunday Referee* article referred to in **Letter 2** did not mention any aspect of the Scandinavian tour.

Letter 17<sup>1</sup>

On Carlton Hotel letterhead

*In train, Bergen to Oslo*

(Wednesday,) 23 October 1935

My Darling

I have heard nothing from you since I left Stockholm, no doubt because I had to rush on to Bergen. I hope Brunjolf Bull will have something for me tonight. Meanwhile I am anxious.

At Bergen I was invited by the students & the Anglo-Norwegian Society jointly.<sup>2</sup> They treated me very kindly & the Anglo-Norwegians were pleasant people. But the students were so shy of talking English that they got themselves represented by a middle-aged lady<sup>3</sup> who had had an English husband in Guatemala, & has become a religious crank. She was very trying. She took me up a funicular<sup>4</sup> to a place of very great beauty, & then tried to convert me, so that I couldn't enjoy it. The President of the Anglo-Norwegians was a man called Figenschou,<sup>5</sup> in the iron & steel business. He had lately been in

*Hamburg & swore that working men look much happier than before 1933, but that employers complain. He is evidently going Nazi, but one can't be sure there is no truth in what he says.*

*I don't write about politics because I get the news 2 or 3 days late. I try to get people to tell me the news, but they are all hopelessly vague. Forgive messy paper & envelope. I left the rest by oversight at the hotel in Oslo to which I am returning.*

*My dearest Peter I love you very very much.*

*Thank you for telling me about Dora seeing the children off—it is just what I should have imagined.<sup>6</sup> You wrote once about some people to buy the house.<sup>7</sup> I wonder if anything came of it.*

*Goodbye. I long for a letter.*

*Your devoted B*

<sup>1</sup> Included with this letter was a short note from Egil Alvraker to Russell dated 22 October 1935 and written on letterhead of the Bergen Museums: "Please accept this note as a tribute from one of your enthusiastic readers. From no other author have I derived so much pleasure and help in life."

<sup>2</sup> It appears that Russell delivered a single lecture in Bergen on 22 October. Since the audience was composed primarily of students and members of the Anglo-Norwegian Society, the lecture was probably "Revolt against Reason" or "Science and Religion" and not the two technical philosophy papers delivered initially in Copenhagen.

<sup>3</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>4</sup> The Fløibanen funicular opened in 1918 and transported passengers to the top of Fløyen mountain overlooking Bergen.

<sup>5</sup> Biographical information on this individual cannot be located. Rasmus Figen-schou, the son of the businessman referred to in this letter, wrote to Russell on 23 November 1961: "You may not recall your visit to my home in Bergen some 25 years ago. I was at that time a small boy, but I have since become a steady reader of your

books."

<sup>6</sup> In her letter to Russell of 15 October, Peter had passed on a second-hand account of Dora seeing John and Kate off at the train station to school: "Zita Baker saw them being seen off by Dora on the Dartington train. She had led them to a distant carriage, away from all the others, and was clinging to them. Zita said they looked extremely embarrassed and it made her uncomfortable to see it.... Don't feel that they think she is the only one who cares about them. I am sure they would never tell her anything that worried them—remember how they said it was no use telling her things. I think for the sake of convenience they have learned to play up to her. That saves them being unhappy. Don't worry about them my darling. I am sure her madness will soon become too obvious to affect them much."

<sup>7</sup> In her 15 October letter, Peter noted that "Crompton has just telephoned to say that he has heard of some people from Withers who want to buy the house, and who are apparently not abashed by the price. They are coming to see the place tomorrow." Nothing resulted from this visit.

---

Letter 18

From Oslo on Savoy Hotel letterhead  
(Thursday,) 24 October 1935

My dearest Darling Love—

Just after I had telegraphed to you today<sup>1</sup> I got 2 lovely letters from you,<sup>2</sup> which set my mind at ease. It was the fault of the incompetent Brünjolf Bull that I had not got them sooner. I was afraid you had stopped writing—All you say about the children is a great relief,<sup>3</sup> & I had a nice letter from Kate by the same post.<sup>4</sup> I won't worry about them any more. I think Dora impresses them at the time, & then the effect gradually wears off. If there is no war with Italy, it will show them that she has irrational fears—& I feel more sure than ever that there will not be war. I have read Hoare's speech the day before yesterday<sup>5</sup> & find that I cannot seriously object to his policy. Sanctions which avoid war are all right, I think. But of course behind it all is the Gov't's. friendship with Germany.

I lunched today with a banker who is president of the Anglo-Norwegian Society. He says he has been astonished by the friendship of the City for Germany. I was the more interested as he himself is rather pro-German. I like seeing business men here, because they give me interesting information. He says the Queen of Norway (who is English<sup>6</sup>) has never managed to feel at home here—from what he said she sounded just like the Empress Frederick.<sup>7</sup> At his luncheon I sat next a Professor of Mathematics<sup>8</sup> who told me that the excuse given for dismissing Landau (the Jewish Professor of pure mathematics at Göttingen, & a very distinguished man)<sup>9</sup> was that he had given a non-Aryan definition of the sine in trigonometry. You know that the "Aryan" definition is

$$\sin A = \frac{BC}{AB}$$



which is proper for schoolboys. But for grown-up people the definition is

$$\sin x = x - \frac{x^3}{1.2.3} + \frac{x^5}{1.2.3.4.5} - \dots \text{ \& so on}$$

He gave the latter definition, which doesn't appeal to "intuition", so he was wicked. Such people (as those who allege this proof of wickedness)<sup>10</sup> cannot hope to survive in the modern world; their poison gases will soon be out of date. Heisenberg, who studied under Landau, spoke sneeringly of him in the course of that conversation I wrote about.<sup>11</sup>

By all means let us come straight home when I arrive, & let us have the car

to drive down, or travel first in the train, whichever you prefer. I told you I should arrive King's X 4.15 p.m. but I may be an hour earlier—it depends on the boat. I can telegraph from Newcastle, so you will know by 11 a.m. when I shall arrive. Of course if the weather is bad I may be later.—I hope the people who are looking at the house will buy it. I shall loathe giving it up, but I can't go on spending £2000 a year of capital<sup>12</sup>—It would be a great comfort to be living within my income.

I have spent so little during this tour that I have not yet broken into the £10 cash that I had the day I started. I had a little money besides that, & I got 100 kroner (about £4) for broadcasting in Denmark.<sup>13</sup>

My Beloved, I feel alive again after the 2 letters I got today—Bless you my sweetest. I hope you haven't got a fearful chill—I see it has been very cold in England, & Dartmoor is not a warm place.<sup>14</sup>

I love you

## B

<sup>1</sup> Telegram not extant.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Peter's letter of 20 October, in addition to her second handwritten letter of 19 October (710.106371) describing her visit to Dartington to see John and Kate.

<sup>3</sup> Peter's second handwritten letter of 19 October reassured Russell that Kate and John were thriving, despite the baleful influence of Dora and her outlook on the international situation: "They don't give the impression of being worried at all & they both soon said that it seemed as if there wasn't going to be war. I think Dora must have scared them badly about war, their tones sounded so deeply relieved."

<sup>4</sup> Dated 16 October 1935 (710.106768).

<sup>5</sup> British Foreign Secretary Sir Samuel Hoare (1880–1959) delivered a major foreign policy speech on 22 October 1935 on the Abyssinian conflict that endorsed the mild League of Nations sanctions against Italy and called for an "honourable settlement within the framework of the League" ("The British Position", *The Times*, 23 Oct. 1935, p. 14) that satisfied Italy's demands for territory and raw materials. Hoare would be forced to resign in December 1935 after the leaking of the Hoare-

Laval Pact, an agreement reached by Hoare with his French counterpart Pierre Laval (who was also Prime Minister) that basically recognized Italy's conquest of most of Abyssinia.

<sup>6</sup> Princess Maud of Wales (1869–1938) was the youngest daughter of Britain's King Edward VII. She married Prince Carl of Denmark, her first cousin, in 1896. After Norway became independent from Sweden in 1905, Carl ascended the Norwegian throne as King Haakon VII.

<sup>7</sup> Princess Victoria (1840–1901) was the eldest child of Queen Victoria and married Prussia's Prince Frederick William in 1858. Victoria and Frederick shared liberal Anglophile ideals often at odds with those of the Prussian aristocracy, and her reign as German Empress beginning in March 1888 ended four months later, following the death of her husband.

<sup>8</sup> Probably Edgar B. Schieldrop (1891–1965), a mathematics professor at the University of Oslo from 1929 to 1961. Schieldrop wrote to Russell on 22 January 1957, noting that "I introduced you when you gave a lecture to the Anglo-Norse Society in Oslo before the war."

<sup>9</sup> Edmund Landau (1877–1938), German-Jewish mathematician, was forced to resign his post at the University of Göttingen after publishing a textbook in 1934 giving a non-geometric definition of *II*.

<sup>10</sup> The text in parentheses was inserted.

<sup>11</sup> As mentioned in the introduction to these letters, Russell’s account of his conversation with Heisenberg is not to be found in the Russell Archives.

<sup>12</sup> Included in the prohibitive costs of upkeep for Telegraph House was a £400 annual payment to Frank Russell’s second wife Mollie, which Bertie, despite Frank’s death in 1931, was obligated to pay as part of a convoluted legal agreement created before Frank and Mollie’s divorce in 1916 and supplemented twice thereafter (see Ian

Watson, “Mollie, Countess Russell”, *Russell* 23 [2003]: 67–8). Telegraph House was not finally sold until 1937 for nearly £5,500, and some of the proceeds were placed in trust and allowed Russell to reduce his personal direct contributions to Mollie, who died in 1942.

<sup>13</sup> Russell’s statement about not spending any money reinforces the theory that every expense he incurred was fully covered by the tour organizers.

<sup>14</sup> Peter had visited John and Kate at Dartington Hall School; her second letter of 19 October had been written on the letterhead of the Seymour Hotel in Totnes, near the moors of Dartmoor in Devon.

## Letter 19

From Oslo on Savoy Hotel letterhead  
(Friday,) 25 October 1935

*My dearest Darling—*

*Your “domestic” letter<sup>1</sup> came today & all it said interested me. I hope you are right about Xtine.<sup>2</sup> You say the “matter of the bill” clinched your decision, but you don’t say what this matter<sup>3</sup> was. Clearly she lied about Kate’s bag,<sup>4</sup> & always lies when convenient. But I am much afraid of your having too much to do when she is gone.—There should be a cheque from Norton for Praise of Idleness by about now.<sup>5</sup>—I am sorry you are so tired, & very sorry the operation has not cured the old troubles.<sup>6</sup> I don’t think we can go to Malaga before Xmas, because of the children. I should not like to miss our half of their holidays. But we could stay till Easter holidays.—I am having an easy time in Norway & shall arrive not at all tired. The weather has been perfect, though rather cold. Today Brunjulf Bull sent a young lady<sup>7</sup> (whose name I didn’t catch) to take me a walk on the hills. There are very lovely views—fjords & mountains. She had been at the School of Economics, & had specially studied the Suffrage movement in England. I find from everybody that the elementary schools here have a frightful amount of religious teaching, owing to the fact that the only religion is Lutheranism; the wretched children learn not only Bible but endless dogmas by heart. The men I meet are all full of common sense in action & opinion, but have dreamy mystical eyes—I feel a desire to know what they would be like drunk—they are just half way between English & German.*

*Poor Joan Malleeson—I am sorry for her. It seems odd that Miles should inspire such devotion.*<sup>8</sup>

*Now I must prepare my lecture<sup>9</sup>—God, I am sick of being away from you—it will be glorious to be home again. And I am in a mood to do mountains of work. Bless you, Beloved. Take care of yourself & keep warm.*

*Your B*

<sup>1</sup> Peter's first typewritten letter of 22 October (710.106374a) recounted her activities around Telegraph House that day: "This is a very domestic letter, but perhaps you will like that, as you are away from home."

<sup>2</sup> "Xtine" was a domestic servant at Telegraph House. Peter's first handwritten letter of 21 October (710.106373) recounted Christine's hiding of a nearly £10 bill submitted by a fishmonger, and a handwritten note on her "domestic" letter of 22 October informed Russell of the employee's termination: "Have just written a very tactful letter giving Xtine notice and saying that this incident of the bill only clinched a decision already half formed for other reasons."

<sup>3</sup> The word "matter" was inserted.

<sup>4</sup> The complete nature of this incident is not known, but Peter's 20 October letter recounting her visit to Dartington referred to it as involving Dora and the housekeeper Christine: "Kate emphatically declared that her dressing case was *not* locked, as Xtine said. I told her you had been scolded, and she said she had tried to defend Xtine when Dora was angry, but she just wouldn't listen. She said something implying that it was only an excuse for being angry."

<sup>5</sup> In a letter to Russell dated 18 October, Peter informed Russell that a cheque had indeed arrived from W. W. Norton, Russell's American publisher, for \$392.40. The envelope for this letter is marked "Re-

tour", indicating the letter had not reached Russell, so Russell had not previously heard this news when he indicated that the cheque should have arrived.

<sup>6</sup> Peter's first handwritten letter of 21 October opened with a frank account of her physical and emotional state: "I feel quite exhausted, & am cancelling my massage and staying at home to cope with letters & rest a little. Have been feeling wretchedly unwell, but think it is probably only fatigue:—the result of rushing backwards and forwards, & of massage, which is itself tiring. This morning I feel that everything is too difficult, & am worrying about money & everything." Her second handwritten letter of 21 October (710.106374) noted that "I still have all my old syndromes, so they obviously weren't caused by the appendix at all. It is a damned nuisance & I must try ignoring them again."

<sup>7</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>8</sup> Joan Billson Malleeson (1899–1956) was a physician who championed birth control and abortion rights causes. In 1923, she had married Miles Malleeson (1888–1969), the former husband of Colette O'Niel, one of Russell's most influential lovers. Possibly a separate letter forwarded by Peter spurred Russell's observation here; her letters in the Russell Archives written while Russell was in Scandinavia do not mention Joan Malleeson.

<sup>9</sup> Unidentified.

Letter 20

From Oslo on Savoy Hotel letterhead  
(Saturday,) 26 October 1935

*My Darling Love—*

*This is my last letter, & perhaps this won't arrive before me. Hurray!—I had a very nice letter from you today.<sup>1</sup> How beastly about Xtine & the accounts. I must say I should not have suspected her of actual dishonesty.<sup>2</sup> That makes it clear she must go.*

*I don't care whether you come with or without the car to meet me at King's X. I think there is something to be said for the train—it is warmer, & by travelling 1<sup>st</sup> we can get privacy, which we don't get in the train.<sup>3</sup> But do as you like.—Today I was taken to see the Viking ships,<sup>4</sup> very interesting, genuine 9<sup>th</sup> century, buried in the tomb of a Queen & discovered about 50 years ago—beautiful, the shape of a curragh<sup>5</sup> except for the prow,<sup>6</sup> but large enough for 40 oarsmen & about 40 others. Then I was taken out to tea—one lady had a child at Neal's<sup>7</sup> & another had two grandchildren at Dora's.<sup>8</sup> Yesterday at my lecture I met our Norwegian Captain, also Halfdan's parents,<sup>9</sup> of whom the father, to my horror, has become a Buchmanite<sup>10</sup> (she has not)—they are very nice people, but he seemed less nice than formerly—he had acquired a sort of forced jauntiness.—Dean Inge's review in the Spectator is pleasing.<sup>11</sup> I saw what the Archbagger said about divorce<sup>12</sup> & was much cheered.*

*Must stop—my last lecture<sup>13</sup> is nearly due. Bless you my Dearest, my Angel, my Treasure, my sweet child—I love you & long for you.*

B

<sup>1</sup> Dated 22 October 1935, the second type-written letter (710.106375) sent by Peter that day (and in duplicate).

<sup>2</sup> Peter had added a bit more detail to her earlier account of Christine's suspect activities regarding household bills: "She has been definitely deceitful and that can't be endured. I don't think I told you that when I last asked to see the books, just before I took them over, she suddenly and very mysteriously lost the account book. It was there one night and the next morning it had completely vanished. I thought when she announced this loss that her manner was odd, and it must have been because she had deliberately lost it. This prevented my going over the accounts.

That is why I have just discovered this large debt."

<sup>3</sup> This is the original word in Russell's letter—he presumably intended to write "car".

<sup>4</sup> By 1932, Oslo's Viking Ship Museum housed three major ninth-century archaeological discoveries—the Tune Ship (excavated 1867), the Gokstad Ship (excavated 1880), and the Oseberg Ship (excavated 1904). Russell's mention of the "tomb of a Queen", although dated by Russell to the Gokstad excavation, probably refers to the Oseberg Ship, which some scholars hypothesize carried the remains of Queen Asa (c.800–850), the grandmother of Harald Fairhair, the first ruler of a unified

Norway.

<sup>5</sup> A currach (anglicized “curragh”) is a wood-framed boat originating on the west coast of Ireland and traditionally covered with animal skins.

<sup>6</sup> Russell inserted the qualifying phrase.

<sup>7</sup> Presumably A. S. Neill (1883–1973), whose Summerhill School, founded in Sussex in 1921, practised many of the same progressive educational methods supported by Russell. The two women mentioned by Russell in this sentence are unidentified.

<sup>8</sup> After her separation from Russell, Dora moved Beacon Hill School from Telegraph House to Boyle’s Court in Essex in 1934.

<sup>9</sup> Halfdan Kielland (b. 1926) had been enrolled at Beacon Hill School as late as February 1933 (see William Bruneau, “New Evidence on Life, Learning, and Medical Care at Beacon Hill School”, *Russell* 23 [2003]: 151); it is not certain if he remained in Beacon Hill after Dora Russell moved the school from Telegraph House. His father, Trygve von Tangen Kielland (b. 1893), had been a Norwegian diplomat before leaving the foreign service to establish business interests in London and Oslo. His mother, Ragnhild Kielland (b. 1900), would have an affair with Russell in 1948, which proved to be one of the final complications leading to Russell’s divorce from Peter.

<sup>10</sup> See Russell’s reference to the Oxford Movement (Group) in **Letter 2**.

<sup>11</sup> William Ralph Inge (1860–1954) reviewed Russell’s *Religion and Science* in the 18 October 1935 issue of *The Spectator*. Although critical of Russell for beginning his study of religion “with presuppositions

which predetermine his verdict against it”, Inge nonetheless praised Russell’s “brilliant sword-play” and noted that his criticism of cosmic purpose was “unanswerable”. Inge—“a romantic and iconoclastic Conservative” (Matthew Grimley, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [online]) who led the modernist wing of the Anglican Church—was Dean of St. Paul’s from 1911 until his retirement in 1934.

<sup>12</sup> Russell refers to statements concerning divorce made by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Gordon Lang (1864–1945), on 21 October 1935 at the Canterbury Diocesan Conference. Although Lang personally believed that remarriages of persons with living former spouses should be conducted in civil ceremonies and not in churches, he did indicate that “it was impossible for Parliament to resist the growing public demand for some extension of presumably legal grounds for divorce” (“Divorce Law: the Primate and Legislation”, *The Times*, 22 Oct. 1935) and that the laity—not the clergy—should ultimately determine Church of England policy on the matter. In her second letter to Russell dated 22 October 1935 (710.106375), Peter had referenced Lang’s statement reported in *The Times* and noted that Russell’s divorce from Dora had no effect on Russell’s popularity: “Everyone except the small minority of bigots who would never read your books in any case must realise that you are not so black as you were painted, and every person who had read you before or was likely to read you is probably grateful to you for helping to loosen the divorce laws.”

<sup>13</sup> Unidentified.