

# TALKING WITH RUSSELL: 1951–55

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In 1996 it is forty-five years since Russell last visited the United States and twenty-six years since his death. Not surprisingly, even slightly greying philosophers come to me with the obvious question, “What was he like as a person?”

The query is valid. One might at first surmise that someone who left us with as extensive a body of written work as Russell must, somewhere or other, have disclosed his most private thoughts and deepest traits of character. But anyone who knew Russell well, even if for only a short period, would, I think, deny this. The works reflect the man, assuredly, but there was more to the man than the works reveal.

When Russell addressed himself to the public his choice of words was influenced by what might be described as an aristocratic British reserve, especially after he inherited his title in 1931. The Earl Russell did not yield to passion in the manner of Canio in *I Pagliacci*. To sing *Vesti la giubba* would be unthinkable. But the passions in his heart and mind might be no less intense, and his passions twice led to imprisonment.

Although the world knew him by the name with which he had established an international reputation as a writer, after 1931, Russell saw himself socially as a peer of the realm, a member of the House of Lords, the senior figure in an aristocratic family with deep roots in English history. He preferred to be addressed as Lord Russell. His wife, perforce, was Lady Russell. As he saw it, this was not putting on airs. It was simple good manners. He signed social correspondence as an Earl would—Russell.

To start at what I regard as the very beginning, Russell was a man filled with extraordinary kindness. He loved humanity, men, women, and children, of every nation, race, and culture, with fervid intensity. He had the highest degree of empathy for suffering, particularly those who

suffered needlessly because of the folly of others. This was nothing abstract or intellectual. I am convinced he really hurt in his own mind and body, especially since he believed that if the resources of the world were properly used, a good life could be made a universal achievement of humanity.

Behind that view was one of the first things he told me (an observation repeated in his writings), that no one born as I was, in the 1920s, could possibly understand the feeling of those who grew to maturity before 1914. In the rosy glow of the Edwardian era, the Indian Summer of the nineteenth century, optimism prevailed, the belief in the inevitability of progress was accepted on all sides, and the steady advance of science, learning, and enlightened reason promised a world in which all humankind were moving toward richer and better lives.

The massive slaughter of British youth in the 1914–18 war, including the son of his great friend and colleague Whitehead, much of it in ill-planned military operations that, at best, had slight chance of success, appalled him. The entire war, as he saw it, was madness. England should have remained neutral as it did during the Franco-Prussian conflict of 1870–71. The Emperor Wilhelm was a gentlemen. A continent dominated by the Central Powers need not be a threat to an empire on which the sun never set. When the follies of the war were followed by the follies of Versailles and the triumph of the Bolsheviks in Russia, Russell's optimism, he told me, was forever replaced by the fear that this was the beginning of a century of bloodshed and horror.

The last of these great fears, which haunted his thoughts during our years of close association, was the possibility of a holy war fought with atomic weapons between the Soviets and a politically triumphant Radical Right in the United States. Thus in 1966 we find him telling an interviewer that Lyndon Johnson was the worst president the United States had ever had because he was embarked on a mindless war against communism in Vietnam.

Historians may well dispute one or more of these opinions. I am not offering them as demonstrated truths but as ideas which Russell sincerely held. I came in time to appreciate the degree to which he had been scarred by his experience in the United States during his period of self-imposed wartime exile. (More of this later.) I insisted that the American electorate would never put the Radical Right in power, that (Russell's deepest fear) Senator Joseph McCarthy was not headed straight for

the presidency in the 1956 election. Russell was sure I was being over optimistic, but the victory of Dwight David Eisenhower proved me to be right.

Deeply as he loved his fellow humans, Russell did not suffer fools gladly. He craved intellectual stimulation, and, one quickly sensed, it was a fatal sin to bore him. He soon ran out of patience for the reverent person who, on introduction, silently stood in awe before the great man. We got along well because I was never afraid to argue with him. (The only person I never argued with was Arturo Toscanini, but I asked him questions!) Unlike some thinkers of far lesser achievement, Russell was not a put-down artist. Still less was he interested in one-upmanship. The "I am smarter than you are" games which I found played at Oxford by individuals who really should have been above such things, were totally abhorrent to Russell.

A characteristic Russell response was the post card he had printed, sometime in the 1930s, to send to those who wrote him not terribly bright or interesting letters. "Thank you for your recent communication," it read. "I shall lose no time reading it." The calculated ambiguity was a typical Russell joke. More significant is the fact that he felt an obligation to respond. He had meant enough to someone that he or she had taken the trouble to write, however fatuously, and deserved something in return.

Thus in situations in which some of his colleagues might have been rude, Russell turned to irony. In the late 1930s, C. E. M. Joad, a popular philosopher of the day (and a star of a celebrated BBC quiz programme, "The Brains Trust") sent Russell his newest book, apparently in hope of receiving a quotable phrase of approval. Russell, who felt the work was deeply in debt to his own philosophical writing, responded "Modesty forbids...."

He did not see himself as someone easily labelled, still less as someone who might be regarded as a stereotype. In his later years the two labels he particularly loathed were communist and logical positivist. Anyone who had read *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* ought to conclude that Russell was not a Marxist, still less a disciple of Lenin. This did not prevent him from being cited as a communist by the Dies Committee of the American congress (and in turn it was suggested in 1956 by one investigator that I was a communist because of my association with Russell), but neither charge could hold up under examination. American

Red-baiters like to ignore the existence of British socialism, but non-Marxist socialism is a conspicuous feature of English political life in this century. Partly to combat these false charges, Russell asked Unwin to reprint *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* in 1949 and arranged for a new American edition in 1964.

The philosophical right liked to call Russell a logical positivist, an identification he vigorously denied (with the full support of responsible colleagues). Although he was sympathetic to some of the goals of the positivists, he objected to what he perceived as scholastic tendencies in the movement. One misguided line of thought was that anyone interested in mathematical logic, and advocating it as an alternative to Aristotelian syllogistics, was a logical positivist. This would make Whitehead (the author of *Process and Reality*!) or Harvard's W. V. Quine logical positivists, a label both men would certainly reject.

Russell's love of truth produced the same intensity as his love of humanity. In his middle years he was criticized for the frequent changes in his philosophical viewpoint, but he was determined to find the right answers. If a position he had held in the past proved faulty in some respect, he would abandon his former views without hesitation to embrace a newer and better formulation of the problem. His dedication was not to any doctrine, least of all to his own ego, but to the truth.

I began my studies of Russell's philosophy in a literature course at Northwestern University in 1944. The Northwestern philosophy department of those days was dominated by German thought mildly diluted with pragmatism. Although Paul Arthur Schilpp was editing his *Library of Living Philosophers* (which included in this period volumes on both G. E. Moore and Russell), Dewey was only the philosopher represented in the library whose work was mentioned at length in any Northwestern philosophy course, including Schilpp's. Schilpp once remarked to me, of Moore, "If I had to do philosophy like that, I'd slit my throat."

Russell could teach me through his works. When I arrived as a graduate student at Harvard in 1948 I wanted to write a thesis on Russell's educational theories as part of his larger view of society, and began work on this project while alternating between Cambridge, Mass., and a teaching job at the University of Illinois. The problem was that Russell had not commented on some central issues for nearly twenty years, and I felt the need to discover if his ideas had changed. His American lecture tour of 1951 brought him to Indiana University at Bloomington. I wrote

him, requesting an opportunity to discuss these questions, and he responded quickly and graciously with his consent.

I was delighted to learn that the lecture had been scheduled for the largest hall on the campus and that, moreover, it was packed. In his first postwar American lecture tour, the previous year, he had objected to the thought that some students might attend hoping to hear him advocate free love or some other raffish subject. Asked to speak at a New England women's college, he surveyed a sea of expectant young faces, smiled, and began, "There are certain interesting questions on the foundations of non-Euclidean geometry which have been insufficiently examined...." In retrospect it was Russellian irony in its purest form, and, for the mathematicians present, a brilliant performance.

The Bloomington lecture was on social issues in the post-war world and closely related to his address accepting the Nobel Prize for Literature the previous year. It was impressive for me to hear Russellian prose emanating from Russell's lips. He was a master of the lecture hall. Although obviously working from a script, there was never the suggestion that he was reading a text. His timing of jokes and climactic phrases was worthy of Bob Hope or Winston Churchill. For an hour he kept this large audience in silent concentration, and when he dismissed them with a flourish of verbal brilliance, they erupted into applause.

I met him backstage and we proceeded to, I believe, the home of the chairman of the philosophy department where a reception had been scheduled. Russell handled it gracefully, shook hands, fielded stupid questions adroitly, and dealt kindly with those frozen into a dumb stare. After he had made the rounds, he motioned to me, strode to the bar, selected the most promising bottle of Scotch whisky, and proceeded to the kitchen. For the next hour we sat at the kitchen table, making significant inroads into the whisky, and reviewing his educational theories.

As we left, his reserve somewhat diminished, he turned to me with an impassioned outburst against those who, once their own needs have been met, are indifferent to the suffering of others. These people are truly evil in their heart, he insisted. They hate their fellows, and express this hatred by exploiting them. The happiness of one group of people must never be purchased by the suffering of another. Education must never suggest that such behaviour is justifiable.

Russell insisted he was not a Christian, and, I suggest, the point of view he expressed here is, in its roots, Jewish. It goes to the great rabbi

Hillel (30 BC–9 AD) who once, when asked for the essence of the Torah, replied: “Do not do to another the thing you hate. Everything else is commentary.” (That is Jewish irony.) I do not suggest that the Torah as a religious document meant any more to Russell than Christ’s preaching, but he was in sympathy with this moral idea.

I returned to my thesis which was accepted that year and praised by my chief examiner, I. A. Richards, for bringing the material up to date. My next intended project was to show that there was more than one philosophical foundation for education in a democratic society, and here I encountered a stone wall. The disciples of Dewey were so entrenched that the mere suggestion of an alternative formulation was viewed with the deepest suspicion. Only pragmatists truly believed in democratic education. This was nonsense. I turned to other aspects of Russell’s thought.

In the early fifties the British press gave increasing attention to what were hailed as new and significant developments in philosophy at Oxford. My curiosity was aroused. I had unsuccessfully applied for a Rhodes Scholarship in 1946, but now I had the means to go abroad on my own. I was admitted to Oxford as a non-collegiate student at St. Catherine’s Society and wrote Russell that I would be in England for ten months. On my arrival at St. Cat’s I found, in my mail, a cordial welcome from Russell and, upstairs, a hostile one from the head of the society (he then bore the curious title of Censor), Alan Bullock. In my correspondence, he charged, I had been rude to his predecessor, the Rev. V. J. K. Brook. I was told not to sit down, and Bullock, serving as prosecutor, judge, and jury, without troubling to listen to the accused, told me I must be taught to behave. This meant that, although I had a Harvard doctorate, my status was to be identical to any freshman coming up from secondary school.

Actually there was a simple explanation for the matter. All my correspondence to St. Cat’s had been sent air mail, but anything bulky (most significantly, the documents I needed to be admitted to Britain as a student) had been sent to me surface mail, so I did not receive letters in the order in which they were posted. I put up with Bullock’s denial of senior status. Far graver, at the start, was the discovery that this much-heralded new Oxford philosophy seemed to be exhaustive studies in trivia. I found some excellent teachers, Isaiah Berlin and G. D. H. Cole in social theory, H. L. A. Hart on the philosophy of law, and,

unexpectedly, John Austin examining the ethics of Aristotle primarily from the Greek text. The star philosopher, Gilbert Ryle, struck me as an arrogant boor, and Berlin was complaining over tea that philosophy “really was not worth doing.”

Russell had a basic dislike of Oxford, stemming, I came to believe, from its treatment of his brother Frank when he had been sent down from Balliol by the redoubtable Benjamin Jowett, allegedly for fornication with a college servant. More than sixty years later he would quip that “the primary function of philosophy at Oxford is to prevent fornication.” He frequently welcomed me to his home in Richmond (a London suburb), listened attentively to my reports on what I was hearing in Oxford philosophical circles, and supported me in my view that none of this seemed terribly important.

In the final volume of his autobiography he writes, “When I returned from America in 1944, I found British philosophy in a very odd state, and, it seemed to me, occupied solely with trivialities” (*Auto.* 3: 37). This opinion was freely reflected in Russell’s conversation. The situation was largely ascribed to the nefarious influence of Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose later work, in Russell’s eyes, was “a dodge to avoid thought”. Traditionally the reputation of philosophers rests, ultimately, on a body of published works, but in 1952 there was almost nothing of Wittgenstein in print beyond the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, and he had become the intellectual property of a cult of former students who claimed to understand his later point of view. Some months later, when I discussed these matters with John Wisdom, he was aghast. “I am so sorry Russell is saying these things”, he protested.

I saw an approaching crisis early in 1953 when I was scheduled to read a paper in London to the Aristotelian Society. Was I to go to Bullock, cap in hand, and say “Please sir, may I stay out after midnight? I am to address a learned society.” It was insupportable. When Bullock insisted that I was to have “no special privileges”, I resigned from St. Cat’s saying his decision was an insult to Harvard and myself. His response was “We like our traditions”, i.e. that American degrees were not recognized.

The matter then landed on the desk of the Vice-Chancellor, Sir Maurice Bowra, an astute academic politician who was familiar with Harvard and did not want to prejudice the good relations of the two universities. Moreover, he was aware that Bullock had no right to keep me under undergraduate discipline at the age of 28 and, had the issue come before

the proctors, would have been seen to be at fault. "You must forgive him", he explained nervously. "He is a young man." My matriculation was quashed, and for a modest fee I was given a pass that permitted me to attend any lectures I wished. For Bowra this was an obvious coup. This obnoxious American was no longer a member of the university and in June would vanish without a trace. I do not vanish successfully. I am happy to report that I am once more a member of what (thanks largely to Bullock) is now St. Catherine's College.

I wrote Russell, who had followed all this with amusement, and said that during the spring I planned to rent a bed-sitter on the Tottenham Court Rd., or thereabouts, work in the British Museum, and, with luck, see him every fortnight to so. His reply was an extraordinary act of kindness. I should not return home, he felt, with a bad opinion of the ancient British universities. In fairness, I should give Cambridge a chance. If I wished, he would write Trinity proposing that I be admitted to the college as a visiting scholar with MA status for the Easter term.

This was salvation indeed. Within a few days I had a letter from the senior tutor, F. H. Sandbach, inviting me to come to Trinity. I looked at it, thinking of the letters Harvard colleagues had received from this same person, telling them that their admission to the college was out of the question. I spent a delightful spring in Cambridge. Wisdom's lectures dissected Ryle's *The Concept of Mind* with surgical precision, and I felt that I was in a place where real philosophical work was possible.

In my conversations with Russell I became increasingly aware of the importance of his early papers published in journals that many students would find it difficult if not impossible to find. Russell was a philosopher who was always primarily oriented toward his next project. His past was behind him. He spent very little time rereading his older work. Thus, although he gave his blessing to my proposal to collect this material, he said that the responsibility of getting the book into print would be mine. On that basis work began on *Logic and Knowledge*. I can say sincerely that without me the book would never have come into existence. In his brief prefatory remarks, Russell still exhibited his scepticism that there would be much interest in these "bygone lucubrations".

In the spring of 1953 I ran out of money and returned to the United States to take a visiting professorship in SUNY at New Paltz. My Russellian principles immediately got me in trouble with the followers of Joseph McCarthy, who felt that nothing should be taught at the state

university that was offensive to the Radical Right. Politically I was nothing more violent than a New Deal Democrat, but I was controversial (for example, I believed that sexual education should be given in the schools), and that firmly limited my stay to two semesters. Trinity was prepared to let me return as a research student, and in the autumn of 1954 I sailed back to England. Russell could not have been more supportive.

It was then I came fully to realize the depth of the scars on his psyche from his years in the United States, 1938 to 1944. In *Bertrand Russell: the Passionate Sceptic* Alan Wood observes "The war years in America were probably the most unhappy in Russell's life" (p. 192). I am sure this came, more or less directly, from Russell's lips. There was one bright chapter. Harvard, where Russell first taught in 1914, had appointed him William James Lecturer for 1940, and, Harvard, he felt, alone of the American universities with which he was involved, defended his freedom of thought and speech and treated him with exemplary professional courtesy. In turn, he enrolled his son and daughter as undergraduates at Harvard and Radcliffe where they took degrees in 1943 and 1944, respectively.

Russell was a natural target for those unable to deal with the liberalism and pluralism of the twentieth century. In the autumn of 1938 he found the University of Chicago split between the divisions (i.e. the graduate faculties) where he taught, and the College created by the President of the university, Robert Maynard Hutchins, and his mentor, Mortimer J. Adler. Both men were fundamentally lawyers, entranced by dialectic and a romanticized vision of the medieval synthesis of learning. Russell found this ridiculous. Although there were some pleasant personal relationships at Chicago, there were hostile clashes with Hutchins' supporters, one of whom was still calling Russell a son of a bitch thirty years later. Accustomed to high-table talk at Trinity, Russell found many of the Chicago faculty dreary specialists and complained after one party that "no one said anything clever all evening", the sort of remark that heightened hostility.

Chicago folklore includes the story that early in 1939 Russell indicated an interest in returning for another year and was told by Adler that he must leave. If it is true, the idea of a thinker of Russell's stature being fired by a philosopher as inconsequential as Adler, is outrageous. In any case, for the academic year 1939-40 Russell moved to the University of

California at Los Angeles. Here again there was a hostile president, and when Russell was invited to become a Visiting Professor at the College of the City of New York for 1941–42 he quickly accepted, unaware that both the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches regarded him as a moral enemy to be destroyed. One of the most disgraceful chapters in American intellectual history followed, bigotry triumphed, and Russell's appointment was cancelled. He was rescued by a five-year contract to lecture at the Barnes Foundation. Albert Barnes was an eccentric millionaire who had massed a huge private collection of French art. His clashes with Russell were personal rather than ideological. (He objected to Lady Russell knitting during her husband's lectures. In fact, he objected to her being Lady Russell. Presumably, in democratic America, the couple should have been Bertie and Pat.) Barnes tried to cancel the contract in January 1943, but Russell eventually secured the salary due him in a lawsuit. Meanwhile an advance on the unfinished *History of Western Philosophy* permitted him to return to England.

One afternoon in Richmond, Russell was rummaging in a desk drawer for a manuscript and drew forth a sheaf of legal papers from the Barnes litigation. "Barnes died in a traffic accident driving through a red light", he observed dryly. "Red lights didn't mean anything to Barnes."

What I found significant was that Russell was convinced that, with rare exceptions, the United States was dominated by eccentrics like Barnes, autocratic administrators, clerics hungry for thought control and secular power, conservative extremists, and politicians brandishing nuclear weapons. He therefore found it perfectly natural that in New York state, and later at the University of Chicago, I should experience many of the same difficulties he did. The distrust of intellect, and of intellectual freedom, he felt, were deeply rooted in American life.

In the mid-1950s as a member of the faculty of the College of the University of Chicago, I found philosophy was still dominated by Aristotle and Aquinas with Adler's disciples in charge. The philosophers were unhappy that they had not been consulted at length about my appointment to the humanities staff. *Logic and Knowledge* was seen as the work of two dedicated, logical positivist (I use an Orwellian term) thought criminals. "You don't intend to do anything more like this?" the dean asked, imploringly, as he examined the book. As a potential source of false doctrine, I was denied the right to lecture, and it was suggested to students that if they attended my discussion classes they might not do

well on the comprehensive examination. Aristotle, apparently, said things at the University of Chicago that he did not say elsewhere. The relationship was, under these circumstances, short lived. Because of changes in the administration of the university, I am happy to add the situation improved after my departure, but no one seemed in the least concerned that my career there had been destroyed for unjustifiable reasons. Russell expressed his regrets. I mention all this because I am convinced that part of the close relation I enjoyed with Russell was based on the fact that he saw us both as victims of the enemies of intellectual freedom.

Sir Stanley Unwin, Russell's British publisher, liked the idea of *Logic and Knowledge*, and, starting in the autumn of 1954, I went to work with renewed energy. I would secure photographic copies of a text and send them to Russell for him to make any changes, corrections, or additions he felt appropriate. The greatest problems were in "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism", first published in the United States in 1918. Apparently when the manuscript was sent to America the censors had no idea what to make of it. This was an important work, and the printed text contained a number of errors which we found and corrected to his satisfaction.

The first essay, "The Logic of Relations", had been written in English and later translated by him into French. Russell could not find the English text, so I undertook a translation. It was soon clear that Russell was trusting me more than I wished to be trusted, so, to secure his attention, I sent him some pages in which there were mistakes.

He replied that one might infer from my errors that I was ignorant of both logic and French (which he knew not to be the case), but he corrected my slips and, thereafter, read my work with greater care—which was precisely what I wanted him to do. Because of this when the English text finally surfaced, after his death, the variations between the two versions were minor.

As the work on *Logic and Knowledge* neared its end, it was suggested to Russell that he revise *The ABC of Relativity* which he had published in 1925. He knew that I had been a research assistant in the Harvard physics department in a philosophy of science project headed by Philipp Frank, and asked me to suggest the passages in the text most in need of revision. I was happy to do so. Felix Pirani, who was much more of a physicist than I, rewrote several portions of the text for its republication

in 1958.

The best moments of the months spent on *Logic and Knowledge* came after our tasks for the day were done and we could relax over tea (always Lapsang Suchong) or whisky (Red Hackle—excellent if little known) and discuss a wider range of subjects. What Russell wanted to do philosophically, if he had the time, was prepare a sweeping analysis and criticism of the positivist movement and the work of Wittgenstein and his disciples. Much of this philosophy was, he felt, well intended but misguided. Wittgenstein was becoming, posthumously, a cult figure. One of the things we discussed at length was whether Wittgenstein belonged in the tradition of British philosophy. Russell was inclined to view Wittgenstein as an Austrian whose thought was part of the intellectual life of the Continent.

Contemplating his campaign against nuclear warfare, Russell boldly proclaimed "Every philosopher must be Socrates, if necessary die like Socrates." But Russell found little of the Socratic spirit in contemporary British thought. He must not abandon philosophy at this crucial moment, I insisted, but he declined. "It makes no difference if philosophers are right or wrong", he announced at the close of one discussion, "if everyone dies in an atomic war. Preventing that is the primary objective. That is what I must do with the rest of my life. If the philosophers are wrong, they will be found out sooner or later. It has always been that way in the past."

Russell, after four marriages (the last of them wonderfully successful) regarded himself as an expert on women. He found it amusing that I bring my women friends to tea so that he might appraise them with his practised eye. I began with the daughter of a distinguished Eastern seaboard family with whom I was, momentarily, wildly in love. She was a perceptive student of philosophy but had gone through college driving her teachers mad by smiling sweetly through every class and saying nothing. She did the same thing to Russell, who observed that the refusal to speak was really hostility, a form of rejection. Russell did not like to be rejected over the tea table.

In 1955 I introduced him to a young woman who had assisted me with the proofs of *Logic and Knowledge*. She was a botanist by training, and she and Russell had several pleasant exchanges on the nature of her work in Cambridge. When I went back a week later for his views he was enthusiastic.

"That is a red-headed woman who is not a bitch," he announced. "There is nothing rarer than a red-headed woman who is not a bitch. Marry her." I did. She was my wife for 29 years, and we remain on excellent terms.

A week or so later, after several drinks of Red Hackle, the significance of red hair became more apparent. Dark pubic hair, Russell observed, did not excite him erotically, and blonde pubic hair was almost invisible, but red pubic hair was highly arousing sexually. The most revealing thing about this discussion was the degree to which Russell's intellectual energy seemed rooted in his sexuality. Women have commented to me, "How can a man who looks like a prune have been such a great lover?" The answer is that women who are only interested in weight lifters probably would find Russell unexciting, but the quality and intensity of his mind, his capacity for passion, made him a very sexy man even in old age.

On one of my next visits he raised the question of homosexuality. My orientation was perfectly clear to him, but he suggested that I might be able to help him understand something he found incomprehensible. When there were all these fascinating women in the world as possible sexual partners, why would anyone be interested with a sexual relationship with another man?

The best I could offer was the fear of rejection, plus a lack of basic sympathy toward women. He then began to talk of George Santayana. Several women, he gathered, had been fondly disposed toward Santayana, but he was never so disposed toward them. Santayana had been a close friend of his brother, Frank Russell, treating Bertie (as he always called him) as the precocious kid brother. Although in their published works dealing with one another's thoughts, the two men address each other with friendship and courtesy, Russell considered Santayana's thought to be too derivative to merit much attention in the *History of Western Philosophy*.

"Santayana", Russell once commented, "was the sort of man who wears black patent leather pumps to go punting on the Cam (where tennis shoes would be far more appropriate). I always assumed he was a homosexual, but, mind you, I never asked, 'George, are you a bugger?'"

It is interesting to speculate how Santayana would have responded. Bertie might well have rendered him speechless.

Questions do not always lead where you might expect. I was not

prepared for Russell's angry reply when once, early in our talks, I said I was puzzled that only one of the two directories of the peerage, *Debrett's*, and *Burke's*, listed his second daughter. "I have no second daughter", he replied. "That was my wife's [Dora Russell's] child. It took me ten years to get the bastard out of Burke." This was the Earl Russell speaking. Defending the family name was a matter of deep importance to him.

I may have been the last person with whom Russell had regular discussions of philosophical questions in his home. I sense I was the last to urge him (unsuccessful though I was) to return to philosophical work for at least part of the time. My last visit to Richmond was a day or two before the movers were to arrive and begin packing the books and papers for Russell's impending move to Wales. *Logic and Knowledge* was complete except for some final proofreading which I would do in Cambridge. Russell had read my introductions to the essays with apparent interest and had never suggested that I change as much as a comma.

I had done this work on the basis of a verbal agreement, and Unwin had not planned to pay me. Russell thought this unfair and insisted I receive ten per cent of the royalties for ten years. None of us had the slightest idea that forty years later the book would remain in demand and in print. We remained in contact by mail, and I was delighted that when, early in 1956, the book appeared, Russell obviously liked it.

I asked him for a few words of recommendation I might use in securing a teaching job in America. He wrote a short letter describing me as a competent philosopher. In the double talk American academics use among themselves in documents of this type, that would have meant that I was a dull hack. But Russell was using ordinary English. He would never have selected a dull hack as a collaborator when able persons were readily available to him. He meant that I had the capacity to grasp the major philosophical problems and deal with them effectively, something I knew he would not have said of some of the bright young things at Oxford. It was, perhaps, the greatest compliment paid to me in my life, equal to Toscanini calling me an honest musician. (My critical study of Toscanini, which permitted a philosophical thought criminal to make a living as a music critic, was also issued in 1956.)

As I left the Richmond house that night, turning the corner for the now familiar walk to the station, I knew that one of the great chapters of my life had closed. I never saw Russell face to face again, but his smile, captured in a picture I took in the Richmond study, shines down on me

benevolently as I write this. I have done things he would not have understood and some he probably would not have approved, but nothing that would have destroyed our friendship. My basic view of humanity and the world remains profoundly shaped by his thoughts.