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G. H. Hardy

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BERTRAND RUSSELL
&
TRINITY

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G. H. HARDY
BERTRAND RUSSELL
AND TRINITY

*A facsimile reproduction
with a foreword by*

C. D. BROAD



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FOREWORD

Hardy's pamphlet *Bertrand Russell & Trinity* was written by him during the earlier years of the Second World War, and was completed towards the end of 1941. As stated in the Preface to it, it was printed for private circulation only. The printing was done for Hardy by the Cambridge University Press in 1942. When copies became available any Fellow of the College who wished to obtain one would find a pile of them on a table in the entrance-hall to Hardy's rooms. Alongside of them was a plate in which the intending purchaser would deposit his money, and a sheet of paper on which he would sign his name before taking away his purchase. A Fellow was allowed to buy more copies than one, and several of us did this in order to give them to friends who would thus learn the true account of a very complicated set of incidents. A copy of the pamphlet was preserved from the first in the Library of Trinity College, and it has always been available for consultation there by any of the Fellows who might care to inspect it.

From the above it will be plain that the pamphlet soon became something of a 'collector's piece'. Hardy died in 1947. He was survived by his sister, and after her death the copyright of all his writings passed to the London Mathematical Society. The latter, after consulting the College Council, now issues the pamphlet, with the Council's full approval, to the general public.

Besides being one of the most eminent pure mathematicians of his day, Hardy had a command of clear, elegant English, which makes anything that he wrote a pleasure to read. But in this pamphlet he excels, not only in this respect, but also in two others. The story of Russell's relations with Trinity during and immediately after the First World War is, as the reader will find, a highly complex one. It also involves matters on which Hardy had very definite opinions and very strong feelings. Now Hardy manages in a masterly way to disentangle the various incidents, and to enable the reader to see the connexions between them. And, while never attempting to conceal his own sentiments, he provides as fair and objective an account as is humanly possible of all the issues involved.

[v]

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[More information](#)

Hardy's pamphlet is the story of the breach between Russell and Trinity which occurred during the First World War. This resulted in Russell's severing his connexion with the College and taking his name off its books. As the reader will see, the breach was in fact healed by the end of 1919. On 12 December of that year the Council decided to offer to Russell a Lectureship in Logic and the Principles of Mathematics for five years from 1 July 1920, and on 16 January 1920 the Master was able to announce his acceptance.

But, although there was not and never has since been any further quarrel between Russell and the College, a set of unfortunate circumstances prevented this from becoming obvious to the world at large. Russell in fact, through his own action, never took up the Lectureship which the College had offered and which he had accepted. In the first place, in July 1920, just as his tenure was to have begun, he applied for leave of absence for the academic year 1920–21. This was granted, and he spent that period travelling and lecturing in China. Then, on 14 January 1921, he resigned the Lectureship, and his resignation was accepted. It was motivated, not by any difference with the College, but by circumstances in his private life which he feared might embarrass those who had supported his reinstatement.

That the breach really had been healed was shown later by the fact that in 1925 the Council invited Russell to give the Tarner Lectures, and that he accepted. The lectures which he then gave were afterwards published under the title *The Analysis of Matter*.

Hardy's pamphlet ends with the following sentence: "All the world of learning knows that there was a quarrel between the College and one of its most famous members: could it not be told, in language which leaves no possibility of misunderstanding, that the quarrel has since been healed?" Hardy's question did not long await a satisfactory answer. On 3 December 1943 the Council resolved to offer a Fellowship under Title B to Russell. The latter was then in the U.S.A., where he had been for some considerable time, and was planning in any case to return to England in the summer of 1944. He cabled his acceptance, and on 14 January 1944 the Council elected him to the promised Fellowship. The actual admission took place on 10 October 1944.

In reference to the above it should be explained that Trinity Fellowships, whilst uniform as regards qualifying the holder to vote at meet-

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ings of the Governing Body and to enjoy certain domestic privileges, are classified under certain Titles, which differ in regard to conditions of tenure and entitlement to stipend. A Fellowship under Title B is the rarest of these various categories. A Fellowship under it is given from time to time to a distinguished senior man. It confers on him a stipend subject only to the condition of his engaging in research.

In Russell's case the Council informed him that neither residence nor teaching would be required of him, but that the College would welcome it if he were inclined to lecture, and would pay a fee to him for such lecturing as he might be willing to undertake. On 28 July 1944 the Council agreed to invite Russell to lecture during the three academic years 1944–5, 1945–6, and 1946–7, and fixed the stipend for doing so. Russell did in fact lecture to large and enthusiastic audiences, and he resided in Cambridge (for part of the time in College) during much of the period. It was during this time that he put the finishing touches to his book *A History of Western Philosophy*.

The reader will see on pp. 48 *et seq.* of Hardy's pamphlet that the Fellow of the College who was mainly responsible in 1919 for the memorial which led to Russell's reinstatement was H. A. Hollond. It is of interest to record that it was the same Fellow (by that time Professor Hollond) who was primarily responsible for moving the Council to offer a Fellowship under Title B to Russell in 1944.

In October 1948 Russell's Fellowship under Title B was automatically coming to an end. On 1 October of that year the Council prolonged it until Michaelmas 1949. On the expiry of this prolonged Fellowship on 30 September 1949 Russell became automatically, under the Statutes, a Fellow under Title E. Such a Fellowship is tenable by the holder for the rest of his life, and accordingly Russell continued to be a Fellow under this title until his death on 2 February 1970.

In order to complete the story of Russell's relations with Trinity, I will end with a short summary of the relevant facts before 1919. He was admitted to the College on 17 June 1890. He took his B.A. degree in 1893, being seventh Wrangler in the Mathematical Tripos; and his M.A. degree in 1897. In 1895 he was awarded a Fellowship under the then Title (α). Such a Fellowship, popularly called a 'Prize Fellowship', was awarded as the result of an annual competition, at which each candidate submitted a dissertation on a subject chosen by himself.

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[More information](#)

It lasted for six years, and involved no duties of residence, research, or teaching. Russell was in fact away from Cambridge during the latter part of the period. The dissertation on which he won his Fellowship became the basis of his book *The Foundations of Geometry*. Finally, in 1910 the Council appointed Russell to a College Lectureship for five years in Logic and the Philosophy of Mathematics, which they created especially for him. Though it was not accompanied by a Fellowship Russell enjoyed many of the privileges of a Fellow, including rooms in College. He lectured, and he occupied rooms in Neville's Court, from 1910 to the outbreak of war and somewhat later.

C. D. BROAD

Trinity College, Cambridge

25 February 1970

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A college controversy of the last war

BY

G. H. HARDY

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[ix]

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page</i>
	vii
1. Introduction	i
2. Public opinion towards pacifism during 1914– 1918	3
3. Opinion in the College	7
4. The U.D.C.	10
5. The N.C.F.	15
6. The Council and the U.D.C.	18
7. The College Meeting about the U.D.C.	22
8. Russell's position in the College before 1916	25
9. The Everett leaflet	31
10. <i>Rex v. Bertrand Russell</i> : the prosecution	34
11. <i>Rex v. Bertrand Russell</i> : the defence	36
12. Russell's dismissal	40
13. Reflections on the action of the Council	43
14. The second Russell case	46
15. The memorial for Russell's reinstatement	48
16. Comments on the memorial	52
17. Reinstatement and resignation	57
<i>Appendix</i> . List of the Fellows of Trinity on 12 Dec. 1919, with their ages and record of war service	59
<i>Postscript</i> (5 March 1942)	61

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-11392-2 - Bertrand Russell and Trinity

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE

This pamphlet is printed for private circulation only.

The College Council have given me permission to quote from sources (the Council Minutes, the Minutes of College Meetings, and the Report Book) accessible only to Fellows. I have also to thank Professor Broad, Mr Burnaby, Mrs A. Y. Campbell, Mr Hollond, Mr Laurence Housman, and Miss Parry for permission to reproduce letters.

I wish to make it plain that Russell himself is not responsible, directly or indirectly, for the writing of the pamphlet or for any of its contents. I wrote it without his knowledge and, when I sent him the typescript and asked for his permission to print it, I suggested that, unless it contained misstatements of fact, he should make no comment on it. He agreed to this course and, though I have altered it a good deal as the result of suggestions from other friends, no word has been changed as the result of any suggestion from him.

G. H. H.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

4 December 1941