DONALD RUSSELL

Donald Andrew Frank Moore Russell

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elected Fellow of the British Academy 1971

by

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Fellows of the Academy

Donald Russell, Professor of Classical Literature at Oxford University and Fellow of St John's College, specialised in imperial Greek literature, especially Plutarch, and in literary criticism, rhetoric and declamation, both Latin and Greek. His work was especially notable for its sensitivity to language and style, a strength that was useful to him as a Bletchley code-breaker in the Second World War and that was just as evident in his classical scholarship, including the many emendations he suggested as a textual critic. He continued to publish widely and to pass on suggestions to others, into his late 90s.

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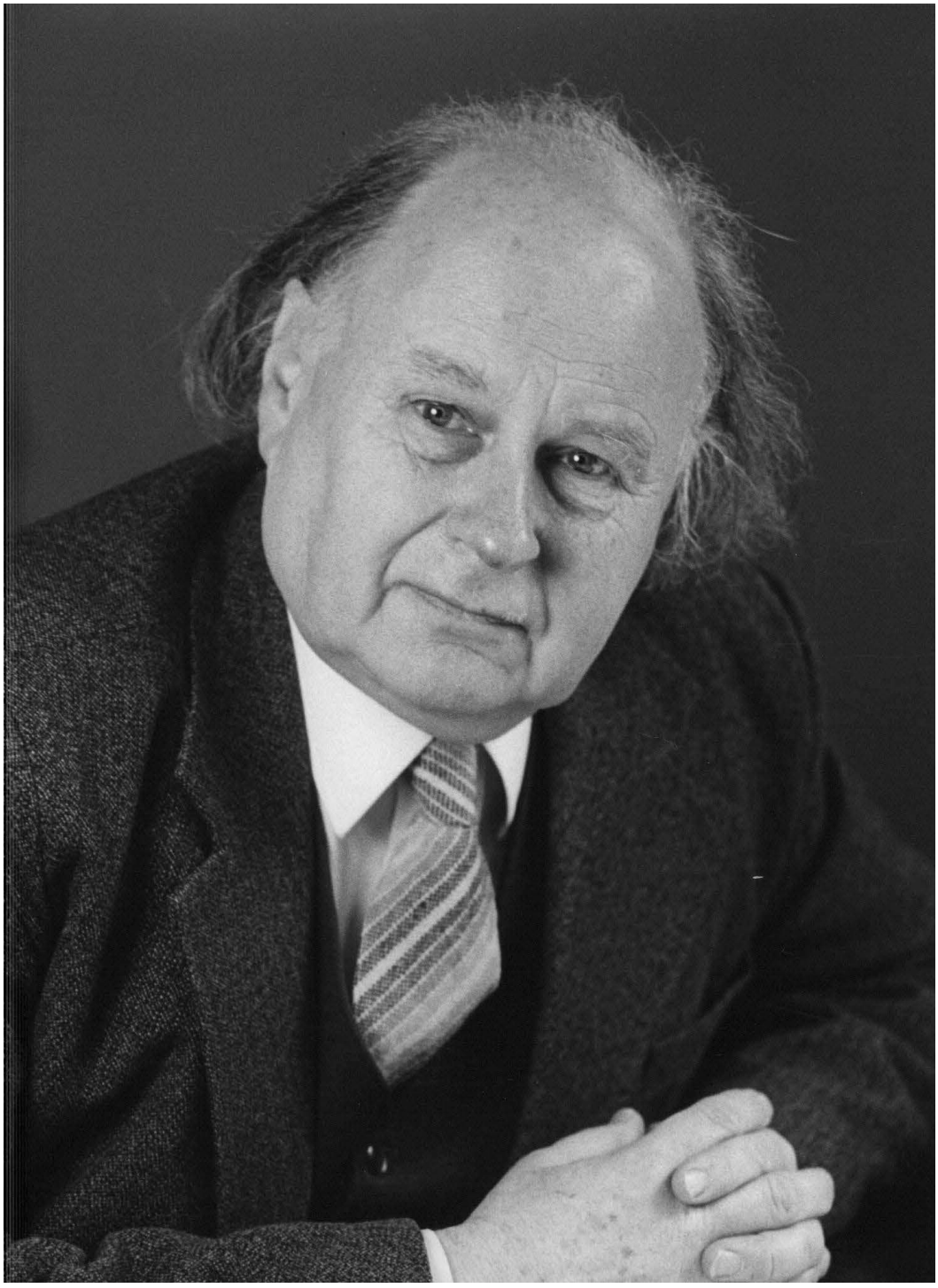

DONALD RUSSELL

During the last week of his long life, Donald Russell stamped an envelope containing acute comments on a vexed passage of Quintilian about which he had been consulted by an Italian colleague. He had written them in long hand, for he was not a man for typewriters, let alone computers. The envelope sealed, he returned to reading Lord Chesterfield's letters to his son. This was a man who still delighted in scholarly collaboration and immersed himself in literature.

Donald Andrew Frank Moore Russell—he seldom used his third and fourth initials—was born in Wandsworth a few months short of a century before, on 13 October 1920. Both parents were schoolteachers. His father, Samuel Russell (1878–1979: they were a long-lived family) came from near West Bromwich and had at the age of 14 been put in charge of a class of fifty or so six-year-olds. Telling them a story of the Tower of London swiftly won their attention, and he had no more trouble. He later studied Chemistry and German at Birmingham University, and returned to teaching, moving to London in 1915 and interrupting that career briefly for Royal Flying Corps service in 1917–18. He was headmaster of various primary schools in South London and retired in 1943.

In 1912 he and Laura Moore had married. Laura (1876–1966) was also a teacher in the West Midlands. She had been brought up in Worcestershire, but the family came from Liverpool, and had strong Irish connections: Donald would often talk about his Dublin relatives. Both parents, he recalled in the notes that he deposited with the Academy, were strong characters and always encouraged him: 'no doubt they spoilt me'. An older brother had died at or soon after birth.

At kindergarten a gym mistress perceptively reported that 'Donald is a man of words and not deeds, and so is not good at gymnastics'—a remark that went down well sixty years later in his retirement speech. At nine he started in the junior school at King's College School, Wimbledon and later went on to the senior school, where he prospered despite a series of illnesses. A sign of things to come was when he spent one of these translating Demosthenes' *Third Philippic*: he remained proud of that version many years later. It is also telling that the teachers he particularly remembered were those in English, French (with 'a lot of literary culture') and German ('jumping to Goethe at a very early stage'); the Classics teachers were competent and scholarly but less exciting. That broader literary taste was another feature that was to last.

In December 1938 he won a scholarship to Balliol College. He was interviewed by Cyril Bailey,[1] 'a dear old boy' whom he admired for 'applying the precepts of Epicurus to his own life'; one question that stuck in his memory was whether *Alice in Wonderland* or P. G. Wodehouse would be easier to translate into other languages. He was to have

[1] Walter Oakeshott, 'Cyril Bailey, 1871–1958', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 46 (1960), pp. 295–308

spent summer 1939 on a language course at Besançon, but world events and a mother's anxiety put a stop to that. At Balliol his tutors were W. S. Watt and Roger Mynors,[2] and he took an accelerated course, expecting to be called up at any moment. He took Honour Moderations in June 1940, and spent 1940–1 on an abbreviated course of Ancient History and Philosophy, together with a certain amount of drilling in Christ Church Meadow and learning the parts of the Bren gun. He later recalled 'listening to improbable lectures: the poet Edmund Blunden on platoon tactics and a philosophy don … who managed to cast a cloud of metaphysical obscurity over the relatively simple topic of map-reading'.[3] But the call-up was slow, and it was not until autumn 1941 that he finally joined the army.

For over a year he served in the Royal Signals, training for most of the time to be a wireless operator, but in early 1943 he was sent to Bedford for a crash Japanese course, designed to produce people capable of deciphering and translating enemy intercepts. From then until the end of the war he was working at Bletchley Park in the code-breaking operation that was so critical to the course of the war. For many years he was dutifully discreet about what he had done, mentioning only that he found it 'quite an enjoyable sort of applied scholarship', the kind of 'quiet job' that he relished. Once the decades had passed and more about Bletchley had become public, he was prepared to expand,[4] recalling for instance 'one chap who was always writing about his expenses': his frequent use of 'yen' gave an invaluable starting-point. There was a particularly important message shortly before D-day, when the Japanese representatives in Berlin had toured the defences of the French coast and written home about it.[5] He remembered too the porters at Bletchley station: they would say 'Oh, you want the Secret Place—it's up the road there on the right.' The food, he said, was awful, and he began in an uncomfortable billet in Bedford: mice would run over him in bed. But it was clear that he took pleasure as well as pride in his work there, particularly when the team managed to decode messages ahead of their American counterparts, and many of the friendships he formed proved durable. Certainly he was well fitted for the work as an intellectual all-rounder, with a capacity to evaluate and interpret the texts as well as the linguistic skill to decipher them; his translations from the Japanese were particularly admired for their elegance. He said that he had learnt three important skills

[2] R. G. M. Nisbet, 'William Smith Watt, 1913–2002', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 124 (2005), pp. 359–72; Michael Winterbottom, 'Roger Aubrey Baskerville Mynors, 1903–1989', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 80 (1993), pp. 371–401.

[3] Russell, 'Times change', in Robin Nisbet and Donald Russell, 'The study of classical literature at Oxford, 1936–88', in Christopher Stray (ed.), *Oxford Classics* (London, 2007), pp. 219–38 at p. 228.

[4] E.g. in an interview with Josh Spero, an old pupil: see Spero, *Second Hand Stories* (London 2015), pp. 128–42.

[5] Speri, *Second Hand Stories*, p. 136.

there: 'To do my work quickly and on time. To work in a team. And not to expect credit for what I've done.' It was years later that he discovered the note made on his record when he was demobilised: 'discharged with the highest merit'.[6]

By the end of 1945 he was back in Oxford, one of a formidable generation of returning ex-servicemen. At Balliol he was often paired with Kenneth Dover for tutorials with Russell Meiggs,[7] Donald Allan (whose memoir he wrote for the British Academy),[8] or Donald Mackinnon[9]; he and Dover enjoyed not merely a lasting friendship but considerable mutual respect, and in his autobiography Dover acknowledged that 'Donald's judgement and sensitivity on literature have always been better than mine'. Meiggs told Dover bluntly that Donald 'had a better brain' than Dover, although he would 'never be as good a historian'.[10] Subsequently Donald contributed to the Dover Festschrift an elegant *prologos* crafted in the style of the Second Sophistic,[11] though a few years after that he did not conceal from Dover his distaste for some aspects of his autobiography *Marginal Comment*. With Stephen Halliwell he also wrote the British Academy memoir after Dover's death.[12] Another undergraduate contemporary and lasting friend was Hugh Lloyd-Jones of Christ Church,[13] and the three were competitors for the university prizes—what an intimidating examination room that must have been for anyone else. Donald's share was a Craven Scholarship in 1946 and a de Paravicini prize in 1947.

Like the other ex-servicemen he had already taken the 'war-time MA' to which he was entitled, but he did not in fact sit his final examinations until December 1947. He got a First. By then he had a choice: should he accept a five-year research post at Christ Church or a tenured lecturership in Ancient Philosophy at Edinburgh? A. D. Lindsay, Master of Balliol, told him it was a choice of Heracles, one between Virtue

[6] For a survey that stresses the work of future FBAs at Bletchley see N. Vincent and H. Wallace, *British Academy Review*, 25 (2015), 42–6.

[7] Kenneth Dover, 'Russell Meiggs, 1902–1989', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 80 (1993), pp. 361–70.

[8] 'Donald James Allan, 1907–78', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65 (1981), pp. 564–71.

[9] Stewart Sutherland, 'Donald Mackenzie MacKinnon', 1913–1994', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 97 (1999), pp. 380–9.

[10] Kenneth Dover, *Marginal Comment* (London, 1994), p. 66. One reason for Meiggs' verdict may be hinted at in Russell, 'Times change', p. 229, where Russell 'recall[s] the Athenian Tribute Lists with quite peculiar distaste'.

[11] Elizabeth Craik (ed.), *'Owls to Athens': Essays on Classical Subjects for Sir Kenneth Dover* (Oxford, 1990), pp. vii–viii.

[12] 'Kenneth Dover 1920–2010', *Biographical Memoirs of the British Academy* 11 (2012), pp. 153–75. Russell's views on *Marginal Comment* are clear at pp. 172–3, in a section written by Russell (note on p. 175).

[13] Nigel Wilson, 'Peter Hugh Jefferd Lloyd-Jones, 1922–2009', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 172 (2011), pp. 215–29.

and Vice, but was unfortunately not too clear about which choice was which. Scot as Lindsay was, he might well have thought Edinburgh the virtuous path,[14] but Donald's choice of Oxford was to define his later career.

He had only two terms at Christ Church, but those months were important. He was supervised by E. R. Dodds, who shared many of the same interests, in particular the paths that Greek philosophy took after Plato and Aristotle. There was not much taste in Oxford for this, and Denys Page[15] spoke of 'Neoplatonic poppycock';[16] but Dodds took seriously the task of disentangling the thinking involved, and so later did Russell. The two remained close friends: he even took Dodds' advice on the choice of setting for a honeymoon (Ireland), and relished his remark that in 1936 there were two plum jobs in Oxford, the Regius Chair and the Head Gardenership at St John's. One of Russell's last publications was an elegant collection of his reminiscences of Dodds.[17]

Early in 1948 St John's College had a vacancy for a Classics tutor, and spent its Sunday nights on interviewing candidates, Russell and Dover among them. They plumped for Russell; one reason, possibly not the only one, was that his interests extended to Latin as well as Greek, and Latin was thought to be the subject with a more secure future. Russell Meiggs told him, perhaps tartly, that he 'should be all right at St John's', and he was. He began there in October 1948, the year of the Berlin airlift, and he thought he might well be back in uniform even before he started. But he was not, and his more than seventy-one years are believed to be the longest term as a fellow in the college's history. He was successively Junior and Senior Dean, Tutor for Admissions (the first in the college's history), and Vice-President.

Most of his time was taken up with teaching, often over twenty hours a week in the first two terms of the year; in his first few years he also shared with Dover the teaching at Wadham College as well as seeing many pupils from other colleges. He was a gifted tutor, gentle but firm, and wholly unembarrassed either in lectures or tutorials by a slight stutter; he was particularly good at sharing his own love of language as well as literature, instilling a feeling for style in a way that few tutors can. Prose and to a lesser degree verse composition still dominated the teaching routine in his early years, and that continued to be a forte. Nor did retirement put an end to this, for he was teaching composition to pupils from St John's and elsewhere well into his

[14] So Russell thought, anyway: 'Times change', p. 229.

[15] Hugh Lloyd-Jones, 'Denys Page 1908–1978', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65 (1981), pp. 759–69, commenting on Page's bad relations with Dodds at p. 761.

[16] Russell recalled the embarrassment of sitting between Page and Dodds at dinner: 'Memories of E. R. Dodds', in Christopher Stray, Christopher Pelling, and Stephen Harrison (eds.), *Rediscovering E. R. Dodds: Scholarship, Education, and the Paranormal* (Oxford, 2019), pp. 280–6, at p. 286.

[17] Russell, 'Memories of E. R. Dodds'. Russell also wrote the memoir in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 67 (1981), pp. 357–70.

nineties, and was also very willing—eager, even—to be recruited by grateful Regius Professors to advise on the setting of the University composition prizes and the ranking of the entries. Each year he would round off the exercise by producing his own incomparable versions, and these are now preserved in the archives of the Classics Faculty and of St John's. His pupils regarded him with fondness as well as respect, and the St John's Classics society is now named the Russell Society in his honour.

At Christ Church he had begun work on Plutarch's essay *On the Daimonion of Socrates*, which concerns that inner 'sign' that Socrates so prized as a guide to conduct. Dodds had suggested a topic more limited in scope, the rather shorter and less wide-ranging *On Superstition*, but Donald stuck to his choice. By summer 1948 he had to lay it aside because of his teaching load, but he returned to it later, initially in a short article in 1954 on textual questions,[18] then in a few pages in his 1972 book, and finally and most substantially in his contributions—introduction, text, translation, notes and an appendix—that form the heart of a collected volume in 2010.[19] He was attracted to that dialogue not just because he thought of it as 'Plutarch's little masterpiece' but 'because it encapsulated (as it surely does) both of Plutarch's main concerns—the Hellenic past and Platonist philosophy'.[20] It is also a very fine piece of narrative, and in *Plutarch* (1972) this was the feature on which he dwelt. He made the point largely by extensive quotation, capturing Plutarch's style as well as any translation could.[21] This too was a feature of Russell's writing: he knew when to leave the stage to his authors, and did not labour to display his own cleverness.

In that Plutarch book Russell ranges with equal assurance over both the *Parallel Lives* and the moral essays. 'My object', he said, 'had been to explain what it is like to read Plutarch and what I think one needs to bear in mind in order to read him with understanding. … I have tried to do this in a manner intelligible to those who do not read Greek',[22] and that gift for elegant translation is well in evidence. It was also ahead of its time in including a chapter on what was to become known as reception, tracing the ups and downs of Plutarch's reputation as tastes changed; translation again features extensively here, with a detailed analysis of the strategies followed by Amyot and North. He concludes, perhaps surprisingly, that Amyot may have been a greater writer than Plutarch, as a creator in a new literary language in a way that Plutarch had never

[18] 'Notes on Plutarch's *De genio Socratis*', *Classical Quarterly*, n.s. 4 (1954), 61–3.

[19] H.-G. Nesselrath (ed.), *Plutarch: On the daimonion of Socrates* (*SAPERE* vol. 16, Tübingen 2010). Russell was responsible for the introduction (pp. 3–15), the translation and text (pp. 18–81), and an appendix on 'Some texts similar to *De genio*' (pp. 201–7); the notes on the translation (pp. 82–98) were co-written by Russell, Robert Parker and Nesselrath, and Russell is also credited with revising the translation of two chapters originally written in German.

[20] Russell in Stray, Pelling and Harrison, *Rediscovering E. R. Dodds*, p. 282.

[21] *Plutarch* (London, 1972), pp. 36–41.

[22] Ibid., p. vii.

been. The book was on the whole well received ('exceptionally clear, balanced, and informative … Every sentence has behind it the weight of judicious thought and scholarship'[23]) and acknowledged to be the best general introduction available, though inevitably experts on any one aspect of Plutarch were disappointed that particular issues had been sidestepped or left undeveloped.[24] There was general agreement that the treatments of style and narrative technique were a particular strength.

By the time of the book Russell had already published a string of Plutarch articles. 'On reading Plutarch's *Lives*' and 'On reading Plutarch's *Moralia*' both appeared in *Greece & Rome*,[25] and, appropriately for that journal, were aimed at a general audience as well as academics. Perhaps not coincidentally, they were both rather in the manner of Dodds' elegant essay on Plutarch, published in the same journal three decades earlier.[26] The *Lives* essay in particular showed an enviable lightness of touch, including a sketch of how Plutarch might have set about writing a life of Churchill, with appropriate interest in ancestry, a few digressions on, say, Blenheim and the Hellespont, and sympathetic engagement with a man who wrote history as well as made it. The more lasting impact was made by two further papers that went deeper into *Coriolanus* and *Alcibiades*.[27] Those two *Lives* form a pair in Plutarch's series, and twenty years later Russell would have gone deeper into the comparative technique; but even without that perspective these papers are particularly rich. *Coriolanus* offers a chance to put Plutarch's technique under the microscope, as it is clear that almost all the material is derived from Books 5–8 of Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *Roman Antiquities*.[28] In the great days of nineteenth-century *Quellenforschung* this left little for scholars to discuss; Russell grasped the opportunity to look in detail at what Plutarch did with that material, teasing out the recastings of sentences, the reshaping of narrative, and the wholesale reinterpretation of character and motive. *Alcibiades* is a more complex case, as Plutarch exploits several different types of material in those chapters; once again Russell brought out the skill with which the character of Alcibiades, at once so infuriating and so fascinating, was allowed to emerge. A spurt of international Plutarch scholarship followed in the next decades,[29] with Russell's

[23] O. Taplin, 'Brief reviews: Greek literature', *Greece and Rome*, 21 (1974), 88.

[24] Cf. e.g. the reviews of Russell's *Plutarch* (1972) by F. H. Sandbach, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 94 (1974), 199–200; C. P. Jones, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 64 (1974), 279–80; F. E. Brenk, *Review of Metaphysics*, 27 (1974), 623–4; H. G. Ingenkamp, *Gnomon*, 48 (1976), 545–51,

[25] *Greece and Rome*, n.s. 13 (1966), 139–54, and n.s. 15 (1968), 130–46.

[26] E. R. Dodds, 'A portrait of a Greek gentleman', *Greece and Rome*, 2 (1933), 97–107.

[27] 'Plutarch's Life of Coriolanus', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 53 (1963), 21–8; 'Plutarch, *Alcibiades* 1–16', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 12 (1966), 37–47.

[28] Russell estimated it at 80 per cent of the *Life* ('Plutarch's Life of Coriolanus' 21).

[29] The International Plutarch Society was founded in 1982 and has staged many conferences; Russell delivered several keynote addresses.

work a vital stimulus, and the three *Lives* articles were duly reprinted in Barbara Scardigli's 1995 collection of seminal Plutarch essays.[30] Further Plutarch contributions followed over the years, notably a volume of translations in the *World's Classics* series,[31] the commentary on *How to Study Poetry* (*De Audiendis Poetis*) that he co-wrote with Richard Hunter,[32] and finally a chapter on Plutarch's style in the forthcoming *Cambridge Companion to Plutarch.* That volume will now be dedicated to his memory.

A further scholarly interest had become strong in the 1960s, the way that the ancients themselves thought about their literature. A 1960 sabbatical was spent in Cambridge, and this gave Russell the chance to concentrate on 'Longinus', *On the Sublime*. Given his own feeling for style, it is not surprising that 'Longinus', with many sensitive stylistic comments on canonical authors, should have been the author he turned to first. His commentary was published in 1964, followed by a translation and a new Oxford Classical Text over the next few years.[33] The commentary's introduction begins with a big claim:

> European literary criticism owes most, among Greek writers, to Aristotle. Its next biggest creditor it knows as Longinus (Russell, *'Longinus'* (1964), p. ix).

This is backed up later in the introduction with a lengthy section on 'Influence' (pp. xlii–viii'), ranging confidently over English (admittedly, only English) literature from the Elizabethans to the twentieth century. The work's appeal, argues Russell, has been in conveying 'the pervading sense that L[onginus] loves literature and wants to communicate his love to others' (p. xlviii), and reviewers were complimentary about the way the commentary helped readers to appreciate that enthusiasm: 'sensible, learned without being pedantic, remarkably clear and readable';[34] 'a model of what a good commentary on this scale should be'.[35] The writer's idiosyncratic style poses particular problems to the textual critic, and Russell characteristically mixed good judgement with a readiness to make new conjectures of his own, some twenty in number: his text was generally welcomed as a real advance over its predecessors. Not all the features of his Introduction were found persuasive (he may for instance have overstressed a 'Jewish connection' as one of the few keys to its origin, and several reviewers cavilled at his claim that the sublime 'reveals itself not in a whole context but

[30] Barbara Scardigli, *Essays on Plutarch's Lives* (Oxford, 1995).
[31] *Plutarch: Selected Essays and Dialogues* (Oxford, 1993). He had earlier contributed the notes to Rex Warner's Penguin translation (*Plutarch: Moral Essays*, Harmondsworth 1971).
[32] Richard Hunter and Donald Russell, *Plutarch: How to Study Poetry* (Cambridge 2011).
[33] 'Longinus' *On the Sublime* (Oxford, 1964); 'Longinus' *On Sublimity* (Oxford, 1965); *Libellus de sublimitate Dionysio Longino fere adscriptus* (Oxford, 1968).
[34] G. A. Kennedy, review of Russell's *'Longinus'* (1964), *American Journal of Philology*, 87 (1966), 356
[35] H. Ll. Hudson-Williams, review of Russell's *'Longinus'* (1964), *Classical Review*, n.s. 17 (1967), 282.

in a single word or a phrase', p. xxxvii); but his caution in dealing with the authorship found approval ('guesses … are shots in the dark', p. xxix), and so did his favouring of the first centuries CE as the date. Most interest was found in the treatment of 'the sublime' (ὕψος) itself, not just (he argued) a matter of style but also one of morality: 'Longinus' 'unites his stylistic ideal under a moral ideal—the man of dignity and integrity who does his duty in human society and understands his station as a citizen of the cosmos' (p. xlii). Without such character, 'Longinus' suggests, stylistic affectation is shallow.

In the 1960s Russell was becoming increasingly involved in Oxford faculty affairs, often working closely with his friend Robin Nisbet.[36] It had long been a paradox that the study of Greek and Latin literature had been confined to the first five terms of the Oxford course ('Mods'); the remaining seven—'Greats'—were given over to ancient history and (predominantly though not exclusively modern) philosophy. Still, it was easier to resent this than to change it, though Dodds had tried, and Dover's despair at the prospect of any reform was one of the reasons he gave for turning down the Regius chair on 1960.[37] In Lloyd-Jones' inaugural lecture the following year he cited the example of Sir Charles Firth, who in *his* inaugural as Professor of History had presumed to recommend some syllabus reforms, and was (so Lloyd-Jones said) cut dead by his colleagues during his entire tenure of the chair. Lloyd-Jones went on to suggest some syllabus reforms, aiming at closer integration of literature with the rest of the course. Russell and Nisbet's first step in 1960 was to propose that the Homer and Virgil papers should include essays: hitherto these had confined themselves to translation, with optional essay-questions on the General Paper. Their proposal was drafted as they took a steamer boat-trip between Oxford and Goring;[38] the change was made a few years later. The bigger reform came towards the end of the decade and was again piloted by Russell and Nisbet. This finally elevated Literature to be a third part of the Greats course, and also for the first time made Oxford Classics accessible to those who had not studied Greek at school. The first cohort took 'Mods B', as it was then called, in 1970 and Greats in 1972. It was originally thought that only a few would choose the Literature option and that the great majority of entrants would still take the traditional 'Mods A'; both expectations proved false, and it is just as well for the current health of Oxford Classics that they did. The Nisbet–Russell reforms set the faculty on the path that culminated in the further reforms at the end of the century, which opened

[36] S. J. Harrison, 'Robin George Murdoch Nisbet, 1925–2013', *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the British Academy* 13 (2014), pp. 365–82.

[37] Dover, *Marginal Comment*, p. 91. Russell was himself sceptical of Dover's reason: Russell, 'Times change', p. 236.

[38] Russell, 'Times change', p. 233. That chapter gives a vivid picture of Oxford teaching and learning at the time.

the course also to those who had studied no Latin and integrated Archaeology as a further independent limb of Greats.

The 1960s also were an important decade for his personal life. In 1951 he had met Joycelyne Dickinson, always known as Joy. It was at a wedding, where he was best man and Joy was the only bridesmaid. They did not marry till 1967, as both were preoccupied with looking after elderly parents, but both later deeply regretted the delay. 'Once the decision was made,' he said, 'the gates of heaven opened for me'; as the editors of his Festschrift said in their preface, 'the marriage of Donald and Joy radiated such happiness that it brought pleasure to all who knew them'. Joy was a history fellow at St Hugh's and an expert on Renaissance diplomacy; her books were particularly concerned with 'Diplomats at Work', the title of the final one,[39] exploring the cultural background as much as the niceties of the diplomacy itself. Joy's French was perfect and Donald's serviceable, and they travelled a great deal, not just to France but to Germany, Italy and Greece; they had three stints in the United States when, after his retirement, Donald held visiting professorships at Stanford, twice, and at Chapel Hill. They also had a flat overlooking the sea at Highcliffe in Dorset. At home in Oxford, in a comfortable St John's house on the Woodstock Road, they flourished. They entertained generously, with Joy contributing most of the words—'she talked rapidly,' noted the *Independent* obituary,[40] 'and with few pauses, yet her partners in what could rarely, in truth, be called a dialogue always came away feeling that they had made witty and intelligent observations'—but Donald's smiles and interjections made it clear how much he was enjoying himself. It was a devastating blow when she died in 1993. A vase of fresh flowers was always kept in his dining room in her memory; he called her *Gaudium meum*, 'My Joy'.

During the 1970s and 1980s Russell continued to publish on ancient criticism. First came *Ancient Literary Criticism* (1972), a collection of translations co-edited with MW. The texts cover the long period from Homer and Hesiod to later Greek rhetoric (Hermogenes, Menander). Major contributions were made by Margaret Hubbard and Doreen Innes, but the bulk of the Greek was translated by Russell himself, together with the *Ars Poetica* of Horace. His felicity in rendering Latin as well as Greek is first displayed here. He wrote the short introduction, a sketch that was nine years later developed into an authoritative general survey of the field in *Criticism in Antiquity* (1981), This book, like the earlier *Plutarch*, was published by Duckworth Press, which Colin Haycraft had made into a home for high quality monographs freed of the scholarly apparatus that Oxford or Cambridge might have expected. The book proceeds by topic rather than author, and consciously bases itself on the material

[39] Joyceline Russell, *Diplomats at Work: Three Renaissance Studies* (Stroud, 1992).
[40] Barbara Harvey and Jennifer Loach, 'Joy Russell', *The Independent*, 26 March 1993.

collected in *Ancient Literary Criticism.* In an Appendix, Russell then breaks new ground with supplementary translations from less familiar authors, some of them (characteristically) neo-Platonic.

An admirer of Russell, in a perceptive review, found the book too short and too snippety.[41] More fundamentally, he judged that 'the whole study starts under a cloud': as Russell knew very well, 'this ancient rhetorical "criticism" ... is fundamentally not equal to the task of appraising classical literature' (p. 6). The only critic who began to come up to that mark was 'Longinus', Russell's admiration for whom shines through the book. Indeed, the epilogue ends with a personal paragraph looking back 'some twenty years ... when I embarked on a fairly serious [!] study of 'Longinus' (p. 171). 'What he says—and the same goes for the less attractive Dionysius and Demetrius—is often true, and always worth thinking about. It never amounts to the whole truth. But what criticism could claim that?'

The translations of material here and in the earlier book look forward to a substantial edition of Menander Rhetor, produced jointly with Nigel Wilson.[42] It was around this time that Russell's interest in ancient declamation came to the forefront: a topic to which we shall return. Later, retirement in 1988 allowed work on a variety of authors: well over half of his publications came in those retirement years. Particularly notable on the Greek side were an edited collection on Antonine literature,[43] a Cambridge commentary on several speeches of Dio of Prusa,[44] a translation of Libanius,[45] and two prose anthologies,[46] designed to convey a sense of different styles as well as serve as instructional manuals in the languages, in particular for a paper set in Oxford Classical Mods. In his last fifteen years he continued to take pleasure in co-authorship, enjoying the intellectual companionship as well as the work. The Plutarch books with Hunter and Nesselrath have already been mentioned, and he also collaborated on Heraclitus with David Konstan,[47] on Aeneas of Gaza and Zacharias of Mytilene with Sebastian Gertz and John Dillon,[48] with Nesselrath again on

[41] M. McCall, review of Russell's *Criticism in Antiquity* (1981), *Phoenix,* 37 (1983), 364–7.

[42] *Menander Rhetor*, edited with translation and commentary by D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson (Oxford, 1981): 'a superb piece of scholarship, the definitive study', M. S. Silk, *Greece and Rome*, 29 (1982), 88; 'as good a text as we are ever likely to have, a close and careful translation, and a helpful commentary', R. Browning, *Classical Review*, n.s. 32 (1982), 149. Wilson found more to do on the manuscript side than he had expected.

[43] *Antonine Literature* (Oxford, 1990).

[44] *Dio Chrysostom, Orations VII, XII, and XXXVI* (Cambridge, 1992).

[45] *Libanius: Imaginary Speeches* (London, 1996).

[46] *An Anthology of Latin Prose* (Oxford, 1990); *An Anthology of Greek Prose* (Oxford, 1991).

[47] *Heraclitus: Homeric Problems* (Atlanta, GA, 2005).

[48] *Aeneas of Gaza: Theophrastus with Zacharias of Mytilene: Ammonius* (London, 2012).

Synesius,[49] with Nesselrath and Michael Trapp on Aelius Aristides,[50] and with six other authors on Priscian.[51] His part in several of these volumes was to provide and annotate translations, a role in which he continued to delight.

In his seventies Russell also took on, and completed in five volumes, a Loeb of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*.[52] In his nineties he found a new role as adviser to an Italian project to produce another Loeb, of the so-called Major Declamations, wrongly attributed to Quintilian.[53] His work on Greek texts continued, as we have seen, but this late blossoming of his Latin studies, accompanied by a new confidence in textual criticism, require separate treatment.

Textual criticism was taught to everyone, not always to their benefit, in the old Mods that Russell eventually helped to overthrow; he was presumably tutored in it by Bill Watt, who later became a prolific emender, vying with D. R. Shackleton Bailey to purge great tracts of Latin literature.[54] At Bletchley, the code-breaker and the textual critic will have enjoyed a happy symbiosis. Later, Russell attended classes where select dons read and discussed Aristotle. One by-product was an Oxford Classical Text of the *Eudemian Ethics*, to which Russell contributed some conjectures; and as we saw there are more in his own 'Longinus' text.[55] But it was in the Quintilian Loeb that he first displayed his skill in Latin textual criticism. As will be seen, the apogee was reached in the ps.-Quintilianic Major Declamations.

Russell already knew Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* well when, with his wife's death still raw in his mind, he threw himself into the Loeb project. He had magisterially surveyed the whole range of ancient literary criticism in *Criticism in Antiquity*, and what he did not already know about rhetoric he had taught himself by immersion in Walz's daunting *Rhetores Graeci*. Of all this an editor of Quintilian had to be a master, for this fundamental text touches on every corner of the field. Russell only felt the need for specialist advice in the grammatical chapters of Book One, where he turned to J. N. Adams. Everywhere else he had acquainted himself with the abundant and often technical material. The resulting volumes will be standard for a very long time.

[49] *On Prophecy, Dreams and Human Imagination: Synesius de Insomniis* (Tübingen, 2014),

[50] *In Praise of Asclepius: Aelius Aristides, Selected Prose Hymns* (Tübingen, 2016).

[51] Pamela Huby, Sten Ebbesen, David Langslow, Donald Russell, Carlos Steel, Malcolm Wilson and Richard Sorabji, *Priscian: Answers to King Khosroes of Persia* (London and New York, 2016).

[52] *Quintilian: the Orator's Education*, vols i–v (Cambridge, MA and London, 2001).

[53] Forthcoming in 2020 or 2021.

[54] Richard F. Thomas, 'David Roy Shackleton Bailey 1917–2005', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 153 (2008), pp. 3–21.

[55] Those in Russell and Wilson's *Menander Rhetor* are attributed to 'nos', just as 'we' investigated the manuscript tradition. It is not thought that Russell ever opened a manuscript. He does not claim to have re-collated the Parisinus of 'Longinus', and a note on the Vaticanus in the 'Longinus' (n. 34) commentary begins 'to judge from a photograph' (p. xxiii n.1).

The opening paragraph of Peter Mack's review cannot be improved upon:[56] the book 'provides everything which a reader might want from a dual language edition and much that one could barely expect to find: a new Latin text which surpasses any previously available, a lucid and accurate translation which is a pleasure to read, magnificent notes, the best brief account of Quintilian's life, a masterly introduction to the work as a whole, accurate and helpful surveys of the content and sources of each of the twelve books, and almost ninety pages of indexes'. One might add that it also does something that previous editors signally failed to do, in dividing up the Latin text into manageable paragraphs. This is not in the full sense a 'critical' edition, for, as the series required, it has only a minimal apparatus criticus (fuller information on the manuscripts and their variants is readily available elsewhere). But Russell gave the *Institutio* what it needed: a translation and interpretative notes that will take it forward into an age when, it may well be, fewer and fewer scholars will be able to read the original for themselves.

Quintilian had much to say on the topic of declamation. But this too was something familiar to Russell. He introduced MW to the Elder Seneca in 1954. But it was only in 1979 that he first published in this field (on the ps.-Dionysius *Mistakes in Declamation*, a little text that went on interesting him: in 2019 he reported with pleasure that he had just made three new emendations[57]). Reviews of Fairweather's *Seneca the Elder* (Cambridge 1981)[58] and Håkanson's Teubner text of the Ps.-Quintilian Major Declamations (1982) reveal his expertise on the Latin side.[59] But it was Greek declamation that he chose as the topic of his Gray Lectures in Cambridge in 1981. The resulting monograph of that name (1983), which he said was the book he most enjoyed writing, is a pioneering work.[60] Its title might seem to echo that of S. F. Bonner's still very useful *Roman Declamation* (1949), and the two books complement each other. Bonner was of course aware of the Greek background, but it was Russell who opened up the full sweep of a genre that begins with Gorgias and still flourished in the times of Libanius and Choricius of Gaza. His chapter 2 on Sophistopolis (he used to profess doubt as to whether he really had coined this useful word) paints a diverting portrait of the declamatory world; and equally readable is the account of 'Character

[56] *Classical Review*, n.s 53 (2003), 374–6.

[57] He had been consulted by Dr Giovanna Longo (Gioia del Colle) on the constitution of the text; but in the event he sent her as well a new translation of the whole work.

[58] *Classical Review*, n.s. 32 (1982), 28–30.

[59] *Classical Review*, n.s. 35 (1985), 43–5.

[60] When starting to work on the Minor Declamations, Michael Winterbottom asked Russell for help with the Greek background, and was given a list of the themes treated by Sopatros. This in turn sparked off MW's work with Doreen Innes which culminated in their *Sopatros the Rhetor* (1988). Russell's *Greek Declamation* carried an acknowledgement of their help on this author, without mentioning his own substantial contribution to their research. All this is typical of the man.

and character' in chapter 4: this expert on Plutarch was always fascinated by *êthos*. But the meat of the matter is the account of *stasis* theory in chapter 3: a technical and unappealing topic, but one central to declamation, whose primary and continuing purpose was to provide training in the various issues round which law cases revolved. Especially helpful is the third Index, of Technical Terms.

Bonner had restricted himself to the Elder Seneca, and work on the Ps.-Quintilian declamations, Minor and Major, only took off after 1980. In the new century, the latter collection has been splendidly served by a Cassino series that offers plain texts, translation (into various languages) and detailed commentary on each of the nineteen pieces. When the series was nearing completion, its moving spirit Antonio Stramaglia (who later moved from Cassino to Bari) conceived the happy notion of producing a Loeb of the whole corpus. He himself established the text. The translation fell to MW, who soon found that this was no easy task. His first drafts were unsparingly corrected by Donald Russell, who used to tell common friends gleefully (and rightly) that he would have done it better himself. When his conjectures, and no less his interpretations of this excruciatingly difficult text, came to the notice of Stramaglia, he forthwith made Russell a consultant to the team. Many of his aperçus have found a place in the Loeb. He was gratefully called upon to advise whenever a particularly knotty crux came up, and his responses often met with admiring cries of 'Bravo, Donald' and 'Donald strikes again'. It is unlikely that any scholar has ever made such brilliant contributions to textual criticism at so advanced an age. The two Loeb volumes will be dedicated to Donald Russell's memory.

He was elected FBA in 1971, and in Oxford was awarded a personal readership in 1978 and a personal chair in 1985, three years before he retired. On his seventy-fifth birthday his colleagues and pupils presented him with a Festschrift, marking his distinctive scholarly interests by its title *Ethics and Rhetoric*.[61] At the presentation dinner he recalled how a German professor had taken him aback by referring to 'Donald Russell und seine Schule': he was proud of having no such 'school', and that this was reflected in the range of approaches his many graduate pupils had taken. His pedagogic style was indeed to respect and foster whatever strengths they might have, while gently offering corrections and supplements that they could—and did—use as they chose. Doreen Innes, later Fellow and Tutor of St Hilda's College, recalls that 'one always knew when a correction would be gently suggested because his mild stutter appeared'. Christopher Pelling was another who benefited greatly from his benign guidance and support.

[61] Doreen Innes, Harry Hine, and Christopher Pelling (eds.), *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (Oxford, 1995).

After Joy's death he bravely picked up the pieces of his life and continued the hospitality, by now in an apartment close to their previous home. Joy's nieces were frequent visitors; so were a string of friends, many of them his former students, and scholars from abroad were made particularly welcome. For as long as he could he enjoyed going back to St John's Senior Common Room, 'surely the best day-care centre for the elderly in Oxford'. His temperament was the same as ever. He once commented that Cicero and Plutarch shared 'a serious, humane, unhysterical preoccupation with duty and morality'.[62] Donald himself had shown the same qualities throughout his career; and in retirement others they had in common became even clearer: a taste for the amusing story, a voracious appetite for reading, a liking for good company, and a capacious memory. He also shared those two authors' eloquence: a gift for witty and well-crafted speeches, stammer and all, had already shown itself with duties that came his way as a senior fellow, and he continued to produce similar pieces for suitable occasions, in prose or in verse and in English, Latin, or Greek. One of the last that he was able to deliver in person was made after the hanging of his portrait in the Oxford Classics Centre in 2018: the picture captures the twinkling eye of a genuinely *uiridis senex*. He was proud too that, despite that early despair of the gym mistress, he could still touch his toes in his early nineties. After that he suffered from increasing immobility, but devoted home-care from a long-standing friend Jenny Barney made it possible for him to stay in his apartment. He died on 9 February 2020, busy to the end. When asked which books he might like to take into hospital for what was expected to be a short stay, he chose a few Oxford classical texts.

Acknowledgements

By far the most valuable source, especially for the early years, is the thirty-seven page manuscript memoir that Donald Russell left with the British Academy *in usum necrologorum*, first deposited in 1993 and then updated in 2003 and 2010. There are many personal memories in the chapter he co-wrote with Robin Nisbet in Christopher Stray's *Oxford Classics* (n. 4), and some in his two memoirs of E. R. Dodds (n. 18). We are also grateful to Patrick Finglass for compiling a list of Russell's publications that is now available on the St John's College website, and to Penny Beswick, Doreen Innes, Nicholas Purcell, Nigel Wilson, Antonio Stramaglia and Georgy Kantor for valuable information and reminiscences.

[62] *Greece and Rome*, 15 (1968), 131.

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