Russell's world in photographs

by Harry Ruja

Ronald Clark. *Bertrand Russell and His World.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1981. 127 pp. 105 illustrations. £5.95. US$14.95. C$22.50.

ESSENTIALLY THIS IS a collection of illustrations with accompanying text. As such it is one of a number of such collections, including H. W. Leggett's *Bertrand Russell, O.M.* (1950), the February 1957 issue of *Wisdom Magazine*, *Into the 10th Decade* (1962), and *The Life of Bertrand Russell in Pictures and in His Own Words* (1972) by Christopher Farley and David Hodgson. Indeed, many of the illustrations found here appeared also in Russell's *Autobiography* (1967–69) and in Clark's *The Life of Bertrand Russell* (1975).

But this volume is different, for Ronald Clark is a talented, conscientious, and diligent professional biographer. Though to be sure there are here a number of illustrations that Russell fans have seen before (baby Bertrand, age four, BR as a Cambridge undergraduate, the "pen" portrait, the "chair of indecency" cartoon), there are some striking new ones. Examples: Bertie in China with Dora dressed in elegant Chinese costume, Colette in a most seductive pose, Peter in a sentimental one, and Ottoline and her home and her friends in a variety of poses and settings.

Some other interesting illustrations which I for one have not seen previously include: a chubby, clear-eyed Bertie with his Aunt Agatha, a full-length portrait of Alys, stately and composed, a shot of Alys's Quaker parents playing cards in the garden of their home, and BR stretched out on Welsh soil resting after a hike and smoking.

Clark documents the sources of the illustrations fully. He has made good use of the resources of the Bertrand Russell Archives in Hamilton, Ontario. Some of the illustrations are from the Bertrand Russell Estate, Trinity College, and the BBC. Mrs. Igor Vinogradoff (Ottoline's daughter) also proved helpful in supplying illustrations for this volume.

Clark disagrees with Russell on the date of the "pen" portrait. In his *Autobiography*, Volume 1, BR assigned a date of 1916 to it; Clark dates it 1913. The earliest it appeared in print according to my records of Russell's portraits was in 1921 (*Foreign Affairs*, London). It was widely reprinted in 1924.

The text is as distinguished as the illustrations. In style it is energetic and terse. In content, it consists of a smoothly flowing abridged re-

counting of the essentials of BR's life and thought, supported by a balanced selection of relevant detail. Clark is judicious in his (muted) evaluations, refraining both from captious criticism and fulsome praise.

Is there anything in the text which BR fans will find new? Test yourself on these:

☐ "I loved Colette passionately," BR wrote, but—. But what? (P. 63)

☐ How long did it take BR to write a book of 60,000 words? (P. 78)

☐ Who vetoed BR's appointment to the Princeton Institute of Advanced Study, and why? (Pp. 83–4)

☐ Who started the proceedings which led to BR's return to Trinity? (P. 90)

☐ Who joined with BR to found the Pugwash movement? (P. 98)

☐ How long did BR's final illness last? (P. 113)

The text is fully indexed. This volume is a useful sequel to Clark's masterly *Life* and a worthy addition to Russell literature.

Department of Philosophy
San Diego State University