



More Flourishing

Supplementary Letters 1928–1946

This PDF is one of a series designed to assist scholars in their research on Isaiah Berlin, and the subjects in which he was interested.

The series will make digitally available both selected published items and edited transcripts of unpublished material.

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More Flourishing

Supplementary Letters 1928–1946

Some of the following letters would have been included in the first volume of Berlin's correspondence, *Flourishing: Letters 1928–1946*, had they come to light in time. Others are included for the sake of completeness, given that most of the surviving letters from this period (unlike the later ones) were included in the published volume. Cross-references in the footnotes (which are not exhaustive) of the form '(31/6)' or '(198–203)' are to the published volume, by page and (where applicable) note. The relevant portion of the note in that volume is sometimes repeated here for the convenience of readers. See pp. xxviii–xxix there for the conventions followed in these notes.

The evidence from the letters to the Samunovs¹ and other sources suggests that neither IB nor his parents ever had any serious intention of emigrating to Palestine/Israel. Rather they were thinking in terms of investment, or building a property which they might use on visits to the country, or both.

Sources mostly appear at the end of each letter. The letters from A. J. Ayer are from the Berlin Papers in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

The 'bootleg' correspondence between IB and H. G. Nicholas during the Second World War is available in a separate file [here](#).

The four published volumes include for the most part only letters written by Berlin, but where we have been able to secure the necessary copyright permission, the online supplements will also include a selection of letters written to Berlin, chosen for their interest and/or the light they throw on Berlin's own letters.

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¹ F liii, 8, 94, 101. The letters were supplied by Efraim Halevy in 2007, and are now in the Bodleian Libraries, Oxford, as MS. Eng. c. 8238, fols. 74–90.

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TO IDA SAMUNOV

n.d. [1928/9?]

Hollycroft Avenue

Dear Idussya:

As you know I detest prefaces which are prefaces only. So let us begin.

Oxford is not a place where either serious thought or work is encouraged. It is like a large, comfortable, well-bred club, where, so long as you sit in your armchair and enjoy yourself, you will continue to lead a pleasant and popular existence. The unpopular members exist, and may be divided into: (a) the artistically-contemptuous. These are sometimes real, i.e. aesthetes who really hate the mob and prefer to be alone in a scented garden with a book of verse, and sometimes false, i.e. those who simply try to become notorious and take the short cut to fame by dressing, talking, and behaving queerly, sometimes uglily. Most even of this sham kind are exceedingly clever: but in essence they are social climbers, preparing and training their hearts and intelligences to hang parasitically on to the skirts of the really original people. Then there are the hard workers. Some because they are poor and must get on, some because they like it. There are very few such, and one does not see them: they take no part in the social life of the University, and so are ignored. If one wants to find them, one has to excavate patiently.

Then there are the clerks: the pale, clever, plebeian little men, with an enormous sense of what is woeful, a shy love of beauty, an essential vulgarity, and a grim desire to get on in life. They are sons of tradesmen and office-clerks, who are clever scholars, but suffer from a stunted and narrow vision of the world, a certain poverty of manners, poverty of vision, though what they see, they see clearly and profoundly. The great majority at Oxford are pleasant, often clever, careless, comfortable persons, some gentlemen, some not, who are very delightful so long as you do not ask too much of them.

Ettinghausen² thrives and blossoms among such. Stephenson³ at Cambridge is quite happy. Duschinsky⁴ is even not unhappy. Halpern⁵ however suffers a certain amount, because of a certain asceticism of temperament, a certain permanent critical sense, which never lets him take his pleasures carelessly, but always compels him to see through men and things, and becomes sceptical as to their goodness, even while he is supposed to be enjoying them. Hence a great dissatisfaction with life in general; but even he admits that Oxford is a pleasant place. I am glad to say I am really happy that Marmorstein⁶ has won a Hebrew Exhibition at Cambridge. Naki Doniach⁷ coached him in Hebrew for two months, and how he got his [*remainder of letter missing*]

Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Ms. Eng. c. 8238, fols 74–5

FROM A. J. AYER

30 November [1931]

Christ Church

Dear Berlin

I am delighted to hear of your success in the John Locke. I congratulate you warmly. In accordance with our agreement, I expect you to dinner tomorrow night. I do hope you can manage it.

Thank you for letting me have the book about the Phenomenologists. I am reading it slowly but with pleasure.

Yours

Freddie Ayer

² 9/11.

³ 427/2.

⁴ Edgar Duschinsky (1909–91), later Duchin; St Paul's School and BNC; became solicitor and amateur artist.

⁵ 18/1.

⁶ 94/6.

⁷ Nakdimon Shabbethay ('Naki') Doniach (1907–94), scholar of Judaic and Semitic languages (later lexicographer).

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TO A. L. ROWSE⁸

25 March 1932

49 Hollycroft Avenue

Dear Rowse,

Your letter relieved me a great deal: I had noticed your unusual behaviour on that evening, and asked Charles⁹ about it: but he, in his simple and mistaken kindness ascribed it to all kinds of impersonal causes, fatigue etc. which was obviously invented for my benefit: but as he was reluctant to discuss the subject I didn't press him; and there the matter rested for a few days. Later to my intense surprise, perplexity and distress I heard, in the most casual and absurd way, that you were exceedingly annoyed with me: I rapidly surveyed my past meetings with you, and beyond protracted fulminations on subjects which might have seemed trivial and tiresome to you, I failed to recollect a single serious crime or even faux pas to anger you. I therefore decided to ask you to dine with me, thinking that if I had really sinned, and you were really angry, you would certainly refuse. When days passed and no reply from you came I began to think that my informant was right, which was distressing. Hence my relief. As for intellectual fiddling and general culture mongering while everything is burning,¹⁰ that is precisely what I feel so uneasy about, and want to ask you questions about; I shall be in Town from Wednesday 30th till

⁸ (Alfred) Leslie Rowse (1903–97), historian, Fellow of All Souls 1925–74; a socialist early, a conservative late; vigorous opponent of appeasement; an egotist to the point of imbalance, loathed by IB (31/6).

⁹ Charles Gordon Henderson (1900–33), history Lecturer, CCC, 1928, Fellow and Tutor 1929–33; married (Mary) Isobel Munro (Fellow and ancient history Tutor, Somerville) (23/5). Henderson was a close friend of Rowse as well as of IB. The precise nature of Rowse's unusual behaviour remains a mystery.

¹⁰ If Rowse had accused IB of this, his opinion remained much the same in later life, when he described IB's work as 'all bits and pieces; nothing solid, nothing substantial or in any way significant [...] [an] inadequate performance'. *The Diaries of A. L. Rowse*, ed. Richard Ollard (London, 2003), 288.

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

Monday 4th April: if you were free then, I should be glad if you indicated a time & place where I might see you: but please don't let it interfere with any more important activities you may have: the thing can obviously & easily be deferred till next term. Did you read Stephen Spender's poem in last week's 'Listener?'¹¹ it was embedded by some ironical spirit into an article by Eliot¹² which was concerned to deny precisely what the poem was built on; its value as poetry did not seem to me great; but it moved me personally a good deal: and would, I believe, move you. In fact I am sure it would.

Yours

I Berlin

Exeter University Library, MS 113/3

FROM A. J. AYER

20 October 1932

17 Limerston Street, Chelsea

Dear Shaya

Thank you for sending the gloves, and retailing a compliment. We shall be listening to Schnabel in the 3/ seats. Renée is putting on a new dress to attract you.

Yours

Freddie

¹¹ Stephen Harold Spender (1909–95), poet and critic, Univ. PPE 1927–30; friend of IB for life from 1929 or 1930 (38/2, 717). Spender's poem 'After They Have Tired' (*Listener*, 16 March 1932, 382) reflects his growing attraction to Communism.

¹² Thomas Stearns Eliot (1888–1965), poet, publisher, critic, playwright, editor of the *Criterion* since 1922 (22/1). His article, 'Christianity and Communism' (*Listener*, 16 March 1932, 382–3), identified Christianity and Communism as rival religions and re-affirmed his commitment to the former.

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FROM A. J. AYER

18 January 1933 [*manuscript*]

Wien IV, Schönburgstraße 25, bei Jones

My dear Shaya,

I am sorry I left your letter so long unanswered: it is partly because I wished to produce a proper theory about theories: you will see that I have not succeeded: partly that I have left Vienna to come and live in the mountains: whence the odd notepaper: it is very beautiful where we are now up in the Wiener Wald: we pay no rent for our borrowed cottage (Martin's friend again), and we are learning to ski. I would much prefer to remain here but I must really take some steps about learning German and seeing Schlick. From next week therefore we shall be in Vienna, address as above.

You need not be worried by my having read your letter to Martin. As far as I remember, it was all about Goronwy, and did not reveal any romanticism in you. Besides I do not at all despise all romantic attitudes though I am myself more or less incapable of adopting them. I think to the observers the unfitness of the object for the attitude is a little funny and disconcerting (e.g. Miss Grant Duff – but of course she may have unpenetrated depth of character) but that is all. Nor need you think that Martin is estranged from you. He is idle about writing, and so for the most part am I, but I know he is very fond of you.

As far as I can see you don't quarrel with my account of philosophy as the attempt to give definitions of various sorts, but merely raise one of the most difficult philosophical problems – what is one doing when one makes a theory: and with most of what you say I agree. As far as possible one (= I, you, the scien-tist) does try to organise one's knowledge in a deductive system in the sense that most of the general propositions we believe are deduced from some other propositions we believe – though paradoxically we usually don't know what this proposition is – e.g. the plain man takes it as certain that the sun will rise to-morrow because he thinks some other general proposition which together with certain other

facts entails that the sun will rise is certain, though he does not know what it is: and I see no reason why with the help of the Encyclopaedia Britan[n]ica even such ill informed persons as ourselves should not be able to state which of the general propositions we take for certain in ordinary life are entailed by what axioms believed by the physicists or others. I don't for a moment suppose that all our knowledge can be organised in a deductive system, i.e. there will be plenty of loose ends: and we find this inconvenient. The evidence for the first principles is always inductive – and this is independent inductive evidence for the consequences – that is why it is still possible to believe the consequences, when the axioms are overthrown and [we?] look about for new axioms.

But all this has nothing to do with Hegel or relations of necessary connexion (other than ordinary logical entailment) – it means that instead of always arguing simply from $\varphi a - \varphi b$ etc to for all $x \varphi x$, you find that φa ent. ψa , you and already believing for all $x \psi x$ believes $(x).\psi x$ without questions. I think I have made the whole thing too schematic. It seems to me ~~more~~ as much a question of complicated analogies and inductions, that [sc. ~~than~~ as?] the assumption of only a few first principles: but that is a detail which you can correct and explain for yourself.

Why do we want theories? Obviously for predictions, to help us get what we desire (assuming for convenience that false psychology). Unless you act on the assumption of system you can't get on at all. I accept Ramsay's definition (such a great philosopher: really very great – goes for the important thing more than Wittgenstein who suffers from not being really *interested* enough in the actual world) a theory is a language for discussing the facts the theory is said to explain. And of course your theory must talk in terms of fictions (fictions in the sense that they are not objects constituting the facts the theory explains) and if you ask what the fictions are – e.g. what are atoms – the best answer is classes of facts. What you must do is to *define* certain behaviour of objects (entities of the primary system) as such and such a relation of electrons (entities of the secondary system) and this definition will

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be arbitrary though obviously you choose a convenient definition – i.e. one that will make for simplicity and economy in the theory – and afterwards be consistent. And you hold the simplest theory that accounts for the facts. In principle you can always translate back: i.e. I maintain that nothing is said with electrons etc. that could not in principle be said without: but in practice the enumeration of all the facts the electrons explain is hardly possible.

I have not re-read all this because as it stands it may be largely nonsense and if I saw it was nonsense I should not send this letter: and I hope by this letter to get some remarks out of you that may help me see this thing more clearly: it seems to me with all its ramifications the *only* important question in philosophy: though I know I shall degenerate into providing solutions for other questions too. But for the moment I am sticking to this one. I hope by the time I see you to have it all a little more clear.

Please keep my umbrella and see that its elegance is not destroyed. I have no gossip for you. We have been occasionally to the Opera here. I liked Verdi's Don Carlos very much and also Don Giovanni, though it ought to have been better staged. We go at least three times a week to the Cinema: and see practically no one except Martin. Next week perhaps I shall risk my life at the University: I shall anyhow obtain somewhere an interview with Schlick.

I have grown a beard: it is very black and said by René to be handsome. But Christ Church senior common room will certainly not tolerate it, so you may never see me with it: or at least not until my job there is secure.

My love to some people at Oxford including Maurice Bowra, Gilbert Ryle, M. B. Foster, H. H. Price, and the Highets – there are others but you are not likely to be seeing them – Renée sends you messages of affection.

Freddie.

FROM A. J. AYER

26 February 1933 [*manuscript*]

Wien IV, Schönburgstraße 25, bei Jones

Dear Shaya

When I last wrote to you, a long hasty and confused rigmarole about the laws of nature, I had not yet met Schlick and his colleagues. Now that I have attended some of Schlick's lectures on Naturphilosophie and a series of their fortnightly club meetings, I can give you some information that may amuse you. I have myself got little more than amusement out of them. That is the fault of my German which does not yet enable me to understand them well enough to obtain the instruction they are certainly able to give me.

The best of them are Weissmann [sc. Waismann?], Hahn, and Gödel. Schlick seems to be a man of about the same calibre as Broad, with this superiority that he has been content to follow Wittgenstein instead of going into jealous opposition. In his lectures he discusses the views of Eddington and Poincaré on the function of science and so forth. Wittgenstein is a deity to them all, not purely on the strength of the *Tractatus* which they consider to be a slightly metaphysical work ('metaphysical' is the ultimate term of abuse) but on the ground of his later views, which I myself (again the insufficiency of my German) have not been able to learn from them fully. Philosophy is grammar. Where you would talk about laws they talk about rules of grammar. All philosophical questions are purely linguistical. And all linguistical questions are resolved by considering how the symbol under consideration is in fact *used*. All contemporary philosophers in Germany are rogues or fools. Even to think of Heidegger makes them sick. No modern English philosophers have even been heard of except Russell and Ramsey [sc. Ramsay]. Russell is thought of as in many respects an old-fashioned metaphysician but definitely as a forerunner of the Christ, Ramsey as an intelligent pupil of Wittgenstein. The history of philosophy is I believe taught, but I have never heard the views of any philosopher older than Frege or Bolzano discussed, a and I

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am acquainted with only one philosopher here who thinks that ethics is a serious branch of philosophy, and he is a South American business man who only took up the subject at an advanced age three years ago.

Altogether a set of men after my own heart. I do not [at] all begrudge you the stimulation of your Josephs and Crossmans and Gallies. Erika Crossman was here for a time but we hardly saw her. We see a great deal of Martin, live simply and look forward to the spring. We shall go to Italy if we can possibly afford it. At the least we shall be here another three weeks. Write to me please.

Freddie.

TO IDA SAMUNOV

n.d. [early 1930s]

Pension Villa Helena, Baden-Baden

Dear Idotshka.

Heredity is a queer and wanton force. Mrs Snowman¹³ is a woman of rich and pregnant mind, who leads you to expect even more than she contains. Helen on the other hand is shallow, honest, truthful, embittered, suffering acutely from an inferiority complex, constantly on her defence against expected and unexpected attacks, irritable, runs to her mother (which I understand. The revolt of the shy against the confident, of those who totter in the belief of their own weakness, and in the fear that the world knows it and only accepts them out of decency and pity, against those who walk through the world, like Mrs S. in the pride of knowledge of their aims, beliefs, and knowledge of the relative values of things. A healthy Doctor creates a natural resentment in a broken patient, however kindly he is. So with Helen), and generally very hard to get on with. One is constantly conscious of treading on ashes under which the fire is continually smouldering,

¹³ Julia Snowman (1874–1968), née Benjamin, wife of the Berlins' GP, Dr Jacob Snowman. Their daughter was Helen Miriam E. Snowman (1910–89), who later married Maurice Stonehill.

continually of touching a body full of wounds. I have not the least idea of what hurts her and what does not. And she as I told you has built a wall round her own weakness. So it is all very difficult. Mrs Snowman is madly in love with Knut Hamsun,¹⁴ whom I shall have to read. I myself am deep in about seven books, Flaubert, Romain Rolland¹⁵ (who is never less than excellent. The finest and purest soul living. How our century could have produced someone so deep and so simple, so clear and so unfanatical I cannot understand. Anyhow no nobler man lives, unless it be Gandhi. I am reading a quantity of modern French *Lebensphilosophie*¹⁶ which is sometimes shallow and brilliant, sometimes deep, difficult, and eventually profound. Rarely both together, i.e. brilliant and profound. All the brilliant people, the Maurras,¹⁷ the Bendas,¹⁸ the Maritains,¹⁹ refuse to hamper their even flow of entrancing ideas with too deep research; they prefer, like novelists, to shape the materials to the theory, not the theory to the materials. With the result that they are interesting, fascinating, and without any basis of reality. It is the ‘Jew Süss’²⁰ school of philosophy. Just as the historical novel is usually more picturesque and interesting to the average mind, like mine, than dry and precise documents of contemporary chronicles and subsequent scholars, so this type of imaginary philosophy is more fascinating than the heavier speculations of those who treat truth as our and their mistress not

¹⁴ Knut Hamsun (1859–1952), né Knud Pedersen, Norwegian author (mainly of novels); influenced by Nietzsche and strongly pro-German.

¹⁵ Romain Rolland (1886–1944), French novelist, dramatist, biographer and essayist.

¹⁶ ‘Philosophy of life’.

¹⁷ Charles(-Marie-Photius) Maurras (1868–1952) was a reactionary French journalist, author and political activist.

¹⁸ Julien Benda (1857–1956) was a French philosopher, novelist and critic.

¹⁹ Jacques Maritain (1882–1973) was a French philosopher.

²⁰ The title of a 1934 British film based on Lion Feuchtwanger’s 1925 novel (itself derived from Wilhelm Hauff’s 1827 novella) about Joseph Süss Oppenheimer, the illegitimate son of a Christian nobleman brought up believing himself Jewish, who accepts execution rather than abandon the Jewish world in which he has been raised.

their material, as opposed to those who talk about historical truth and artistic truth as separate things, not to be identified. All this I have written obscurely, but I hope that you understand, Anyhow it is all very obvious.

The German stage seems to be falling into the same pit. Georg Kaiser,²¹ who is famous and popular, is representative of the attempt to present a case brilliantly, swiftly, interestingly, even if truth is to be sacrificed in the process. I have seen a play of his:²² it is very very clever, the technique is admirable, i.e. scenes, words, characters are fitted together like a piece of neatly made machinery, well oiled, so that the lubricated wheels roll nicely along. It is pleasant to see. The theme is ordinary and not too bad: a man who desired to marry a chaste wife, married a clean girl from an orphanage, she betrays him, whereupon he, wishing to keep his dream of purity intact, is going to treat her as dead: by a piece of clever technical writing on the part of Kaiser he procures a corpse of another woman, pretends to himself and others that his wife is dead, and is in fact this corpse, and refuses to recognize his living wife. Finally he begs her to do him the great favour, to leave him, alone with the memory of a pure woman, to go away and become the mistress of Louis XIV (this is the period) and leave him with the glorious past of a wife who died pure. She loves him, goes and commits suicide. All this is treated with vast cleverness, dramatically, brilliantly, but the whole talent is concentrated on the outside, on the colours, materials, light and shade. Rather like Pirandello in that respect. But Pirandello plays about with metaphysics which is at least original, but Kaiser and other German playwrights are content to give you a series of quick, impressionistic snapshots, brilliant, hard, and – false. False because soulless. Because all great and true art comes from obeying the inner not the outer claims; and this is definitely mercenary, definitely a piece of coquetry with the public taste for swiftness, rapid dramatic dénouements, thrills, intellectual if not grossly

²¹ (Friedrich Carl) Georg Kaiser (1878–1945), German dramatist.

²² *Der Brand im Opernhaus* (1919).

physical, and a great search for stimulants. The coquetry is sincere, but it is, if you see my point, a lie sincerely and honestly served. Such things do occur. Lie no less than truth has the power of attracting honest devotion. So German drama, the stronghold of Goethe and the Pure Worship of Art and Life, has also sold itself, at least partially, for intellectual bribes. Kaiser of course is very popular.

My happiest hours were spent in Paris where in certain portions of the Quartier Latin the pure esprit of elegant scholarship, of refined idealism, of rationalism not so rational as to be vulgar, and imagination not so impractical as to ruin its owner, still broods over the quai of the Seine. There I bought a book called ‘Ulysses’²³ by James Joyce, which the police will not allow to enter England, which some people declare to be the greatest book of the last 200 years, written in English by an American, very hard to understand, written in difficult and sometimes unintelligible language. Mrs Snowman has of course read it, and does not know what to think. She is в восторге²⁴ with her Hamsun.

Yours,

Shaya

Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Ms. Eng. c. 8238, fol. 76

TO MAIRE LYND

n.d. [late May/early June 1934?]

Hollycroft Avenue

Dearest B. J.

Alas what is this? you do distress me.

Surely surely you remember your own severe instructions to me before our Italian journey about treatment of Sigle: you remember,

²³ *Ulysses*, a novel by the Irish writer James Augustine Aloysius Joyce (1882–1941), was banned in England until 1936; imported copies were seized by customs officials. IB probably assumed that Joyce was American because the novel was serialised in the US before its publication in Paris in 1922.

²⁴ ‘V vostorge’ (‘delighted’).

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it was v. important then, to pacify her after the damage done by the Irish Tour: this time the same attitude became quintuply necessary after the Salzburg incident. I cannot, much as I should like to be capable of it, express to you here and now how much I resent having to balance precariously between you when in company of you both, leaning heavily to the side of Sigle, acting on the advice given by yourself and my own conscience. I cannot, because it would embarrass me to, & in the middle, in my horrible way, I should suddenly try and make a joke and spoil everything.

I shall destroy your letter and forget the ill-grounded sentiments therein expressed. Since you cannot manage Wednesday, wd Thursday do? If it would will [you] either telephone privily (you admit, do you not, that that is required still?) or write[?] If (a) I am out when you telephone (b) you write, you need merely say Miss Lynd says she's willing, which I shall interpret as a rendez-vous on Thursday at 4 p.m. in Yarners.²⁵ Alternatively if your message is more complex than that you'll have to state in full. If so writing is advisable.

Miss Strachey's party, which Sigle couldn't go to (but unless you know this already, you mustn't know it. For whence.) was boring, very, though I enjoyed delaying Collingwood with a mass of semi-malicious conversation, he poor man, weakly smiling (he *is* very ill) & saying nothing. He thought Cassirer wd discover the length of the Oxford philosophers' legs all right. Odd metaphor which please[s] me quite a lot.

Work. Work.

Shaya

²⁵ Presumably Yarners Coffee Ltd in Regent Street.

TO JULIA PAKENHAM

1st [August? 1934]

49 Hollycroft Avenue

Dear Lady J.

(You don't, I hope, mind this slightly Regency style of address?)

I write principally to express my horror, amazement and sympathetic indignation at the act of the PPE examiners. I approached Mr Sumner, whom I met shortly after seeing the *Times*, and succeeded in giving him a very considerate sense of guilt: he admitted that were he to have had his time again he wd have acted differently perhaps, and pleaded weakly that the enormous brilliance of a certain Hitch, of Worcester College I am told, blinded him to your merits. To show some independence of judgment he asked if I knew a Miss R. Walker? I did? He thought she was in some respects the most interesting person in the whole examination, yes, including his colleagues; (will you be kind and pass this on to the relevant quarter? please.).

Secondly I do not know whether you are aware of the peculiar conversation between Mr Coughlan & me? which led up to the Oppé scene on the nest[?] of which I left, without taking proper leave of you, in a fluster.

Mr Coughlan knows me far from well. However after you caused the flight of Mrs Scott James from my side, he looked at me silently for a considerable time, and then said 'I've met you before. Two years ago. Where was it?' 'Salzburg' I said. 'True, with Stephen Spender.' Uneasy silence. 'Will you come to Salzburg with me this summer? I have a car' 'Thank you very much' I said 'No.' 'Will you dine with me tonight?' he said, 'I fear I can't,' I said. A longer and acutely embarrassing silence. 'Who' he said 'is the girl in red?' 'I don't know.' he looked despairingly round the room, twice or thrice, and saw no disengaged face. 'Who he said desperately 'is the girl in blue?' 'I don't know' 'In yellow, in pink, dappled?' he said 'I don't know. But what Sir John Simon does' I suddenly said 'when he knows faces but not names is to accost the

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face and say “how is your newspaper in Albania getting on?” – either the man looks surprised and says ‘I’ve no newspaper in Albania, I am a don, you know,’ which provides a clue, or he really is to do with Albania. It never fails’. Mr Coughlan smiled faintly but repulsively, moved towards Miss Oppé, & the rest you probably know: after he assured her that he thought her to be Lady Oreithyia Cygnett or something, I betrayed him & left. If you know all this already, forgive me. I hear you are going to Salzburg. Everything in it is lovely. If I am there for the Toscanini concert, which is improbable, I shall attempt to ask you to lunch.

yrs

I.B.

FROM A. J. AYER

21 August 1934 [*manuscript*]

Trevin Towers, Eastbourne

Dear Shaya,

I hope you have not gone off to Palestine without letting us know. We have come here to stay with my grandfather, who is suffering badly from shingles. On the whole we prefer his new wife to my mother’s M^r Vance.

You will be relieved to know that Renée has decided to stay in Oxford anyhow for next term. She has various reasons for this decision, most of them good. I was careful not to put any pressure on her myself.

I am making fairly good progress with my book. I should like you to see it before it goes to the press. Write and tell me when and where we can see you. Our address after Monday will be c/o M^{rs} Pattenden The Mount Shoreham Kent.

Shall we enjoy having the Head Master of Winchester for our dean? I see he is one of your fellows. Strangely enough I was not consulted about that appointment.

Our love,

Freddie.

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

FROM A. J. AYER

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Trevin Towers, Eastbourne

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Our love,
Freddie.

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

[22 August 1934; *postcard*]

Dover

I suddenly remembered to look for keys & found none: Then I remembered I left them in bag upstairs for Johanna to lock & was never given them back. So Johanna knows where they are. I am not prepared to sit in Paris for 2 *days*, & will register the 2 bags as luggage to Verona or Dessuzano, & go to Locanda (San Vigilio, Garda) & there wait. If you send keys to-morrow morning they ought to arrive on the 25th: before that I do not expect them & will

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worry you with no further references to this matter until keys arrive. Otherwise I'll take a locksmith to the station.

I.B.

Please do *not wire* that you've sent keys. Not necessary at all.

MSB 292/57

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

[23 August 1934; *postcard*]

Paris

I disliked the Hotel de l'Universite so I went next door: I am leaving to-day by the 10 p.m. train: my friend is very charming & cosy, with me as far as Lucerne: I doubt if I shall stop there, I am rather lightly luggaged for breaking journeys. I am v. happy, it is not too hot. As for keys there are a farce: send them to Salzburg, to Mr Andrewes, but no matter if you've sent them to Locanda.

Love.

Shaya

MSB 292/58

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

24 August [1934]

San Vigilio

Mi Cari!

It is agreeable to be here after a long journey. Paris was not too bad – I at any rate enjoyed myself quite a lot. Here it is cool and beautiful, I am alone – and, would you believe it, quite happy! Venice is only some 4 hours away, I don't know when I go there. The 3^d cl. sleepers are v. comfortable. Mine was empty. According to our arrangement I do not write until I intend to move. I hope to do so on Monday (27th) or Tuesday 28th – I'll let you know both before & after moving. Please send everything to Fermaposta, Posta Centrale, Venezia, Italy.

Love,

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

Shaya

MSB 292/59–60

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

27 [August 1934]

San Vigilio

My dears

The last 2 days have been absolutely lovely – idyllic & cool & excellent. I am very well indeed. To-morrow I propose to go to Venice in the late afternoon – I shall attempt to wire but my attempt may end in failure – till morning. There I shall see if the Pilsna is possible, if not Ausonia on the 1st. Foster will be there then too, I suppose. I know nothing till I reach Poste Restante in Venice. I vaguely intend to stay in the hotel Vittoria, but this is uncertain.

I am well, happy, & looking forward enormously to Venice & Jerusalem.

Love,

Shaya

Life has been so uneventful there is nothing to write about – I drink Vichy.

MSB 292/61–2

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

27 [August 1934]

Locanda

My dear parents,

Life here is lovely. Latest developments: Andrewes is arriving with keys to meet me: I shall not leave for Venice till the 28th afternoon or 29th even: I'll wire as soon as I arrive. I *hope* my bags are there. If not I may have to pursue them somewhere which wd. be a nuisance. But I refuse to be panicked, I am very, endlessly happy here – alone! really, I assure you. I have written to Andrewes to ask Sigle Lynd if she goes to London from Salzburg to telephone

MORE FLOURISHING

you to say how well I am & that you are not to worry about anything. I meet Foster in Venice on the 29th I hope. Really I don't want to move from here. But I must see Venice. If I have to go in any odd direction for my bags I will keep you posted abt. my movements. The French Calais Customs were *fool* about it: when my porter tried to let me take them into the train they said 'C'est trop facile, ça' & refused. The porter apologised saying 'nous sommes tous en état de nerfs, Monsieur, il-y-a du révolutionnaire en France, les douaniers sont, cochons, n'est-ce-pas, des vrais cochons!' I hope you dont mind about my not telephoning etc. from Paris, but it was expensive & wd. have served no useful end. I repeat I'm v. happy & will, when I start moving again, let you know.

Love,
Shaya

MSB 292/63

TO MENDEL BERLIN

30 [August 1934; *postcard*]

[Venice]

I rang you up last night for no particular reason – only because I arrived too late for my wire to reach you next morning. I am very well & happy & sailing to Alexandria on the 1st. The 'smells' & 'heat' are exaggerated. They are quite tolerable. My luggage & keys & Andrews all duly arrived. Thank you: everything is more expensive than one thinks: e.g. luggage & my phone call. So I may have to wire for money from Jerusalem.

Love
Shaya.

This is an absolutely fairylike town.

The Ausonia, after 1 day's delay goes on to Haifa where it gets on 6th. I may do this as the night in the desert is nasty. If so, no wire till 6th. I have just collected some letters from you in the P. Restante: I haven't read them yet. Will write again this evening.

Shaya.

MSB 292/64

80
Pension Romm

שבת.
ז' תשרי.

אחי אני נוסע לתל אביב, ושם
אזכור את הוצאת החג. לצוית' צביה
כמובן ראש הרגיל ולכן אינני יודע אם
לילך דה' אצל אימ' לא תסע אצל
אחיה שם לילות עם לוסיה שליט
שקדש אותי לעשות את זאת, מפנה
שאיננו בירושלים ובנוסף ויחיד הוא שם.
היום (מרת לוס שליט) שונאה [sic] את הארץ
את הארץ (והוא שונא את תל אביב).
נראה. קיום ~~ההצעה~~ הנכס'י אני נוסע
לחיפה וקאלון ימים קצרים, הוניה (המחנה)
נוסעת קצת, ואחיה לטובת ע' בקוקר-יט'ני

TO MENDEL BERLIN

Pension Romm

שבת.

Saturday. [29 September 1934]

מחר אני נוסע לתל אביב, ושם אני אשאר עד מוצא[י] החג. לדודתי צביה כאב
ראש הרגיל ולכן אינני יודע אם תלך עימי, אבל אם לא תסע אז אחיה שתי
לילות עם לוסיה שליט שביקש אותי לעשות את זאת, מפנה [sic] שאשתו
בירושלים ובודד ויחיד הוא שם. היא (מרת לוס שליט) שונאה [sic] את הארץ
והוא שונא את תל אביב. נראה [כנראה] ביום הרביעי אני נוסע לחיפה הוא

MORE FLOURISHING

ואותו היום הביתה. האונייה (Pilsna) נוסעת ב-3 ובאה [מגיעה] ל Trieste ב-8 בבוקר.
ישעיה

[Sabbath

Tomorrow I drive to Tel Aviv, where I shall stay until the end of the holiday. My aunt Tzvia²⁶ is suffering from her usual headache, so I don't know if she'll join me, but if she doesn't I shall stay two nights with Lusia Schalit,²⁷ who asked me to do so, because his wife is in Jerusalem and he is alone there. She (Mrs Cissie Schalit)²⁸ [loathes] the country and he loathes Tel Aviv. We'll see. I shall be going to Haifa on Wednesday and home on the same day. The ship (Pilsna) leaves [port] at 3 [p.m.?] and arrives in Trieste at 8 a.m. [of the following day].

Yeshayahu]

MSB 292/80

TO YITZHAK AND IDA SAMUNOV

n.d. [autumn 1934]

New College

My dear Yitzchak & Ida,

I arrived home through a gale in the Adriatic in the course of which Mr Mendel Weintraub, a v. pious Polish Jew, his pockets stuffed full of Kushans,²⁹ was not only sick, but, because there was boat drill, i.e. everyone rehearsed what they would do if the boat suddenly sank, thought that we really were sinking, & was in a pitiful state of terror when I came to console him. The captain was drunk & the waiters ill: but Yiddish was the only language and everyone felt happy and at home on the boat except for the few Goyim who huddled in a corner & did not raise their voices. After

²⁶ Ida's Hebrew name.

²⁷ Lionel ('Lusia'/'Lucya'/'Lussik') Schalit; 103/1.

²⁸ 'Cis' to her nephews, 'Zil' to her husband.

²⁹ Ottoman land title deeds.

that we passed through a political assassination in France³⁰ & finally landed in the relatively tranquil English coast. Ettinghausen recovered on boat: he had Papertatchi³¹ (?)

As for business: I have induced Father, with mother's loyal assistance, to: rely on you implicitly in 2 matters: a site in Rehavia costing from £1000–£2000. & if something *very* attractive offers between Haifa & Acco³² in the plain of Zebulun i.e. where the factories may be built. As for other schemes, e.g. something on Har Hacarmel,³³ A pardess,³⁴ & Beersheba³⁵ that can obviously wait his coming, which he hopes to achieve in February when he wd like you to be here. But Rehavia³⁶ & Haifa leap in value & it is obviously advisable to hurry. Further he would like

(1) an estate all his own

(2) if you want to buy something but are unprepared to sink as much as £1500 or whatever is asked, he is willing either to lend you half the money or go into partnership to the extent of a half, over & above the fact that he also wants to own something quite alone. Mother is even more anxious than he, consequently she may buy herself where he might vacillate – so she says & it is quite serious.

As for me I continue to want something on the Har, but I do not suppose that you wd find something so specific as I want, overlooking the sea etc. so quickly, so that may wait until father's arrival, tho' it *needn't*: if you find something at say £250–£300 per dunam which lies really attractively, wire, & I'll answer. Same applies to father: if you write a letter stating a description, he will

³⁰ On 9 October 1934 King Alexander of Yugoslavia was assassinated in Marseilles at the start of a State visit to France; the French Foreign Minister, Louis Barthou, was also killed.

³¹ Pappatachi fever.

³² The city of Acre (Akko).

³³ The most exclusive area of Haifa, at the top of Mount Carmel; see 102/1.

³⁴ An orchard.

³⁵ Town in southern Israel on the edge of the Negev desert.

³⁶ A district in Jerusalem.

MORE FLOURISHING

no longer simply absorb the information & forget it, but will wire in reply, I really have altered his state of mind.

Live well, visit people, don't, I beg you invest in Beersheba too easily, you have to plant every year to prevent Bedouin squatting – a nuisance – & be happy tho' in a pension.

love

Shaya

The cuff links gave great pleasure to Aleph³⁷ & my pa, mother was pleased with her odeur, & hopes to thank personally in February: if I am in Oxford then they may actually go!

Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Ms. Eng. c. 8238, fols 77–9

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

[late October 1934]

All Souls

My dear parents.

1. Will you write to Yitzchok about Jerusalem (a) to buy the plot next to Leibovitch either for you or with money borrowed from you, but if so, to buy you another plot for, say, £1400 or so.

2. I will wire him re Carmel, to buy me 2 dunams for not more than £300 & I will wire on Wednesday morning before 12 unless you wire to stop me. I think the 7½ dunam scheme unnecessary.

3. Will you post me P. G. Wodehouse which belongs to the local circulating library & must go back *at once*.

4. My lunch was a success – I was taken out by *him* – I promised to write him an article on modern Russian literature.

5. I am gay & happy. I wrote to Rach re Gabrilowitsch.

yrs

Shaya

MSB 292/83

³⁷ A name sometimes used by Elazar Halevy (1897–1976), brother-in-law of Yitzhak Samunov.

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

[autumn 1934]

All Souls

My dear parents

I am *very* well. And you didn't phone at 10, The Porter reports[,] but at 9:40! of course I only breakfast at 9:50.

As for Yitzchok I haven't done anything: the Jerusalem land is a good investment I repeat, even, probably[,] if you have to build. As for Carmel the price may rise, I think you ought to wire for 2 dunams. *No* hope of reselling must be entertained with regard to the Carmel land, it is not very saleable, I never thought it was: this is *not* an investment but a personal property to live on. Surely I explained that. So please buy for £250–£300. Anyhow I shall write or wire myself on Monday unless you definitely restrain me. Thank you for P. G. Wodehouse. I am v. well I repeat. Thank you for dealing with Gabrilo.

yrs

love

Shaya

MSB 292/89

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

[autumn 1934]

All Souls

Blanket received: please send 2 more. I enclose a note which I received & accepted the invitation: John Foster is a fellow of this Coll. who brought Laski to stay once: & genrally moves in Jewish Scoiety which he regards as useful or entertaining. *About land*, if you are interested, the authority is Moshe Smiliansky, the society is Hanoteah, the place נְתַנְיָה or Nathania, 30 kl. from Tel Aviv.

Building Societies: Yitzchok's thing collapsed because of the non-existence of a proper investing class. Rutenberg's may succeed because there the capital will be provided (a) by the Anglo-

MORE FLOURISHING

Palestine Bank of which he is trying to obtain control, (b) by his general financial backers who back him as himself: Melchett can probably be induced. The purpose or part purpose is to centralise building & stop land speculation: to this end others than private individuals may help; the point is that not small investors with surpluses but large capitalists such as the Rutenberg Company itself will simply lend money to builders or will build themselves as part of a larger scheme for the general exploitation of Palestine: this will give it a certain basis of financial security. Don't you think? I've followed your advice & set Monday morning & Sat. morning (entire) for my research.

love

Shaya.

I expect you on 5th.

MSB 292/89-90

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

[autumn 1934]

All Souls

My dear parents

I quite enjoyed my journey with Persitz: he says (v. secret) that Rutenberg plans (but will fail) to marry his mother. That a new large publishing company is being consisting of his mother & Bruno Cassirer is being formed, to act as a general press for the Near East & as Jerusalem University Press: I asked him about land. He said it was expensive everywhere, & Carmel was vulgarized & not nice. All he knew was that land was being sold extraordinarily cheaply in a place called נתניה – Nethania 30 K. from Tel Aviv towards Haifa on the sea where intellectuals live, e.g. Magnes, at £8 or £9 p. dunam which is cheap, & that if you like he can tell me about the sellers. This sounds good to me. He says that Hoofien³⁸ is looking for *European* investments for his money: that Rutenberg,

³⁸ Presumably the Zionist banker Eliezer Siegfried Hoofien (1881-1957).

with capital got from his backers will start a Palestine Exploitation Company & building societies – this is different from Ischok, which Persitz admits is absurd – & that the boom continues. Wrtie when you receive this: I want to check the post

love

Shaya

MSB 292/91–2

TO YITZHAK SAMUNOV

25 December [1934?]

Dies Natalis.³⁹

Hollycroft Avenue

Dear Yitzchok.

Father is gone to Riga, your letter will be forwarded to him. Meanwhile I have the foll. observations to make: I still would like a plot on Carmel with no immediate obligation to build, in a position overlooking not merely the sea but the Bay. As for the Jerusalem £600 dunam⁴⁰ site it is of course very beautiful: I remember the place well: *but*: it is a fairly expensive investment: I do not seem to be settling in Jerusalem permanently just yet: my parents if even they come to reside will want to live relatively near others & not on a fairly steep slope accessible only by bus or taxi: the position is the best in Jerusalem I admit: but for pure villa (non-commercial) purposes I stick to Carmel.⁴¹ As for building & letting, who would take it? the hospital & university officials may live there for a little time, but in the end they will build their own; & it is too far from town to be easily lettable. Mother, who has great faith in Libovitz⁴² sense, wants to know why *he* is building there. I don't

³⁹ 'Day of birth'.

⁴⁰ A dunam is 1,000 square metres.

⁴¹ Mount Carmel, Haifa.

⁴² Zvi Leibowitz (1897–1980), Jerusalem water engineer and municipal planner, brother of Yeshayahu and Nechama (98/3).

know: is it not for the Reifenberg⁴³ to inhabit? if so it is a personal purpose & not one to be imitated from the financial point of view: if the non-financial is embraced, Carmel is preferable. But if the site cd be bought for £600 without obligation to build for at least 2 years may be my parents wd think about it: as for me I continue to want something on Carmel: if you find something suitable, wire in the confidence that I shall wire back: last time I was restrained by father, this time I shall not re-commit that mistake – he regrets it himself. If after Jan 11th wire to Oxford. You yourself suggest the Scopus⁴⁴ plot for *me*: in other words you think it commercially unsuitable: if you think, or Libovitch thinks it a good business commercially, then *wire*: mother so deeply believes in Libovitch soundness that I could perhaps persuade her: but if it is only to domicile his daughter that is different: so please go on looking for Carmel. Is there nothing in Rehavia for £1000 or so? Mother is a buyer. If there is, wire, especially if it is really suitable for shops etc.

As for Lucy's £7, what can I do? I cannot write to him since it is obvious that you've written to me – I can't just mention it like that – I advise you to mention it to him yourself – not in writing of course – tho' I see it is awkward – it is the Schalit way; on the other hand you couldn't refuse at the time– write about the Mayoral difficulties & local news generally – I have heard Jabotinsky⁴⁵ who was v. good, said that his was the only non-opportunist non-“impressionist” party – said Huleh⁴⁶ was a bad bargain, £600000 in mere baksheesh partly to – Durchgefallenem Konzessionaire⁴⁷ i.e. the Syrians, said it was aesthetically gross &

⁴³ (Abraham) Adolf Reifenberg (1899–1953), German-born agricultural scientist working at the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus, explorer, antiquarian and numismatist; and his wife Esther, née Leibowitz.

⁴⁴ Mount Scopus, which overlooks Jerusalem.

⁴⁵ 332/4.

⁴⁶ A subsidiary of the Jewish Agency had recently bought from two Syrian Arab families a concession to drain marshes and a lake in the Huleh Valley (Upper Galilee) so as to eliminate malaria and provide more land for agriculture and water for irrigation.

⁴⁷ ‘Failed concessionaire’ (properly ‘Konzessionäre’).

vulgar of the Govt. to put through the Leg. Council against Jewish boycott when it was allowed to lapse after the Arab boycott & many other good things. He is a clever man & the only real politician – firm grasp of some facts & a clear & reasoned & logically argued policy free from Shtadlanuth⁴⁸ or sentimentality or Dréi-eness⁴⁹ – impressive man. By the way you are obscure (a) about what the 1400 metres on Carmel are in terms of dunams & where they are situated as from Hadar⁵⁰ (b) in what way obligation to build on Scopus is not pressing.

I am going to send you the New Statesman for 6 months. It is after all not so bad. Write & wire if required. One thing let me beg of you: when writing re estates do express an opinion about their probable returns: e.g. in the case of Scopus whether tenants are easily findable: I am, without information, sure that they are not: in which case the only possible use of a house is personal: which is why it is au moment unsuitable. I crave Carmel. love to Ida.

yrs

Shaya

Mother says that I've exhausted all the possible subjects & she will write by the next airmail

Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Ms. Eng. c. 8238, fols 80–2

TO YITZHAK SAMUNOV

Wednesday [early 1935?]

All Souls

Dear Yitzhak (written in great hurry)

I hope you are well. I hope to see you very soon.

⁴⁸ 'Ingratiation'.

⁴⁹ 'Deviousness'.

⁵⁰ Haifa town centre.

MORE FLOURISHING

Will you please buy for me 2 dunams in Carmel where you say plots are buyable which overlook both sleeves of the sea and Athlit.⁵¹ I am prepared to spend up to £300. i.e. 2 dunams?

this is an authoritative request: I shall not confirm it. Please do this & earn my undying gratitude. I rely on your choice.

love

Shaya

Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Ms. Eng. c. 8238, fols 83–4

TO YITZHAK AND IDA SAMUNOV

4 July 1935

All Souls

Dear Yitzchak & Ida,

Forgive me for my long silence but I have been vertummelt⁵² as they say in a certain vernacular. I am now back in Oxford after a period of wandering, Mother is in Karlsbad, weak but I hope improving, Pa is in London, alone. I am sorry to have to leave him there but I really cannot work in London & have decided to be selfish and bury myself here, where all is dead and beautiful.

You ask for new books, I can think of none. Would you like “I Claudius” and “Claudius the God” by Robert Graves,⁵³ able historical novels about the Emperor Claudius? Would you like “Rats, Lice & History”⁵⁴ & a bright & amusing & able account of the startling rôle of epidemics in Weltgeschichte?⁵⁵ Would you like “Quack quack”⁵⁶ a book by Leonard Woolf⁵⁷ comparing Hitler & Mussolini to totem pole faces & generally tracing the return to

⁵¹ The 13th century castle of Atlit, south of Haifa, built by the Crusaders.

⁵² ‘Confused’ (Yiddish).

⁵³ Robert Graves (1895–1985), poet, novelist and translator; his novels about the Emperor Claudius were published in London in 1934 and 1935.

⁵⁴ Hans Zinsser, *Rats, Lice and History* (Boston, 1935).

⁵⁵ ‘World history’.

⁵⁶ *Quack! Quack!* (London, 1935).

⁵⁷ 80/1.

primitivism & irrationalism in Europe? wd you like “We have been warned”⁵⁸ a bad but v. readable novel about our times & social problems & the intelligentsia by Naomi Mitchison?⁵⁹ would you like ‘The British Intelligentsia, an amusing pamphlet against our general rottenness by ci-devant prince D. Mirsky?⁶⁰ Would you like H. G. Wells’ *excellent* autobiography?⁶¹ or what would you like? ‘The Times Lit. Sup. perhaps, which dull tho’ it is does record everything: tell me & I shall act.

What is the state of political parties in Palestine? is there still the old Right–Left bitterness? is the legislative Council suddenly going to be imposed by decree when no one is expecting? how is Khalidi⁶² behaving? I am really curious about all this. Ettinghausen is going to call on you one of these days. So also I hope will Halpern both of whom have left for Pal.

I was v. sorry to read of the death of John Harris⁶³ of Biram’s school. He is just the sort of honest simple well educated youth who was wanted, more useful than you or I or Shmarya Levin, all of whom are not over simple. However you’ll disagree I expect. From Hodgkin⁶⁴ I have myself stopped hearing. How is Marmorstein? he really is a crook I think, in the end, capable of any amount of petty treachery, restrained only by laziness, fear, and general schlamperci,⁶⁵ an Austrian official of the pre-war type, but v. amiable, lovable etc. just the sort of person who is *not* wanted in

⁵⁸ See 155/3.

⁵⁹ 155/7.

⁶⁰ Dmitry Petrovich Svyatopolk-Mirsky (1890–1939), from a Russian noble family; historian (of politics and literature) and translator; settled in England in 1921 but later returned to the Soviet Union and died in the Gulag. His book was *The Intelligentsia of Great Britain* (London, 1935).

⁶¹ *An Experiment in Autobiography* (London, 1934) by H. G. Wells (125/2).

⁶² Husayin Fakhri al-Khalidi (1895–1962), Mayor of Jerusalem 1934–7.

⁶³ John Raphael Harris (1911?–1935), an English teacher (from London) at the Hebrew Reali School, Haifa, whose founder and Principal was Dr Arthur Biram; he died of pneumonia.

⁶⁴ Thomas (“Tommy”) Hodgkin (55/4).

⁶⁵ ‘Negligence, sloppiness’.

MORE FLOURISHING

Palestine. I think it very funny don't you that Maimonides⁶⁶ should have been honoured in Cordova with a bullfight, a *corrida* in honour of the great Spanish philosopher! The local Jew who arranged the dinner apparently provided the Jewish delegates with dishes of the best lobster of Spain.

I am sitting here slowly collecting materials for my Marx, did you know he was a tremendous snob, à la Jacob Schapiro⁶⁷ i.e. a Goyim-loving snob & gallant to ladies? altogether not unlike old Jacob; who could easily have become a social agitator in different circumstances: whenever I read about Marx's minute learning, ferocity, jealousy, ability, tyrannousness, anti-Semitism etc. I think of Jacob. Marx belonged to a Jewish type which is not uncommon, tho' no one seems to have thought so then & Jacob's celebrated English partner (before the war) with whom he was such friends, must have been very like the virtuous Engels⁶⁸ who even accepted the paternity of Karl's illegitimate son, as a pure kind hearted favour.

love,

Write,

Shaya

Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Ms. Eng. c. 8238, fols 85–7

FROM A. J. AYER

31 July 1935 [*manuscript postcard of Titian, St Sebastian, Brescia*]

Como

Venice in July is delightful, if one sleeps in the afternoon. Titian is a very good painter, but his large sombre religious pictures are

⁶⁶ Moses Maimonides (1135–1204), leading Jewish philosopher; born in Cordoba.

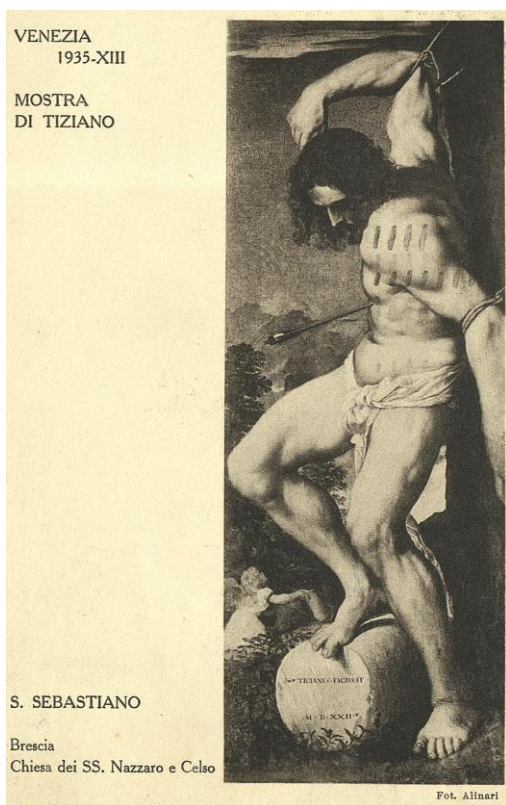
⁶⁷ Jacob Schapiro (c.1866–1941), great-uncle of L(eonard) B(ertram) Schapiro; timber merchant in Riga then in London; member of the Second Duma; killed in a bombing raid on Hampstead.

⁶⁸ 43/4.

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

boring. This San Sebastian is most attractive. He usually looks silly affecting not to notice the arrow sticking into him. The Dolomites are exceedingly beautiful, much more beautiful than the Alps. No one in Italy appears to mind our being English; but I cannot find much to like in the Italians. They have neither the good nature of the Spaniards nor the intelligence of the French. We are coming back in about a fortnight: but I am afraid you will already have left for Salzburg. Renée sends her love

F.



MORE FLOURISHING

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS⁶⁹

30 August 1935 [*postcard*]

Achenseeohof, Tyrol, as from All Souls

Mr Turner's⁷⁰ pleasure at your first I much look forward to: I shall be disappointed if I am not asked to lunch at the Athenaeum to celebrate it: Mr Turner has used more trivial reasons than that before now. But I should dearly like to know whether your first sensation on receiving news was pleasure or relief: on that much hangs and it is a firm clue to all kinds of things. Also whether you thought that Wickham Legg,⁷¹ during your viva, looked like a retired Turkish colonel: it is useless to say you have never seen one: the concept is given by direct intuition. Finally I congratulate you: Dr Grundy,⁷² my old tutor thinks we Greats & History Firsts, you & I & Mary,⁷³ are the intellectual aristocracy of the world.

Yrs

IB.

Jenifer Hart

FROM A. J. AYER

9 October 1935

Balfour House, 119–125 Finsbury Pavement, London, EC2

Dear Shaya,

I am giving this letter to a daughter of an old acquaintance of mine from Riga, Tatjana Finklestein.

⁶⁹ Jenifer Margaret Williams (1914–2005), Somerville history 1932–5; Civil Service 1936–47; married Herbert (H. L. A.) Hart 1941; close and lifelong friend, sometime lover, of IB. She joined the Communist Party in 1935 (113/5, 722).

⁷⁰ G. J. Turner (144/2), a Visiting Fellow of All Souls, possibly (Jenifer Hart's suggestion) working on F. W. Maitland.

⁷¹ Wickham Legg (298/3) is the surname. He was a historian, and one of JW's examiners.

⁷² G. B. Grundy (5/4), Corpus Christi College.

⁷³ Mary Fisher, later Bennett (50/4, 708).

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

This young lady has been studying in the University College of London for three years. She is now going to Oxford to St Hugh's, and as she has no acquaintances I would esteem it a great favour if you would introduce her to a nice circle, and whenever you have time, look after her.

I trust you are well and are not wasting your time, but working hard!

Yours sincerely

M Bick

[*Ayer annotates in manuscript:*] Miss Lind [sc. Lynd] informs me that Gollancz is adamant. I shall call on him on Monday to enquire why he desires to sabotage the book. I wish I had seen you. But at the moment I am anything but a nice circle.

F.

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS

10 October 1935

All Souls

Dear Miss Williams,

I shall attempt Dr Marschak⁷⁴ as soon as opportunity offers, I shall telephone him, but he may not be back, pedantically, till Full Term commences. Your suit will not want for pleading, and his decision will be communicated to you as soon as ever it is made. If he is legally permitted to teach you he shall be made to do so, but he is timid and must be coaxed. As for Joseph's Poem,⁷⁵ it dangles invitingly; but I should really only like to see it if it is likely to confirm me in my disapproval of the man: if it is in any way touching or revelatory of a generous disposition, pray keep it from me. I definitely take pleasure in reflecting on Joseph's considerable

⁷⁴ JW wanted Marschak (236/3) to teach her economics for the Civil Service exam.

⁷⁵ H. W. B. Joseph had written a poem about JW cutting off her hair.

MORE FLOURISHING

defects of character & education, and should hate to lose it: even the truth comes, in this case at least, second.

Dear me. He is your godfather and I shouldn't have gone on so.⁷⁶ I do apologise. But his recent activities have been, as dear Professor Lightfoot⁷⁷ wd have said, terribly terribly disappointing to us all.

Yrs sincerely
Isaiah Berlin

Jenifer Hart

FROM A. J. AYER

23 October 1935 [*manuscript postcard*]

[London]

I am afraid I can't lunch with you to-morrow after all. I find I have a governing body meeting at 1.30, and it would not do for me to shirk the first that I have ever been expected to attend. Would Thursday suit you instead?

Love
Freddie.

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS

[1935, October or later?; *card*]

All Souls

Dear Jen*ifer

There are a number of outstanding issues which clamour for discussion. But whether there are [or] not, wd you come either to lunch or to supper on Monday next? Preferably the latter, it is a much nicer meal with a greater suggestion of leisure, in spite of all memories of Douglas.

Yrs
I.B.

⁷⁶ He was JW's sister's godfather, not her own.

⁷⁷ Fellow and Chaplain of New College.

[*] I still do not know about the n. neither, on paper, I assure you, looks right. P.T.O.

Curtis,⁷⁸ one evening, suddenly addressed me loudly & asked how many Marxists there were in the university. Knowing that any information dropped into that fantastic receptacle always turns into means of violent and successful action, I thought very carefully and did a pure pedantic turn. *Marxists*, I said, i.e. persons who had read in, and formally subscribed to, definite doctrines taught by Marx⁷⁹ would mount to about a $\frac{3}{4}$ %. Round this nucleus about $5\frac{1}{8}$ –6% gathered, all called communists, and as near as may be what used to be called reds. As any use is liable to be made of this, one must be careful. Is what I have said (a) wrong (b) pernicious? since I was made to endorse the figure to-day I am faintly worried.

Jenifer Hart

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS

[1935]

All Souls

Dear Miss Williams

Would you come to lunch on Friday to meet Mr Blakeway & Miss A. Hope?⁸⁰ They are in fact engaged, though this is an official secret which (a) you must not know until told by one of the parties

⁷⁸ Lionel George Curtis (1872–1955), public servant and historian, Fellow of All Souls 1921–55; ‘a fanatic of the British Empire, who founded Chatham House, and who was an *éminence grise* of a tremendous kind behind the scenes. He had no money and no great ambition for power, but he manipulated people: if you wanted your letter to be signed by both Archbishops on the next day, he and he alone could do it’ (MI Tape 8) (71/3).

⁷⁹ Karl Heinrich Marx (1818–83), German socialist and founder (with Friedrich Engels) of Communism; lived in London from 1849. His major work, *Das Kapital* (1867–94) expounded his economic, social and political views and was largely responsible for the widespread influence of Marx’s thinking (43/3).

⁸⁰ Alison Hope (161/6), who later married Anthony (“Tony”) Andrewes, Blakeway having died young on 1 October 1936.

MORE FLOURISHING

or at any rate by someone other than me otherwise there will be infinite trouble of course (b) you must please therefore not refer to. I may also ask Mr Bowra.⁸¹ At 1.15. If my colleague Bowen⁸² fails to give satisfaction pray inform me & I shall invigorate him.

Yrs sincerely

I.B.

Jenifer Hart

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS

[1935]

All Souls

Dear me. I hear that so far from its being a secret you have told it all to Peggy.⁸³ If so certain parts of my other note are nonsense, but you must still not refer, unless officially advised by one of the parties.

I.B.

Jenifer Hart

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE SPECTATOR*

All Souls College, Oxford

Sir, – Anyone reading Mr C. M. Cadogan's letter⁸⁴ in your issue of 18 October would naturally infer that the recent quarrel between Drs Goebbels and Furtwängler ended with a complete victory for Dr Furtwängler, and that an effective blow had thus been struck for the freedom of artists and intellectuals in Germany. This impression would be strengthened [722] by memories of the letters which Dr Furtwängler wrote not long before his resignation to Dr Goebbels and to the celebrated violinist Bronislaw

⁸¹ Maurice Bowra (705).

⁸² Ian Bowen (45/1) of All Souls, who taught JH economics.

⁸³ Peggy Jay (F 48/4).

⁸⁴ The letter from C. M. Cadogan appears in the issue of 18 October, 611, and there is another reply to it, by Edward Seymour, in the issue of 25 October, 666–7.

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

Huberman, published in *The Times*, in which he said that he recognised no distinction between artists save that into good and bad, and followed this up by inviting Huberman, Schnabel, Menuhin and other non-Aryan musicians to visit Berlin. In his reply M. Huberman, who naturally refused the invitation, gave expression to the admiration which those who had followed the course of events felt for Dr Furtwängler as being the only German artist holding an official position in the state with sufficient courage and dignity to resist the policy of his government. Then came the crisis over Hindemith and Dr Furtwängler's resignation.



Wilhelm Furtwängler

There the matter seemed to rest for some months until the news, referred to by Mr Cadogan, of Dr Furtwängler's reinstatement. The great conductor has indeed recovered his former position, but not without having completely abandoned the

MORE FLOURISHING

principle for which he had formerly fought. For he has now consented to the dismissal of all those of his musicians who failed to pass the racial test, which has resulted in the loss, among others, of the three leading members of the orchestra. Even those members of the musical public in whom the claims of justice and humanity are outweighed by reluctance to criticise the internal policy of another country may well, on purely personal and aesthetic grounds, resent the fact that they have been invited to hear in their own country music whose authors and executants are determined for them by the abnormal political exigencies of another. Such a situation has never, to my knowledge, occurred before, nor would it be reasonable to blame Dr Furtwängler for it. He made a most honourable attempt to resist; it failed, and he capitulated. Nobody can expect him to be a martyr, but it does not follow that he can no longer be regarded as a hero.

Yours obediently,
I. Berlin

The Spectator, 1 November 1935, 721–2

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

[November 1935?]

All Souls

Dear Pa & Ma

Well, I am still v. well. Ettinghausen seems to be getting on quite well, he is still not allowed to see visitors, so I can do nothing: I'll send him grapes & papers: perhaps you could make up a parcel of 3 or 4 copies of '*Time*' & send them to him at the Acland Home, I am sure he would be v. *grateful* & return them too & it wd be nice if you wd ring up Mrs E. Thank you for £11.11.0. I am still rather poverty stricken & cannot pay my income tax etc. till end of term, (telephone, God knows what).

The [?] have probably by now gone back to Eastman, I wonder what they can do. My room is much cleaner only the windows are dirty. Otherwise all is very well. When have you asked D. Katz if

at all? The Halpern–Strachey situation is v. difficult: Mrs Strachey apparently *hates* Halpern. Dear me.

Yrs

I.B.

MSB 292/118

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

[November? 1935]

All Souls

Dear Ma & Pa,

1. Budget: in reply to your generous offer I beg to state that my debts to the State & similar institutions will at the end of term accumulate to abt. £30. A cheque for this amount sometime would be more than welcome: of this I think I can promise repayment of say £25 by Christmas.

2. Halperns: no, on the contrary, offence is felt because I don't take enough trouble about them, not having asked them to *any* meal, nor done anything *at all* about them. Aby is not here but in London: as for them, I may, towards the beginning of December ask Mr Olden to dine with me: he is handsome, respectable, & my colleagues will like a German Conservative & ½ an aristocrat. But until then I shall do nothing: the suggestion that I either am or shall be exploited is, [*Russian*] ridiculous, & does not bear examination. As for Miss Strachey she is a nice girl, I still think, & I must ask her to dinner one night in London, *she* does not hate Abiram, the person who hates him is her mother, & it is well known that mothers dislike him as a class, except, apparently, Mrs Rau. On the chair-covers front – no news. Love.

Yrs

Shaya

MSB 292/120

MORE FLOURISHING

TO MARIE BERLIN

[Autumn 1935]

All Souls

Dear Ma

Thank you for your letter. Yes I am quite well. With regard to Mrs Corley, I suppose you had better have lunch with her, & pretend to entire ignorance if asked about Michael, i.e. I tell you *nothing* etc. If she tells you about him, say whatever you think wise: I don't think this or that step on *her* part will bring him back: the only thing is to let him alone for at least a year, & then renew rapprochement – attempts – not before.

As for wireless: I can give you addresses of course: Messrs Acott, High Street, Messrs Russell High Street, Messrs Taphouse Magdalen Street, but what good is this? why should they reduce without special reasons? & what reasons *can* you produce? but again do whatever you consider wise.

I am not trembling re Miss Finkelstein.

Ika Olden called to-day, could I not tell Barbara Strachey that she was ruining Aby's life? that she *must* leave him alone? as on the whole I prefer Barbara who has a kind heart to Ika who has not, I refused to do anything; saying it never does any good. It never does. Upon being warned they marry at once.

Love

Shaya

MSB 292/119

TO MENDEL BERLIN

Friday. [Autumn 1935]

All Souls

Dear Pa,

Thank you for your letter. I really don't know about the polit. situation.⁸⁵ I agree that (1) Italy withdrew from Brenner⁸⁶ to intimidate France. Anyhow it threatened to use that card for some time: i.e. if you let England loose on us, we can't be expected to police Austria, anyway it's less important to us than we thought etc. etc. Meanwhile (2) they⁸⁷ tried to stir up anti-Italian feeling while the cat was away. Failed because Nazis in Germany not ripe, Memel⁸⁸ etc. were pressing. (3) England is making a lot of fuss *publicly* about guarantees from France in order to plead their not supporting them, later as an excuse for splendid isolation. If all 'we' really wanted was guarantees, 'we' should not be making so much public fuss: it is designed to impress on the public that France has betrayed. Therefore: either we shall have a war + France, or minus

⁸⁵ Italy's invasion of Abyssinia, which started on 3 October 1935, was condemned by the League of Nations. Britain adopted a harder line than France over the appropriate sanctions to impose on Italy; in response, Italy attempted to foment discord by building on its recent friendly relations with France, while expressing hostility towards Britain. For a while there appeared to be a real risk of war between Italy and some other League of Nations States, particularly Britain.

⁸⁶ During the attempted *coup d'état* by the Austrian Nazi party in July 1934, in which Mussolini's ally the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss (317/5) was killed, Italian troops had moved to the Brenner Pass, on the Italian–Austrian border, successfully dissuading Germany from military action in support of the Austrian Nazis.

⁸⁷ Presumably the Nazi faction in Austria.

⁸⁸ Historically a German city, the Baltic port of Memel ('Klaipeda' in Lithuanian) became a semi-autonomous region under Lithuanian sovereignty in 1924, thus providing Lithuania with its only outlet to the sea. In 1935, Nazi successes in elections to the autonomous Memel Parliament, and the trial of nearly 100 Germans in Memel who were alleged to have plotted for the return of German control there, heightened tension between Germany and Lithuania.

MORE FLOURISHING

France no war. So I think no war in spite of Musso. But I am not a very political thinker. [...]

love

Shaya

MSB 292/121

TO MARION FRANKFURTER⁸⁹

[early 1936?]

All Souls

Dear Marion

Thank you very much for your last letter. I am still extremely sorry that you weren't able to come this summer. Admittedly I suddenly fell ill of a quinsy in summer, an old world disease which people don't often get in these days. It is undangerous, and very painful, and confused with all kinds of personal complications which began, reached a zenith, and, I think, expired, all in the course of the same summer. At least I think they have ended. But one is never quite sure how far anything which appeared enormously significant to one at the time can have completely faded leaving no possibility of recrudescence. I only remember my summer by the curious series of nightmares⁹⁰ with which it began, and the very good performances of Toscanini⁹¹ in Salzburg. My admiration for him both as a person & as an artist I really cannot

⁸⁹ Marion A. Frankfurter (1890–1975), née Denman, and her husband Felix, both Americans, had become friends of IB while Frankfurter was George Eastman Visiting Professor, Oxford, 1933–4 (104/1, 709). This letter was not sent when it was written but was re-discovered by IB in 1951 and sent then as an enclosure with a new letter.

⁹⁰ IB's former pupil, Rachel 'Tips' Walker, had fallen in love with him. During the summer of 1935 she became increasingly mentally unstable and increasingly set on marrying him. He broke off relations with her in September (92/3, 719–20).

⁹¹ Arturo Toscanini (1867–1957), Italian conductor; Guest Conductor at Salzburg Festival 1934–7; one of IB's heroes, both morally, because of his opposition to Nazism, and musically (100/1).

exaggerate. I like finding heroes very much – Maurice⁹² when I asked him whom to worship about 3 years ago modestly suggested Pares⁹³ – and Toscanini is obviously a good genuine one, & I can let myself go & collect picture postcards of him without restraint. Now I am completely recovered, a little more isolated than I was when you were here, and leading really a very satisfactory existence: I am writing two books,⁹⁴ it is a most difficult, shy-making process for someone as unself-confident and secretly conceited as I am: but really very satisfactory & calming. Our friends seem well: Maurice is in a slightly abnormal state – Gilbert Murray⁹⁵ is retiring this year, & the question of who will be Greek Professor is daily becoming acuter – the last lap, all slightly hectic –: Roy⁹⁶ continues to be without the slightest alteration: Rees⁹⁷ has just after a stormy career become assistant editor of the *Spectator*, The Camerons⁹⁸

⁹² (Cecil) Maurice Bowra (1898–1971), classicist; New College 1918–22; Fellow and Tutor, Wadham, 1922–38, Warden 1938–70; a major liberating influence on IB during his early years at Oxford (47/2, 705–6).

⁹³ Richard Pares (1902–58), historian; Fellow of All Souls 1921–45, 1954–8; Lecturer, New College, 1929–40; Professor of History, Edinburgh, 1945–54; joint editor, *English Historical Review*, 1939–58; the subject of a memoir by IB in *Personal Impressions* (65/4).

⁹⁴ IB's first book, *Karl Marx: His Life and Environment*, was published in 1939; a planned book on Hume, which he appears to have worked on at the same time, never materialised (253/5).

⁹⁵ (George) Gilbert Aimé Murray (1866–1957), born in Australia but educated in England, Greek scholar, author, translator and internationalist; Professor of Greek, Glasgow, 1889–99; Regius Professor of Greek, Oxford, 1908–36; pacifist in inclination, active supporter of the League of Nations, campaigner for women's rights. The character of Adolphus Cusins in Shaw's play *Major Barbara* (1905) is based on him (169/4). Bowra hoped in vain to succeed him as Regius Professor.

⁹⁶ (Henry) Roy Forbes Harrod (1900–78), economist, Student (i.e. Fellow) and Tutor, Christ Church, 1924–67 (55/2, 710).

⁹⁷ (Morgan) Goronwy Rees (1909–79), historian and journalist; New College history, then after his first year PPE, 1928–31; Fellow of All Souls 1931–46 (37/2, 713–4).

⁹⁸ Elizabeth Dorothea Cole Bowen (1899–1973), novelist and short-story writer (51/1, 705), and her husband (since 1923) Alan Charles Cameron (1893–1952), educationalist. He had recently started working for the BBC in London,

have left us Elizabeth lives in a handsome house in London, and reigns over what might be called lower Bloomsbury, in the sense in which Keynes⁹⁹ & Mrs V. Woolf¹⁰⁰ might be regarded as Upper Bloomsbury. Meanwhile I had a long, embarrassingly intimate letter from a contemporary of mine in Corpus a certain Clyde K. Kluckhohn¹⁰¹ now a Rockefeller Fellow in Harvard, an anthropologist, who plainly has decided that we are old friends. I am sorry to be so acid: but I have always been slightly nervous of him as a slightly sinister figure: he was obviously able, charming, & handsome in a Slav sort of fashion, & the Corpus¹⁰² dons loved him to a man. I really don't know what one does when someone one vaguely admires but greatly suspects suddenly opens out and overwhelms one with warm personal details of an, apparently at least, sincere trustful kind. Have you met him by any chance, & if so what do you think of him? I wish you could tell me.

The young men in this university are daily becoming more and more industrious, teachable, respectable, but the old disinterestedness – (which led to a lot of irresponsibility but also a great deal of genuine humanity in the old days), is gone. Everyone is very aluminium in character, efficient, and better got up than in the old days, but with one eye always on their ultimate careers. I feel distinctly nostalgic about the old disreputables, who used to come up, regarded Oxford as an artificial microcosm in which they would not stay long, but which, while it lasted, protected them from the world, so that they could live as they liked and with no

so the Camerons had moved from Waldencote, their house in Old Headington, in north-east Oxford, to the Regent's Park area of London (171/1).

⁹⁹ John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946), economist (created Baron Keynes of Tilton 1942) (251/3).

¹⁰⁰ (Adeline) Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), née Stephen, novelist, short-story writer, essayist and literary critic; drowned herself on 31 March 1941 after many years of intermittent mental problems (68/4).

¹⁰¹ Clyde Kay Mayben Kluckhohn (1905–60), anthropologist; American Rhodes Scholar, Corpus Christi College, 1928–32, first director of Russian Research Center, Harvard, 1948–54; despised by IB. He suffered from paranoid delusions that he was being pursued by unspecified enemies (27/2).

¹⁰² Corpus Christi College.

thought of careers or money, for a little time; now they are infinitely courteous to dons (the old lot either disliked or evaded them), are pillars of society, and all dead to a man.

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS

n.d. [January? 1936]

All Souls

Would you please consider the possibility of coming to lunch here on Saturday the 8th Feb. I don't know who else may not be coming, I never intend to ask more than about 2 persons: in the end there are about forty. So may it be in this case: it may even be faintly I.S.Sish.¹⁰³ I shall exert every nerve to secure Mr A. H. Smith¹⁰⁴ for whom my passion is greater than for our common friend. You must note that Douglas,¹⁰⁵ e.g., calls Joseph Joseph, Layton Layton,¹⁰⁶ The Warden – Adams,¹⁰⁷ but always Mr Smith. Please come if you possibly can. I shall endeavour to act as a host and talk as little as I can, and suppress any incipience of a pompous or of a formal manner. Yet I cannot resist telling you that I don't remember enjoying anything so much as my recent walk¹⁰⁸ with Price,¹⁰⁹ our relations were aloof & courtly to a degree, the conversation as formal and curious as a translation from an oriental language. At about 1.15. Please.

¹⁰³ International Student Service (Jenifer Hart's suggestion).

¹⁰⁴ Alic Smith (79/1, 716), philosopher, Fellow of New College, later Warden.

¹⁰⁵ Douglas Patrick Thomas Jay (1907–96), economist; Fellow of All Souls 1930–7; married Margaret ('Peggy') Garnett 1933; journalist 1929–40 (48/4, 711–12).

¹⁰⁶ Sir Walter Layton (60/3).

¹⁰⁷ (William) George Stewart Adams (1874–1966), Gladstone Professor of Political Theory and Institutions, Oxford, 1912–33; Fellow of All Souls 1910–33, Warden 1933–45 (65/1 and 703).

¹⁰⁸ Possibly the walk referred to IB to JW, 25 February 1936.

¹⁰⁹ H. H. Price (62/4, 713).

MORE FLOURISHING

Yrs
I.B.

Jenifer Hart

FROM A. J. AYER

11 February 1936 [*manuscript postcard*]

11 Foubert's Place, W1

Popper is coming with me this week. Will you help by coming to lunch this Thursday? Answer to Ch. Ch.

Love
Freddie

TO THE HON. VENETIA STARBORGLING¹¹⁰

1 July 1936

All Souls

Dear Boffles,

I feel acute guilt & displeasure at having left the postage stamp that I borrowed from you some months ago, while staying at your very nice house in Hampshire,¹¹¹ unreturned, the thought of having prevailed upon your essential goodness, fine nature, elegance of judgment &c being sufficient to plunge me into a gloom unrelieved by various events of whose relative magnitude I leave you to judge.

1. There is a civil war in Spain. This is really very serious.

2. Sammy's¹¹² non-elevation to the professorship of Greek. How this came, or did not, come about, is a source of cataclysmic misery, for we had done everything in our power, written to Frisk

¹¹⁰ [This satirical piece was inserted by Henry Hardy without the agreement of Mark Pottle.] The Hon. Venetia Starborgling (1913–84), daughter of Lord Dull, Minister for Agriculture, February to March 1925.

¹¹¹ Lucre Grange, near Fordingbridge. On his stay here in 1935, Berlin recorded that he tipped the butler 10/6d.

¹¹² Samuel Ainsworth de Montmorency Drudge (1898–1970), Fellow of Wadham College, author of *Some Little Travels in the Levant* (1932).

and Whiskers¹¹³ about it &c. And Sammy – so mad & gay & snobbish & sweet & so disappointed. Hearing of his arch-rival Professor Vole's victory in the election – a learned, scholarly, unsuitable man – I at once rushed off to dine with him, & I think really consoled him by my insistence that it is the striking, original figures who survive in Oxford legend irrespective of whether they do any work or not.

3. Bobbety's¹¹⁴ failure in Greats. This, I must admit, perplexed me gravely. He had done a fine Latin translation and a noble Greek unseen. While his inability to attend Schools for the final three papers undoubtedly counted against him, one would have thought his qualities of gentlemanliness and sympathetic understanding, not to mention his father's very agreeable residence in Perthshire, where I stayed last summer, would have redeemed him to some extent in the examiners' eyes [...]¹¹⁵

[D. J. Taylor], *Private Eye*, 2–15 April 2004, 24

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS

n.d.

All Souls

Dear Jenifer,

With the greatest pleasure. Indeed I was gloomily looking to this purgatory (for I don't suppose that pleasure is either likely or intended) in solitude since I dared not suppose that anyone wd have the disinterestedness, courage etc. (on all of which we may

¹¹³ To my eternal regret and shame I have been unable to decipher the real identities behind these amusing soubriquets.

¹¹⁴ The Hon. Robert Twistleton-Byng (1914–99), son of Lord Mulcaster, sportsman, socialite and alcoholic.

¹¹⁵ The remainder of this letter is unfortunately lost. Its surviving portion is reproduced with the kind permission of the editor of *Private Eye*. I am indebted to D. J. Taylor for tracing this fragment, of which I should otherwise certainly have remained unaware, and for providing the notes for it – a model of the annotator's art. H.H.

MORE FLOURISHING

well congratulate ourselves) As it is I am delighted: bar the Riddleys I know of no one interested (your brother in law?¹¹⁶ who arrives in the company of elderly ladies, is spoken to by my disreputable acquaintance Davenport,¹¹⁷ & sits patiently through Schönberg & Webern – *what* is his motive?). Also if I come on Friday night I need not (a) go to a reception given by us to our pupils (b) to a children's dance to which I alone seem to have been invited of my age group. I enclose my ticket: wd you, as Francis¹¹⁸ wd say, be an angel & obtain my seats with yours?

Shaya.

Jenifer Hart

On 29 July 1936 the appointment of a Royal Commission of Inquiry to Palestine, together with its membership and terms of reference, was announced in the House of Commons. The Commission was charged with investigating the causes of Arab unrest in Palestine earlier that year, examining the workings of the British Mandate, and making recommendations. Its membership was naturally of intense interest to Zionists. IB immediately wrote to his uncle Yitzhak Samunov, who had emigrated to Palestine in 1934. YS was now general secretary of the Jerusalem Community Council, and enjoyed access to the members of the Zionist executive in Palestine. The list of commission members IB supplies to YS is inaccurate: he names Sir William Birdwood (not a member), omits Sir Harold Morris, and mistakes Lawrence Hammond for Sir Laurie Hammond (the former being the appointee). He may also have been mistaken in his belief that Reginald Coupland would be biased against the Zionists, to judge from the final report of the Commission.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ William Montagu-Pollock, who was keen on modern music.

¹¹⁷ John Davenport, contemporary and friend of IB at St Paul's School.

¹¹⁸ Francis Graham-Harrison (205/8).

¹¹⁹ The Commission reported in July 1937; see 246/3.

TO YITZHAK SAMUNOV

29 July [1936]

All Souls

Dear Yitzchok

I am in a very great hurry & will write a fuller letter as soon as I can. Meanwhile I shall attempt to satisfy your desire to know about the Commission of Enquiry. A certain amount you will know from the public press. I know little about Lord Peel:¹²⁰ he is an ex-secretary for war, ex-secretary for India, concerned with Burma, India etc. Fairly routine politician to do with the east, since Anglo-Indian politicians are usually poor Moslem anti-Hindoo this does not seem too good.

2. Birdwood, Sir William,¹²¹ Fieldmarshal. Unintelligent, pompous, ex-Indian services, probably bad. But I don't know.

3. Rumbold, Sir Horace,¹²² ex-minister in Warsaw, ex-ambassador in Berlin. Pro-Jewish, or alleged to be so while in Berlin during the Nazi rise: not very clever, but said to be kind & sympathetic, bluff: his wife alleged to buy ostentatiously in Jewish shops during Nazi boycott in Berlin. Knows how Jews live in Warsaw.

4. Carter.¹²³ Ex-Tanganyika chief justice, Uganda etc. routine official, probably Chancellor-like, but not necessarily. Probably pro-native.

¹²⁰ William Robert Wellesley Peel (1867–1937), 1st Earl Peel; Conservative politician; Secretary of State for India 1922–4, 1928–9; Chairman of the Palestine Commission.

¹²¹ Field Marshal Sir William Riddell Birdwood (1865–1951), Master of Peterhouse College, Cambridge 1931–8.

¹²² Sir Horace George Montagu Rumbold (1869–1941), diplomat; the Commission's Vice-Chairman; father of Tony Rumbold (339/2), later a friend of IB's in Washington.

¹²³ Sir (William) Morris Carter (1873–1960), Chief Justice, Uganda Protectorate 1912–20, Tanganyika Territory 1920–4.

5. *Hammond* J. L.¹²⁴

Ida wd remember his books on the English village labourer etc. Nice man. I have met him once, old fashioned radical, painfully scrupulous, idealistic, wide-awake in spite of apparent academicism, very kind, but probably weak & impressionable. Wd certainly be pro-Jewish in England. I don't know about Palestine. Strong tang of the London School of Economics outlook: doubtless accompanied by his wife Barbara who is an alter ego & collaborates with him. Infinitely nicer & more charming & human than Webb,¹²⁵ but politically probably vaguely similar. Lib-Lab pink not quite socialist. New Statesman. Very sensitive & humanitarian.

Finally Prof. Reginald Coupland.¹²⁶ Fellow of All Souls. I don't know what to say. I think, pretty bad, but I may be wrong. Very suave, smooth, silver-tongued. Professional compromiser, connected with a quasi-intellectual imperialist ideologists who edit a magazine called *The Round Table*. Professor of Colonial History & imperialist. *Terribly* smooth. A great deal of superficial charm, but both weak, cowardly and endlessly pompous & formalistic. Jesuitical. I believe that he thinks Palestine is a pure nuisance to the British Empire, but a necessary one since the pipe line. Probably an anti-Semite as a result of knowing Namier who might well have that effect. Regards the Palestine problem as insoluble I think, one of those professional liberals whose whole creed by now is simply a mass of involved qualification with hardly anything to qualify, sentimentally pro-native, but infinitely bulliable by characters stronger than himself. I think they will all think what Wauchope

¹²⁴ (John) Lawrence Le Breton ('Laurie') Hammond (1872–1949), social historian who wrote mainly on working-class history in joint authorship with his wife (Lucy) Barbara Hammond (1873–1961), née Bradby. IB confuses him with Sir (Egbert) Laurie Lucas Hammond (1873–1939), formerly of the Indian Civil Service.

¹²⁵ Sidney James Webb (1859–1947), 1st Baron Passfield; socialist, historian and political economist; the Passfield White Paper on Palestine, issued in 1930 while he was Secretary of State for the Colonies, was widely seen as anti-Zionist.

¹²⁶ 120/2.

will want them to think. Fundamentally Coupland is a middle aged bachelor, doomed to move among people who are more powerful, more sincere & stupider than himself, whom he thinks he manipulates like puppets. In fact they manage him. A complete public school man with a gentleman complex and slight Kiplingism of outlook. The whole thing does not promise well: but their decision will alter nothing.

love

Shaya

Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Ms. Eng. c. 8238, fols 89–90

TO YITZHAK SAMUNOV¹²⁷

n.d. [after 29 July 1936]

I am conscious of having considerably overdone the case against Coupland: it is still true that he is pompous and insists on English formalism of conduct: but he is (a) pro-moderate: he declares that he hates all extremists: he is proud of English empiricism, of

¹²⁷ Written, possibly as a PS to the previous letter, on a Hollycroft Avenue card under a Hebrew message from Mendel Berlin to YS dated '4.7.1936':

מקבלת מכתבך האחרון שחלית באינפלואנזה לא שמעתי עוד ודואג אני על בריאותך. תיכף נא להודיעני תיכף וגם האם האסיפה מצאה יעוד על האולטימטום שלך.

שלום

מב

אל תזכיר את שם ישעיה, ביחוד לקופלנד כי חברו הוא וד"ל

[Since receiving your last letter [when] you were sick with influenza I have heard no more, and am worried about your health. At once please let me know at once [*sic*], and also whether the group has come to any decision regarding your ultimatum.

Shalom

MB

Don't mention the name Isaiah, especially to Coupland, as he is his friend – enough said.]

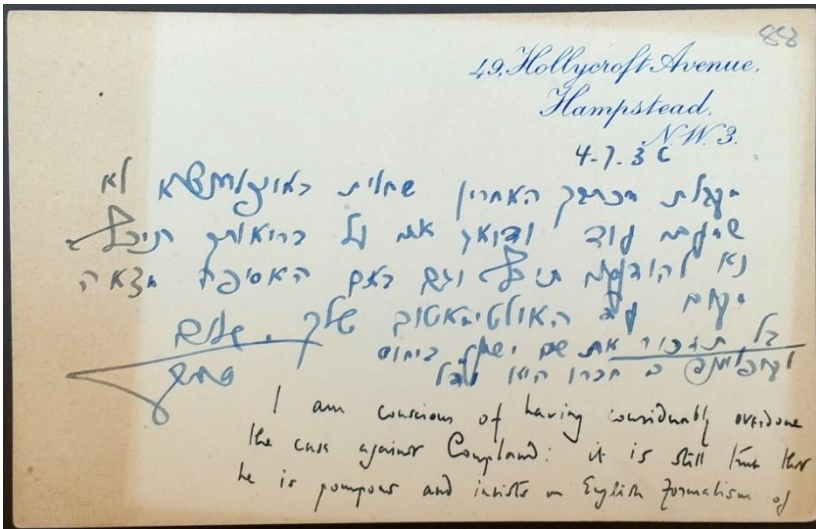
IB's message must have been written after the previous letter, whose verdict it modifies. So if Mendel's date is correct, the card must have waited some time for IB's addition. The nature of the ultimatum is unknown.

MORE FLOURISHING

Baldwinism etc. and is essentially a *reasonable* man and not partipris. The only trouble is that as a person he is to me personally unsympathetic & seems insincere. But in a public capacity he will be judicious, balanced, gentle, reasonable, fairminded, sweet. And will introduce general compromisingness into the situation. The essential in dealing with him is to display extreme **moderation*** whatever the real feeling – *for God's sake don't tell* my views to anyone: you know what Palestine is, & somebody is bound to whisper it to him, & then I shall get into frightful trouble both with Zionists & with my college.

love

Shaya



The beginning of the current letter

* & serious, earnest feeling: & no jingoism, national pride, dinamismo etc. One must seem like an honest, simple, open Colonial with no tormented ideological theorizing. He will

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

automatically prefer Chertok,¹²⁸ or Ben Gurion¹²⁹ to intellectuals. I don't know if he is religious: I am sure he admires it in others.

Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Ms. Eng. c. 8238, fol. 88

FROM A. J. AYER

31 July 1936

11 Foubert's Place, W1

I have three good seats for the ballet tomorrow evening at 8/6 each. I hope that is not too much. Can we give you dinner first? If you called for us here about 7.30, we should have plenty of time. It will be nice to see you again.

Love

F

The final version of the draft letter of 5 August 1936 published at F 187–188 surfaced subsequently at All Souls, together with a personal letter: both appear below. Like the memorandum that accompanies it, the second letter was printed by the College for circulation to committee members.

TO THE WARDEN, ALL SOULS COLLEGE

14 August [1936; *manuscript*]

All Souls College

Dear Mr Warden

I am sorry to trouble you in the very middle of your holiday with college business, but Woodward told me that I should send my memorandum off to you as soon as I could. I enclose it, + a covering letter to yourself. I haven't spoken about this to anyone, but I have had some general conversation with Prof. Bartlett in Cambridge, who is apparently very eminent indeed, with Price who

¹²⁸ Presumably Moshe Shertok (later Sharett), 248/1.

¹²⁹ 121/6.

is an ideal liaison officer between philosophy and psychology, being a professor of one and a B.Sc. in the other, and with the reader in psychology in Nottingham, J. W. Sprott, who was educated at Cambridge himself, and is an exceedingly able, charming, & highly thought of non-experimental psychologist. I know him well personally & have learnt a good deal from him.

With regard to Straus' book,¹³⁰ I have now read about half of it, and can produce my opinion for what it is worth. It is certainly an intelligent and interesting and, above all, widely informed and sensible book. His criticisms of Pavlov, the behaviourists, the Gestalt theorists etc. are acute and penetrating but never conclusive and reveal no positive standpoint of his own which could itself be examined in detail. He is essentially not a psychologist, but a polemical critic of the more extravagant presuppositions of certain psychological schools, and in so far as he does this well, he performs a task which philosophers ought to be doing. His real interest is not physiology or psychology, but scientific method in general, and if we, like the Sorbonne, had a chair for the history and philosophy of science he would probably be a very fit occupant of it. He is full of able generalizations, & sometimes really arresting occasional remarks about this or that psychological point, but the whole thing seems to be the commentary of a brilliant outsider reporting on what he finds from an amateur's point of view.

I think professional psychologists who are interested in the foundations of their subject would profit by reading this book and certainly find there ammunition against almost any other school of psychology they wanted to attack. But a collection of critical comments, however useful, & however much credit it does to the author's intelligence, does not make an expert in a highly technical subject. This he seems to me definitely not to be, because he lives entirely off the labours of others, by criticizing, interpreting etc. & is essentially not a specialist, but a critic and a popularizer. I do not,

¹³⁰ Presumably Erwin W. Straus, *Vom Sinn der Sinne: Ein Beitrag zur Grundlegung der Psychologie* (Berlin, 1935).

of course, know what he is like as a practising doctor, he is very good I expect; but medicine is not psychology, not even medical psychology, & a combination of it with philosophy which he obviously read rather later in life (he seems only to know those philosophers whose names occur among the early students of physics) does not produce the sort of philosophical psychologist whom, I think, we should go for. Is this very divergent from the views of Franks and Ross? I hope not. The book is at present in my room in Oxford, but as I assume that you are not anxious to have it in Ireland, I'll send it over to the lodgings as soon as I return in October (this is written in a village inn!).

I do think that this is the right moment in which to set about acquiring our man, before Brown's new institute gets too rigidly tied in a particular routine, by which time our nominee may find it rather difficult to acclimatize himself, if indeed he is admitted at all. Also, if we are to look for someone beyond England, in America for instance, I think he might do worse than write to Frankfurter who seems so enormously well informed about everything, & so full of genuine affection & good will to All Souls & Oxford, (& absolutely devoted to Mrs Adams and yourself). I dined with them on the night before their homeward journey, and was very sorry to see{m} them go: his enormous energy, kindness, and integrity of character really must make a vast difference to any body of men he is associated with. I hope all is well in Donegal, that Mrs Adams has fully recovered from her accident, & that the sun is shining. I am off to the Blaskets myself in 10 days time, & really look forward greatly to it.

v. sincerely yours

Isaiah Berlin

PS Could I perhaps see the proofs of my memorandum if you decide to decide to circulate it? my handwriting is v. trying as I know well.

MORE FLOURISHING
TO THE WARDEN OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE¹³¹

15 August 1936

[All Souls]

Dear Mr Warden,

I enclose a memorandum¹³² on the contemporary state of psychological studies, which, with your approval, I have drawn up in connection with the recent proposal circulated to the College in the form of a letter signed by Woodward and Faber, recommending the endowment of a Chair of Psychology in Oxford. I am in entire agreement with the general purpose of this proposal, and in particular with the modification which, as I understand, has since been suggested, that a Research Fellowship be created in lieu of a Chair, which, in view of the absence of a general staff of readers, lecturers, or of an organised undergraduate school in this subject, seems eminently reasonable.

I hope the document I have compiled is more or less what was wanted, and may be of assistance to the Research Committee, and possibly the College, in arriving at a decision on this issue. I do not claim that these notes are in any way exhaustive, but they are based on conversation with experts as well as with such reading as I have done in a subject which is becoming more and more closely connected with my own. I append certain conclusions which seem to me to follow from the evidence I have collected and condensed for the benefit of the committee. If this is the kind of document which in your opinion would be of use if circulated, I should be grateful if you would cause it to be sent to the members of the relevant committees for their consideration.

Yours sincerely,

I. Berlin

¹³¹ W. G. S. Adams.

¹³² The draft found in Berlin's papers was published as **'The State of Psychology in 1936'**, *History and Philosophy of Psychology* 3 no. 1 (2001), 76–83. The final version differs from the draft in a number of ways, and is available **here**. Much of it appeared in 'Addendum on Psychology in 1936', *ibid.* 19 no. 1 (2018), 43–50.

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS

3 a.m. [1936?; *card*]

All Souls

Dear Jenifer,

Thank you very much indeed. You allowed me to make so many observations that as a result I naturally feel better informed and happier. At this point, I don't doubt, you observe that if this is so you are v. glad etc. to have proved etc. etc. but this by arrangement is to be ignored. I shall now go to sleep and reflect agreeably about Mr Brown,¹³³ duties towards oneself, and the nature of conscience. Mr Bowra says that what Mr Joseph conveyed was that it was a loud thing which struck twelve and said don't. It is impossible to be earnest about this subject, at this hour at any rate. K. Marx believed it to have been invented during the Reformation: but it is obvious that this faculty whether in him or in Mr Joseph really originates from further East & an earlier date than that. Which, as you see, brings us by easy unforced stages to Zionism once more. I have begun to babble.

Yrs

Shaya B.

Jenifer Hart

¹³³ Norman Oliver Brown (1913–2002), Balliol classics 1932–6 (taught by IB); JW's mentor in Communism at the time of this letter; after leaving Oxford he studied for a Ph.D. at Wisconsin and remained a US academic apart from service with the US Office of Strategic Services (OSS) as a research analyst during the war (203/1).

MORE FLOURISHING

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS

[1936]

All Souls

Dear Jenifer

I haven't seen Nicolaievsky etc.¹³⁴ but obviously everything demands that I should. I shall therefore go to Piccadilly at once and buy him. I am glad to learn that you are still alive, well etc. I am prepared in return for your reminiscences about Dalmatia¹³⁵ to provide details of my grotesque weeks in Ireland:¹³⁶ terror is the chief note of mine, terror of being made to mount horses, terror of being rowed out in minute canoes (curraghs perhaps) into raging seas for hours with all the sailors saying from time to time 'this boat's no joke', terror of my companions etc.

I shall say nothing to Douglas: I absolutely decline to call him Dougle: the first is ludicrous enough in his case, the second is, I seriously suggest, unnecessarily hideous. As soon as I can I shall: write you a brief report I mean: and I hope it won't fall too far below N. O. Brown's normal level of craftsmanship.

Yours

Shaya

¹³⁴ Boris Ivanovich Nicolaevsky [*sic*] (1883–1966), émigré Menshevik historian and archivist of Communism and the Russian Revolution; co-author (under the transliteration 'Nicolaievsky') with Otto Maenchen-Helfen of *Karl Marx: Man and Fighter* (London, 1936). JW was reviewing this book for *The Economist* at the request of her friend Douglas Jay, who was on the staff of the magazine; being out of her depth, she asked IB for his assistance. Her short unsigned notice, largely drawn from IB's 'brief report' of c.30 September 1936 (198–203), appears in the issue dated 12 December 1936, 56 (199/7).

¹³⁵ Jenifer Williams had been on holiday to Yugoslavia with Herbert Hart (221/2), Arnold Pilkington (103/4) and Eve Kisch (110/3), a rather trying holiday companion (203/2).

¹³⁶ IB had spent a holiday in Ireland with Con O'Neill (167/7) and Stuart Hampshire (91/1, 709, Plate 20). They joined a house-party at Bowen's Court, County Cork, during which Goronwy Rees, with whom their hostess Elizabeth Bowen was in love, started an affair with the novelist Rosamond Lehmann (192/1).

Jenifer Hart

TO MAURICE BOWRA

The New Year [1937]

49 Hollycroft Avenue

Dear Maurice.

Thank you for your letter and card which arrived together. I refrained from writing until information became accurate. I am now informed and agree that your situation¹³⁷ is flattering but difficult. Mynors¹³⁸ was enormously upset: I have never seen a man so self-conscious as a rule burst in so unrestrainedly as he into my room about you. His view is that all nerves must be strained etc. to keep you, but as you know he hates intrigue & is bad at it. Fränkel¹³⁹ is in favour of an imploring round robin from everybody explaining how deadly a loss you would be. Dundas¹⁴⁰ said he would write at once. Wade Gery¹⁴¹ talked for $\frac{3}{4}$ hour on the telephone: he said he could not personally absolutely guarantee your election to the Wardenship but he regards it as highly probable. He cannot believe that you would enjoy America as a new world in which to redress etc. & anyhow sees no necessity for redressing. On a calculation of votes, the two new Fellows of Wadham ought to make the necessary difference. The ideal schema

¹³⁷ Bowra had been offered Professorships at several American universities, the most tempting being at Harvard, where he was then lecturing. Alerted by Felix Frankfurter, IB organised a letter-writing campaign among their friends to persuade Bowra to return to Oxford, where the Wardenship of Wadham was due to fall vacant the following year.

¹³⁸ Roger Aubrey Baskerville Mynors (1903–89), classicist, Fellow of Balliol 1926–44 (220/1).

¹³⁹ Eduard David Mortier Fraenkel (1888–1970), Jewish émigré from Germany, Corpus Christi Professor of Latin, Oxford, 1935–53 (108/1).

¹⁴⁰ Robert Hamilton Dundas (1884–1960), classicist, Student and Tutor of Christ Church 1910–57 (210/2).

¹⁴¹ Henry Theodore Wade-Gery (1888–1972), ancient historian, Fellow of Wadham 1914–39, then Wykeham Professor of Ancient History and Fellow of New College (210/4).

seems to me to be one by which you stay in the U.S. for three four years, marry a rich intelligent wonderfully good looking American (after all we know there are such: Marion F[rankfurter,] if not rich, qualifies in all other respects: I must mention her letter later), come back as Warden of Wadham. Would Harvard regard that as monstrous behaviour? and even if they do? if you delay decision long enough it will become the subject of conversation in all Common Rooms: as it is, it is on the tongues of the Coxes¹⁴² Baldsons¹⁴³ etc. perpetually. If you are to be made reader,¹⁴⁴ I suppose Denniston¹⁴⁵ will have to be comforted in some fashion? or will he not, as Farq.¹⁴⁶ would say? anyhow I shall write Mynors a Christmas letter on this subject which has drawn us so together. I myself don't know what to say, If you go all form of human existence will die at once. Woodward,¹⁴⁷ relentlessly plotting to evict me from A[ll] S[ouls] will probably succeed against the powers of New College in making them swallow me, and that will mean the end of everything. With you at Harvard I shall make no attempt to resist and resign myself to a Cambridge persecuted position. So far my egoistic claims. I cannot believe that the

¹⁴² Presumably a reference to Christopher William Machell Cox (1899–1982), ancient historian, Fellow of New College 1926–70 (50/6).

¹⁴³ John Percy Vyvian Dacre Baldson (1901–77), ancient historian, was a Fellow of Exeter College 1927–69.

¹⁴⁴ The academic rank immediately below that of Professor.

¹⁴⁵ A few months earlier Bowra had been a candidate for the Regius Professorship of Greek, which in the event went to Eric Robinson Dodds (1893–1979), Professor of Greek at Birmingham since 1924. The other main candidate was John Dewar Denniston (1887–1949), Fellow and classics Tutor, Hertford, 1913–49. Denniston was the best candidate so far as exact knowledge of Greek was concerned, but Gilbert Murray (169/4, 15/5 above), the current Professor, and thus a Student of Christ Church, thought him insufficiently original, and preferred Dodds, who was also a far better scholar than Bowra (154/6).

¹⁴⁶ Brevet Lt. Col. Arthur Spenser Loat Farquharson (1871–1942), philosopher, Fellow and Tutor of University College 1899–1942 (250/5).

¹⁴⁷ Ernest Llewellyn Woodward (1890–1971), historian, Fellow of All Souls 1919–44, Lecturer, New College, 1922–39; Montague Burton Professor of International Relations 1944–7 (65/3).

absence of the familiar landmarks & possibility of changes in familiar human relations will be compensated by anything in America, on the other hand I see that opportunities for self-realisation on a deliciously large scale exist. You will certainly want to come back to live here after 7 or 8 years, will that be materially possible? If you are made Reader do you cease to be tutor? not I suppose, cf Tod.¹⁴⁸

I think everything turns on Wadham. If you decide to stay, please marry a rich wife & retire to a home near Oxford where you will have as much glory as you want. At present I am plunged in genuine cosmic grief about the victory of the old men. Pace Elizabeth's remark his late Majesty,¹⁴⁹ for all his vulgarity & stuff about home life was a symbol of the Weimar Republic, & now reaction triumphs unchecked, & Sir J. Reith¹⁵⁰ & our revolting Visitor¹⁵¹ are on top for a long time. I regard the appointment of Dodds in this sense the triumph of puritanism over the last embers of the dying twenties. 1936 has been the most horrible year on record. Made no better by a misalliance on the part of Stephen Spender. He married an old friend of Mrs Blakeway's,¹⁵² an arty-

¹⁴⁸ Marcus Niebuhr Tod (1878–1974), Fellow of Oriel College 1903–47, Tutor 1914–40, Vice-Provost 1934–45; University Reader in Greek Epigraphy 1927–49.

¹⁴⁹ George V, who died in January 1936.

¹⁵⁰ Sir John Charles Walsham Reith (1889–1971), 1st Baron Reith 1940; Director-General, BBC, 1927–38.

¹⁵¹ The Visitor of All Souls was (and is) the Archbishop of Canterbury, at the time of this letter Cosmo Gordon Lang (1864–1945), Fellow of All Souls 1889–93, 1897–1928, Archbishop of Canterbury 1928–42 (65/5). Henry 'Chips' Channon had recorded in his diary on 14 December 1936 that 'the most conspicuous rat of all is the Archbishop of Canterbury, Old Cosmo Cantuar, who, in a monstrous broadcast last night, poured scorn on the late King, and branded his social circle as people whose ways of life were alien to all that is best in the instincts and tradition of the English people'. *Chips: The Diaries of Sir Henry Channon*, ed. Robert Rhodes James (London, 1967), 101.

¹⁵² Alison Blakeway, née Hope (1913–83), Somerville English 1932–5, then literary critic for the *Sunday Times*. She married Alan Blakeway (50/2) in 1935; he died in 1936, and she married Tony Andrewes (92/4) in 1938 (161/6).

crafty undergraduette called Inez Pearn,¹⁵³ who knows about pre-Cervantes Spanish literature and talks of little else. If you or I chose to ring up this we should do well at it too. She met her husband at lunch with me (I asked her in desperation, lack of women; my rôle as Lady Furness¹⁵⁴ is thoroughly discreditable I regret to say), when she was rude to him about Spain: he then asked her to a party, noticed that she looked like a boy, liked the fact that she was no lady, & married her at once. Which of our friends are capable of marrying above themselves? Rees (necessarily) and Wilberforce:¹⁵⁵ I wish you would suggest some names. Stephen said 'I knew Tony'¹⁵⁶ wouldn't like it very much, but I didn't suppose he would be indignant, did *you?*' Tony + Giles¹⁵⁷ Romilly obeying the laws of Turgenev¹⁵⁸ are both in Spain, fighting it seems. The former should certainly either get killed or obtain rank in Spain: to have him back

¹⁵³ Stephen Spender's first wife, Marie Agnes Pearn (1913–76), Somerville modern languages 1933–6, was so known. She and SS married on 15 December 1936 and were divorced in 1941; in 1942 Inez married Charles Madge, who had previously been married to Kathleen Raine (217/3).

¹⁵⁴ Lady Furness (1904–70), née Thelma Morgan, daughter of the American Consul-General in Buenos Aires; married first to James Vail Converse, then to 1st Viscount Furness; during her time as mistress of the then Prince of Wales, she introduced him to Wallis Simpson.

¹⁵⁵ Richard Orme Wilberforce (1907–2003), Baron Wilberforce 1964, Fellow of All Souls 1932–2003; barrister, later Judge of the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) (1961–4), Lord of Appeal in Ordinary (1964–82) (65/5).

¹⁵⁶ Thomas Arthur Rowett ("Tony") Hyndman (1911–80) was Stephen Spender's boyfriend in the 1930s, and fought in the Spanish Civil War (76/2).

¹⁵⁷ Giles Samuel Bertram Romilly (1916–67) and his younger brother Esmond (1918–41) had been converted to radicalism while pupils at Wellington School. Giles was a classical scholar at Lincoln College from 1934 to 1936, when he left suddenly for Spain, without sitting any examinations: see further *Lincoln College Record*, 1966–7, pp. 28–9. During the war he was held in Colditz Castle for two years as an important prisoner-of-war (he was a nephew of Churchill), and subsequently testified at Nüremberg (132/2).

¹⁵⁸ *Fathers and Sons* (1862) by Russian novelist Ivan Sergeevich Turgenev (1818–1883) introduced the concept of nihilism, a set of cultural attitudes central to which is the rejection of all forms of authority and tradition; nihilism became popular among the radical younger generation of the Russian aristocracy in the late 19th century, even though Turgenev's work illustrates its inadequacy.

as a cripple would be intolerable. Blaikie¹⁵⁹ of course refuses to go: ground: the Great War has already as good as started here, so it would [be] premature to go to Spain. I wonder whether he really thinks in thoughts ever. Not a credit I fear to the great Jewish people whose fortunes I follow with burning feelings in Palestine. I understand that Coupland¹⁶⁰ is being wonderfully fair minded. The picture of Toscanini¹⁶¹ conducting to his Tel-Aviv audience of 7000 is very fine. He is boycotted by the Italians in Palestine, *honoris causa*: there is certainly something of Wilamowitz¹⁶² in him. While we are on Jews, I stayed with the Rothschilds¹⁶³ in Cambs, & went to a party in Trinity: it was a dead replica of Oxford, 1928. Hideous young men with scarlet lips, in fur collars, curvetted before the dissatisfied eyes of Messrs Rylands¹⁶⁴ & Mortimer.¹⁶⁵ Your Swiss friend Zaehner¹⁶⁶ watched it all very

¹⁵⁹ Derek Edward Walter Blaikie (1912–44), né Kahn, Balliol classics 1930–4, changed his surname in 1933; killed in action in Burma 14 February 1944 (55/5).

¹⁶⁰ Reginald Coupland (1884–1952), Beit Professor of the History of the British Empire and Fellow of All Souls 1920–48; influential member of the Peel Commission on the future of Palestine, which had been appointed by the British government in August 1936, and published its report in July 1937 (120/2).

¹⁶¹ Toscanini had been persuaded by Bronislaw Huberman to conduct the inaugural concerts of the Palestine Orchestra in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem during December 1936.

¹⁶² Enno Friedrich Richard Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff (1848–1931), German classical philologist, known for his willingness to explore new ideas.

¹⁶³ (Nathaniel Mayer) Victor Rothschild (1910–90), 3rd Baron Rothschild 1937, zoologist; Research Fellow, Trinity College, Cambridge, 1935–9; Intelligence Corps 1939–45. Barbara Judith Rothschild (1911–89), née Hutchinson, his first wife. They lived in Cambridge (215/3, 714).

¹⁶⁴ George Humphrey Wolferstan ('Dadie') Rylands (1902–99), Fellow of King's College, Cambridge 1927–99, University Lecturer in English, Cambridge, 1935–62; actor and theatre director (216/1).

¹⁶⁵ (Charles) Raymond (Bell) Mortimer (1895–1980), critic, literary editor of the *New Statesman* 1935–47 (216/2).

¹⁶⁶ Robert Charles Zaehner (1913–74), oriental linguist of Swiss descent; Senior Scholar, Christ Church, 1937–9, thereafter Research Lecturer; Assistant

avidly. Wonderfully sophisticated he is, & devotedly grateful to you. Your slumming is a subject we shall have to go into some time. My fellow guest was Mr A. Huxley,¹⁶⁷ who could hardly be more boring.

A lot of quaker scientists came to lunch: they are overawed by Rothschild wealth & think him a not very good biologist: he only invites people with more than 9 αs in Schools.¹⁶⁸ Wherever I go I feel this to be part of All Souls & other official academic rewards: if I don't come off I shall be dropped: consequently I capitalise my present assets with no sense of guilt at all. Roy, I am sorry & pleased to say, has been misbehaving once more. With, of all people, Jean Connolly, Jeanie.¹⁶⁹ He takes her to low negro night clubs (are you acquainted with The Nest? The Shimsham?¹⁷⁰ etc. Mrs Ayer¹⁷¹ rescues drunken niggers persecuted by crowd & sends them home in taxis: they live opposite.) where he talks to her about population problems, & falls asleep with an idiot stare on her lap. Cyril C.¹⁷² wishes to know whether he contemplates marriage. Anyhow she has confessed all to Rees, so there is bound to be a fuss at some stage. She has been kept from Mrs Harrod.¹⁷³ All my views about Roy's tastes are tottering. After all Mrs C. is repulsive in appearance, all admit. Cyril C. has been writing movingly about

Press Attaché, then Press Attaché, British Embassy, Tehran, 1943–7; later (1952–74) Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics, Oxford.

¹⁶⁷ Aldous Leonard Huxley (1894–1963), novelist and essayist (145/4).

¹⁶⁸ i.e. a run of the highest mark in university degree examinations (cf. 93/1).

¹⁶⁹ Jean Connolly (1910–50), née Bakewell, American first wife of Cyril Connolly; later married to Laurence Vail.

¹⁷⁰ The clients of the Nest and Shim Sham clubs in London's West End were mainly black, as were many of the performers.

¹⁷¹ (Grace Isabel) Renée Lees (1909–80), wife since 1932 of the philosopher A. J. ('Freddie') Ayer; they divorced in 1942 (62/5, 703–4).

¹⁷² Cyril Vernon Connolly (1903–74), critic, editor, journalist and author (83/2).

¹⁷³ Frances Marie Desirée Harrod (1866–1956), widowed novelist, mother of Roy Harrod, sister of the actor Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson (55/3).

Barcelona,¹⁷⁴ whither, so we understand, he, Rees, & Lord Antrim are soon to go. To study atmosphere. Mrs Phillips¹⁷⁵ will, I expect, accompany. Goronwy tells Wogan that he does not understand Rosamond, that she is very, very sensitive. It is apparently exactly what he used to say to the unfortunate Runciman¹⁷⁶ who is now universally sympathised with. I regret to have to be so ferociously malicious but Goronwy's affairs deserve no respect, especially when a high emotional tone is adopted, which conceals too much vulgarity. Dear me. I had forgotten that at the Cambridge party in question I met the charming Mr Bishop¹⁷⁷ whom I like very much: & that I was sent home to Oxford by private aeroplane: it is much the most convenient mode of conveyance, & one is called my Lord by everyone down to what Dr Grundy¹⁷⁸ calls the Citaxy¹⁷⁹ man. The pilot was a wonderful pseudo-county figure who discussed the comforts of the bedroom in the country houses over which we flew. He deplored the passing of many old families in Bedfordshire. As a result of the flight I developed a complaint of

¹⁷⁴ In a series of reports for the *New Statesman* about the progress of the Spanish Civil War.

¹⁷⁵ Rees's mistress, Rosamond Nina Lehmann (1901–90), novelist, wife since 1928 of Hon. Wogan Philipps (1902–93), 2nd Baron Milford 1962, farmer and painter; divorced 1944 (192/1).

¹⁷⁶ Rosamond Lehmann's first husband, Hon. (Walter) Leslie Runciman (1900–89), 2nd Viscount Runciman of Doxford 1949 (married 1923, divorced 1928 after Rosamond had left him for Wogan Philipps).

¹⁷⁷ Herbert Francis ('Adrian') Bishop (c.1898–1942), King's College, Cambridge, classics 1919–23; homosexual; worked in education and journalism in various countries for several years, then became a monk after a religious experience following an illness; volunteered for war service and became Intelligence officer in Egypt and Persia; attached to the British Embassy in Baghdad at the time of his death; a friend of Bowra, who writes about him in his *Memories* (London, 1966), and in a long Eliotesque poem, 'Old Croaker', in *New Bats in Old Belfries* (Oxford, 2005) (216/3).

¹⁷⁸ George Beardoe Grundy (1861–1948), Fellow and ancient history Tutor, Corpus Christi College 1903–31, Senior Tutor 1928–31 (5/4).

¹⁷⁹ A Citax was a city taxi.

the Eustachian tube. Not very serious. Branch¹⁸⁰ is back, in debt and very nice. You might have him to stay in Cambridge, Mass. Felix¹⁸¹ would like him very, very much. Mrs F[rankfurter] wrote a letter about you which I don't enclose because I think it would actually embarrass you. It is a most moving document, & quotes you as saying that the great thing [about] Americans is that they don't know when they are being bored. This gave her endless pleasure. Her devotion to you cannot be overestimated. I almost felt the pangs of jealousy, but didn't. Elizabeth Cameron is on edge to the last possible degree. This is largely due to the infamous Rees who has not behaved at all well. It is infuriating and humiliating to think that he, whose feelings are not worth, as the Russians would say, an eaten out egg, should have the power of rendering her neurotic & miserable for long periods. He cries, stamps, wags his picanninny head to and fro, & reduces her to tears after every visit (so she.) Stephen [Spender] who met him + Rosamond at an exhibition of pictures said he suddenly felt embarrassed, as if in a stable, with Rosamond as a great distended mare & Goronwy as a little colt frisking round her, & straw everywhere. I give him credit for more efficient malice than any of us. Dear me. It is unbearable to think of Oxford, the prey of Baldwinite¹⁸² faces in your absence,

¹⁸⁰ Guy Rawstron Branch (1913–40), Balliol English 1932–5; friend of IB at Oxford; member of OUDS; married Lady Prudence Pelham March 1939; joined British Council; killed in the Battle of Britain (151/1).

¹⁸¹ Felix Frankfurter (1882–1965), American lawyer, born in Vienna; Byrne Professor of Administrative Law, Harvard, 1914–39, George Eastman Visiting Professor, Oxford, 1933–4; Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court, 1939–62 (104/1, 708–9).

¹⁸² A reference to the then Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin (1867–1947), 1st Earl Baldwin 1937, Conservative politician, Prime Minister 1923–4, 1924–9, 1935–7 (146/1); presumably IB regarded him as a symbol of disapproving respectability.

[Christopher] Cox, Boase,¹⁸³ Maud¹⁸⁴ etc. your analogy with Curzon¹⁸⁵ is, I won't say truer, but as true as you knew it to be. Warden Fisher¹⁸⁶ is in terrific form (as Boase would say) & says he only wants to meet lords now, or something to that effect. Coghill¹⁸⁷ became intoxicated (we have reached the *Times* telegrams style) on the night of the abdication, & threw a utensil at, I believe Balsdon, saying you have insulted my lord Edward. Zulueta¹⁸⁸ thinks Blum¹⁸⁹ killed Salengro¹⁹⁰ personally & perhaps eats children

¹⁸³ Thomas ('Tom') Sherrer Ross Boase (1898–1974), Fellow and history Tutor, Hertford, 1922–37 (taught and examined Jenifer Williams); Director of Courtauld Institute of Art, London, 1937–47. According to IB, he had 'a glass eye which occasionally generated tears' (interview with Brian Harrison, 25 April 1988) (113/3).

¹⁸⁴ John Primatt Redcliffe (Redcliffe-)Maud (1906–82), Baron Redcliffe-Maud (of the City and County of Bristol) 1967; Fellow and politics and economics Tutor, Univ., 1932–9, Dean 1933–9; Master of Birkbeck College, London, 1939–43; Deputy Secretary, later Second Secretary, Ministry of Food, 1941–4; Second Secretary, Office of the Minister of Reconstruction, 1944–5; Secretary, Office of Lord President of the Council, 1945; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, 1945–52 (159/4).

¹⁸⁵ George Nathaniel Curzon (1859–1925), 1st Marquess Curzon of Kedleston 1921; Conservative politician and statesman; Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1899–1905; Foreign Secretary 1919–24; Chancellor of Oxford University 1907–25; a xenophobic, inflexible nationalist, he was committed to the preservation of the status quo in many contexts.

¹⁸⁶ Herbert Albert Laurens Fisher (1865–1940), historian, statesman, Warden of New College 1925–40 (50/5).

¹⁸⁷ Nevill Henry Kendal Aylmer Coghill (1899–1980), Fellow and Tutor in English Literature, Exeter College, 1925–57; later (1957–66) Merton Professor of English Literature, Oxford.

¹⁸⁸ Francis de Zulueta (1878–1958), Regius Professor of Civil Law, Oxford, 1919–48; Fellow of All Souls 1919–48 (Subwarden 1934–6).

¹⁸⁹ Léon Blum (1872–1950), first Jewish (and first socialist) prime minister of France 1936–7 (264/2).

¹⁹⁰ Roger Salengro (1890–1936), French socialist politician; Minister of the Interior 1936. The combined burdens of dealing with widespread sit-in strikes in France, the death of his wife the previous year and, most significantly, a vicious smear campaign in certain right-wing newspapers concerning his war record drove him to suicide in November 1936.

on the ile St Louis. Hampshire¹⁹¹ finds All Souls depressing and is going to Cambridge for a term. He is probably very much Sheppard's¹⁹² cup of tea and not only a natural democrat, but very Cambridge. He has proved an agreeable companion. Routh¹⁹³ is as awful as was feared but will do as little harm as Latham,¹⁹⁴ while Sparrow¹⁹⁵ flirts with Wallace,¹⁹⁶ who in his turn is in the clutches of the femme fatale, Caroline Paget.¹⁹⁷ Ridley¹⁹⁸ cannot pass his law exams & is persecuted by a sense of failure & sends small cards about composers to me. He is v. v .v. odd. he suffers actually more than any of us, & is profoundly specious and metaphysical by nature & rarely happy. It has been decided at last that Ayer¹⁹⁹ and

¹⁹¹ Stuart Newton Hampshire (1914–2004), Balliol classics 1933–6; Fellow of All Souls 1936–40; Lecturer in Philosophy, Queen's, 1936–9; military intelligence 1940–5; later Grote Professor of Philosophy of Mind and Logic, London, 1960–3 and Bowra's successor as Warden of Wadham 1970–84 (91/1, 709).

¹⁹² John Tresidder Sheppard (1881–1968), classicist; Provost, King's College, Cambridge, 1933–54.

¹⁹³ Dennis Alan Routh (1912–91), New College PPE 1931–5, Laming Travelling Fellow at Queen's 1935–6, Fellow of All Souls 1936–61, Central Office of Information 1940–8 (213/1).

¹⁹⁴ Richard Thomas Edwin Latham (1909–43), Australian, Magdalen law Rhodes Scholar 1931–3, Fellow of All Souls 1934–43, Foreign Office 1935–41, RAF 1942, shot down 1943 (339/7).

¹⁹⁵ John Hanbury Angus Sparrow (1906–92), barrister, classicist, bibliophile; Fellow of All Souls 1929–52, later (1952–77) Warden; an enthusiastic homosexual (68/7, 716–7).

¹⁹⁶ David John Wallace (1914–44), Balliol classics 1933–6; married Prudence Major 1939, killed in action in Greece (118/9, 720).

¹⁹⁷ Lady (Alexandra Mary) Caroline Cecilia Paget (1913–73), daughter of 6th Marquess of Anglesey.

¹⁹⁸ Jasper Maurice Alexander Ridley (1913–43), Balliol classics 1932–6; married Cressida Bonham Carter 1939; killed in the war (156/4, 714).

¹⁹⁹ Alfred ('Freddie') Jules Ayer (1910–89), Christ Church classics 1928–32; philosophy Lecturer, Christ Church, 1932–5, Research Student, 1935–44; Fellow and philosophy Lecturer, Wadham, 1944–6; later Grote Professor of the Philosophy of Mind and Logic, London, (1946–59), Wykeham Professor of Logic, Oxford, and Fellow of New College (1959–78) (62/5, 703–4).

Spender are not to write a book on liberty together.²⁰⁰ An Ayer–Connolly alliance is in the offing, on a basis of slightly *déclassé* Etonianism. I can't continue with this minute chronique scandaleuse, the atoms are becoming too granulated even for me. Please tell me of your decision: one's own personal suspense is too wearing. I hope the allies in Oxford play up, they are such a very knock kneed army. Dr E. Lowe²⁰¹ departs, the greater victim of official non-recognition, & future father in law to our friend James Fawcett²⁰² (very suitable, I think I said). Pares, a true friend, especially now that Rowse persecutes his marriage, inquires daily after your decision. The crisis you have provoked is genuine, my telegram was a statement of fact as well as of roused feeling. Write when you feel inclined. I shall get in touch with Roger M[y]nors] as early as may be.

yrs

Shaya

²⁰⁰ Ayer and Spender were to have co-authored such a book, but Spender withdrew when he discovered that Ayer had been having an affair with Inez Pearn before she and Spender married, and that it had continued during their courtship. It may or may not have lasted into the marriage. Philip Toynbee, with whom she was also involved at the same time, recorded these events in his diaries (244/2).

²⁰¹ Elias Avery Lowe (1879–1969), né Loew; Lithuanian-born American palaeographer of Latin manuscripts; Lecturer and (from 1927) Reader in Palaeography, Oxford, 1913–48; Professor (from 1946 Emeritus) in Palaeography, Princeton, 1936–69.

²⁰² James Edmund Sandford Fawcett (1913–91), barrister; Fellow of All Souls, 1938, 1960–9; Royal Navy 1939–45; assistant legal adviser, Foreign Office, 1945–50; married Dr E. A. Lowe's second daughter, Frances Beatrice, 1937.

MORE FLOURISHING

FROM STUART HAMPSHIRE

24 September [1937]

All Souls

Dear Isaiah

Will you deny that you are sometimes led by phrases, good images & metaphors, away from facts & verifiabilities, when talking about politics? That is what occurred to me after talking on the telephone – your arguments Crocean in form, about generalized states of mind, the spirit of this & that, Zeitgeist & so on.

I think you become so very unpositivistic and unrealistic as soon as you leave technical philosophy, and see politics as a kind of battle of concepts, in a Hegelian way almost – because the concepts really are so vivid to you. It is almost as if one cannot make the history of ideas a subject, without thereby becoming a Hegelian – the more vividly one presents it, the more misleading one is. One ought never to believe that the patterns one makes are anything more than patterns – but this is psychologically difficult, probably impossible – one could not do it well, unless one believed that they were explanations and real arguments.

I expect you to disagree: but I do think you segregate political arguments from technical, logical criticism, so that you seem two persons sometimes – a spiritualist & Hegelian when talking about politics & history, & a positivist when talking about philosophy technically.

I suppose that it is old socialist fanaticism which makes me aggressive like this – fear of everybody deserting, becoming non-party, universally tolerant, not-quite-conservative-of-course.

I am hoping that you will be here next week-end

Stuart

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

TO JULIA PAKENHAM

1 March 1938

All Souls

Dear Julia,

I ought to have written I don't know how long ago: but I don't read the *Times* attentively, & no one drew my attention. I was so annoyed and piqued by my fearful lateness & not being in on this cardinal fact, that having found myself so far behind events, I obeyed the absolutely inevitable tendency to give up & not attempt to do anything at all: however Peggy burst excitedly into my room and spoke with passion of Mr Mount: and now I feel guilt about my tardiness and want quickly to make up for it. How am I to begin even? I can only think at the moment, apart from all the agreeable and truthful but for such an, in certain respects plus anglais que les anglais character as me, faintly embarrassing things (it cd have been worked up into something even more Jamesian than this I daresay, but I feel a genuine and violent antipathy to him which if pressed I cd defend with gigantic passion), that your new name seems to me gay & very distinguished, & that I shd like to give you a gay and distinguished wedding present, but I don't know what. Will you say? If not it will arrive indeed but may be rather ephemeral: if you wd rather have some long term object, please tell me. I must also say that I saw your new admirer, Mr Coughlan suddenly in Holywell today with the Roy Harrods [*rest of letter missing*]

P.S. If you ever have a son will you send him to Eton & New College, & let me send courtly messages to you by him? I have a clear, rather attractive concept of that, a quarter of a century or so hence.

MORE FLOURISHING

FROM A. J. AYER

2 July 1939

11 Foubert's Place, W1

Would you care to come to a small party here next Wednesday evening (about 8 p.m.)? Your friend Miss Stebbing will, I hope, be there and also M^r Meyer Schapiro from New York, who is very anxious to meet you.

I have decided not to go to Edinburgh.

yrs

Freddie.

TO G. E. MOORE

15 August 1939

Ribbleton, Boar's Hill, Oxford

Dear Professor Moore,

Thank you very much for your letter. I am greatly relieved by the fact that you do not mind the length of the review. As for the copy of the book, I did indeed tell you that I had acquired one already, but I have since lost it, together with some other books, on a journey, and used a borrowed copy for writing the review. So if you could send the review copy, I should be grateful. May I say how much I look forward to attending your lectures and class next term?

yours sincerely

Isaiah Berlin

Cambridge University Library, Add 8330 8B/11/1

TO JEREMY HUTCHINSON

n.d. [?1930s, *manuscript card*]

All Souls

Dear Jeremy

Yes, I see. Possibly O'Neill & I may come to hear Mr Read, who is sufficiently impure & humanistic to be more my cup of tea than any true blue sea green incorruptible expert. Thank you for inviting. I wish someone not Guy told me something sometime about Sartre als Mensch. The two remarks which keep re-emerging into consciousness are

(1) Miss Stein: most things have something to do with everything

(2) Dr Wiesengrund-Adorno 'Giesecking – ah Giesecking – it is as if his mother would be the piano'

Shaya. B.

Jeremy Hutchinson

TO JEREMY HUTCHINSON

n.d.[late 1930s, *manuscript card*]

All Souls

Dear Jeremy

Our relations definitely need mending. Will you therefore come to dinner next Friday, at about 7.30, wearing nothing; I shall not ask more than 2 others, say O'Neill²⁰³ and Harrison.²⁰⁴ Or their nearest equivalents if any. Or not as the case may be. If you can come that will be something. Why didn't he lie and say Borstal²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Con O'Neill (167/7).

²⁰⁴ Francis Laurence Theodore Graham-Harrison (1914–2001), Magdalen classics 1933–7; civil servant from 1938; indexer of KM1; Trustee, Tate Gallery 1975–82, National Gallery 1981–2; known by Ben Nicolson and Jenifer Hart as 'Modigliani' because he looked like one.

²⁰⁵ Apparently a reference to a criminal case.

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or something? I thought she²⁰⁶ scared off everybody in the manner of a genuine genius.

yrs

IB

You can come on Saturday to lunch if you wd prefer it, + the Pakenhams etc. etc. it will be longer, grander & I daresay drearier. Just as you like, if you see what I mean.

Jeremy Hutchinson

FROM A. J. AYER

21 March 1940 [*manuscript*]

Sergeant Jackson's Squad
16 Coy. Coldstream Guards,
Guards Depot, Caterham, Surrey

Dear Shaya

I think the best way for me to write to you is just to give you facts and leave you to interpret them. I cannot myself judge what is or is not significant or amusing. I am too much inside it. "Every moment is too busy being everything to be anything in particular" (inaccurate Cummings – which reminds me that he is obviously *the* person to write to from such a place as this if we had time to write). A My handwriting by the way must not be taken as evidence of a regression to illiteracy – it is just the recruit institute pen – I have left my own in my suit of [?] (made for a man of 5ft 11.) which is inaccessible at the moment. I am in what is known as a brigade squad of potential officers – with about twenty others, most of them undergraduates or boys who had just gone down and gone into banks or what not. One of them, a nice ingenuous boy call Billy Bell talks as if he knew you well. They are quite a pleasant lot, one or two of them rather silly but not offensive as yet, and they are nearly all much more efficient than I. We sleep and live in one large barrack room, with about two feet between beds, together

²⁰⁶ Virginia Woolf.

with one trained soldier who makes us keep the room tidy and shows us how to clean and arrange our kit, etc. He is an ex-policeman, about twenty three years of age. Very efficient and masterful in a quiet way – he boasts that the only time he ever had to hit a recruit he knocked him clean over three beds, but not a bad fellow – he tells harrowing stories of the bullying that used to go on here, how men were shaved with sandpaper, blacked all over with boot polish and then scrubbed till they bled, and generally knocked about by the sergeants, but that seems to have stopped now, or anyhow it is not done to brigade squads. Our sergeant is also an ex-policeman, only twenty-two years old, and very nice and efficient. We get up at six every morning and go to bed at ten, and our sixteen hour day is very full. We do drill, and P.T. and weapon training and listen to one or two lectures (including a very incompetent defence by the chaplain of the physico-teleological argument), and what is worst of all “shining” of boots, belts, buttons, rifles and, in my case, bath-house taps. We have compulsory two-hour shining parades five days a week, and even they do not give us enough time to get everything done. Theoretically, one is not allowed out of barracks until the squad has passed its first drill inspection at the end of the third week, but they let us out of barracks daily over Easter to wander about Croydon and Caterham, where there is nothing to do. Renée and Valerie came down to Croydon on the Saturday and Sunday to be with me, and at first they do not recognise me. My hair is cropped like a convicts, I have for me a florid colour, and my bearing is martial. And now I have begun to grow a moustache, the possession of which is said to be a means of advancement in my new profession, but I shall probably dislike it and shave it off before you see me again. I am well except that I have had trouble with my feet, which got bruised by a pair of hard boots, and I have not been unhappy so far. Once or twice when sergeants and trained soldiers have been rude to me, I have been jolted back into remembering who and what I am to be suffering such things, but on the whole I have managed to become pretty successfully the submissive small boy that I am expected to be. The only way to get

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through this at all is to live completely in it, really to concentrate on rhythmical stamping, and getting the blankets folded in the proper creases, and turning whale-leather boots into patent leather with hours of spit and polish. And it is not as difficult as you might suppose, because the whole material ordering of my life here, down to the very clothes I wear, imposes a form which we could hardly escape even if one wanted to. I don't know whether it will leave a permanent mark: I hope not, but I am not worrying – I hardly think more than a day ahead.

I got my proofs²⁰⁷ done over Easter, and Francis has undertaken to make me an index. I am expecting to get it published in May when, with luck, I ought to have a fortnight's leave before going on to Sandhurst. Write to me please, Shaya, it doesn't matter what.

yrs

Freddie

TO W. G. S. ADAMS

19 August 1940

The Shoreham, 33 West 55, New York City

Private & Confidential

Dear Mr Warden,

I feel that it is time that I recounted to you the story of my wanderings here. I arrived on the 21st July and went straight to Washington. Both Lothian²⁰⁸ (who inquired very warmly after yourself) and everyone in the Embassy, particularly John Foster,²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ *Of The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge* (London, 1940: Macmillan).

²⁰⁸ Philip Henry Kerr, 11th Marquess of Lothian (1882–1940), British Ambassador in Washington from August 1939 until his untimely death in December 1940, notably strengthened Anglo-American relations (309/2).

²⁰⁹ John Galway Foster (1904–82), lawyer and historian; Fellow of All Souls 1924–82; legal adviser, British Embassy, Washington, 1939–43; then legal

were most kind and helpful. The difficulty arose firstly with the Russians, who, although in the person of their ambassador, Oumansky,²¹⁰ they were courteous, invited me to luncheon etc., tended to be dilatory and evasive, and still haven't answered whether they are willing to admit me or not. Also Cripps²¹¹ telegraphed that accomodation in Moscow was very restricted (as if that matters! I have slept on floors before now) and that he wasn't sure as to exactly what I should do when & if I came. How can I convey that in telegrams, which whether sent in cipher or not, are sure to be read on the way? Anyhow with Felix's & others' help I am still trying, tho' my hopes have dwindled somewhat. Meanwhile attempts are being made here to make me do some work in the British Library of Information, to which a new energetic person has been attached – Childs,²¹² who was under (our own) Butler²¹³ in Geneva at the I.L.O. & the press attaché in Belgrade & Paris. Of course I am willing to do anything I am thought fit for, but my primary object is to get to Moscow, & to sit here in any Capacity, when events at home are what they are, is naturally disquieting. I don't know what I should be doing if I return immediately, giving up efforts to press on to Moscow, but

adviser, SHAEF; Conservative Member of Parliament for Northwich, Cheshire, 1945–74 (694, 708).

²¹⁰ Constantine Aleksandrovich Oumansky (1902–45), Soviet Ambassador to the US 1938–41, Soviet Ambassador to Mexico from May 1943 until his death in a plane crash in January 1945 (313/1).

²¹¹ Sir (Richard) Stafford Cripps (1889–1952), Labour MP for East Bristol 1931–50, British Ambassador to the USSR 1940–2, later (1947–50) Chancellor of the Exchequer (83/3).

²¹² Stephen Lawford Childs (1896–1943) had previously worked in southern Russia (economic rebuilding of anti-Bolshevik areas 1918–20), Geneva (refugee work with League of Nations 1921–6 and from 1929) and South America (1926–9); later with the ILO in Geneva; diplomatic service in Belgrade 1939–40 and briefly in Paris 1940; Embassy Press Office, BIS Washington 1940–2. He was killed in an air crash between Iraq and Iran in January 1943 (329/3).

²¹³ Harold Beresford Butler (1883–1951), Deputy Director, International Labour Office, 1920–32, Director, 1932–8; founding Warden of Nuffield College, Oxford, 1939–43, Minister and Head of British Information Services at the British Embassy, Washington, 1942–6 (309/4).

it is morally pleasanter to be facing common dangers than to be in this safety which I didn't seek. So I am in quandary. I shall go on working to go to Russia for a little longer, and then, unless urgent representations are made, return, I think, to remain quietly in Oxford.

Opinion here is very strongly pro-British, now, anti-isolationist feeling is growing fast. Our policy of no propaganda at the beginning of the war has done a certain amount of negative good, by forcing our friends to do it for us. But that time is past now, we should lose nothing by pleading our own cause & telling the truth now, in the opinion of most of the influential pro-allied Americans. And we are perhaps not doing enough, either in the press or otherwise. John Foster has individually done wonders : he knows & is liked by many more Americans, of different types and walks of life, than any Englishman here. If anyone has done much to advertise our needs it is he. Lothian too is a great success, having failed to commit any tactical blunder. Michael Huxley,²¹⁴ the press attaché is also very well liked and successful – he is, isn't he – the son of your old friend and neighbour on Boar's Hill – the rest are more sluggish. They ought, so most of the better informed ones think, [to] have an economic dictator to co-ordinate activities, with high rank and authority, like Reading²¹⁵ in 1916; one or two – Foster, Heathcote Amory,²¹⁶ Marris²¹⁷ (who do blockade) think so,

²¹⁴ Michael Heathorn Huxley (1899–1979); son of Henry Huxley of Boars Hill, Oxford, grandson of the scientist Thomas Henry Huxley and cousin of Aldous Huxley; diplomat then founding editor (1935–9, 1945–59) of the *Geographical Magazine*.

²¹⁵ Gerald Rufus Isaacs (1889–1960), 2nd Marquess of Reading, Earl Reading, Viscount Erleigh, Viscount Reading, Baron Reading, Bencher, Middle Temple (238/1).

²¹⁶ Richard Frank Heathcoat Amory (1903–57), stockbroker; Washington Embassy 1939–42 (330/4).

²¹⁷ Adam Denzil Marris (1906–83), banker, Lazards Bros, 1929–39; Ministry of Economic Warfare 1939–40; British Embassy, Washington, 1940–5. Later (1947–71) Managing Director, Lazards Bros.

& in particular that Wilfrid Greene²¹⁸ may be the man. I am sure he'd be ideal on every ground. I wish he cd be got over. Really authoritative and prominent and attractive men, with the high intellectual attainment which Americans respect so much, are sadly to seek here at present. One Lothian does not make a summer. Also more propagandists – who would make personal contacts i.e. exercise indirect influence – and at present be very useful; Felix thinks that Laski²¹⁹ and Swinton²²⁰ ought both to be here, as well as Tawney,²²¹ and Ross²²² perhaps, who made a wonderful impression on his last recent visit. Also the Jews, less powerful than in 1917, but still influential, are not being used enough: they long to be useful, as I know, but the Embassy is nervous of any 'entanglements', I am sure this is out of date now. And I am doing my best to mediate. But heavier guns are needed. The admiration for the R.A.F. is terrific, played up everywhere: & Willkie²²³ seems to have swung right in on our side. I think they now really are doing what they can. The persons most criticized are Simon²²⁴ &

²¹⁸ Sir Wilfrid Arthur Greene (1883–1952), lawyer, Fellow of All Souls 1907–14, 1932–52, 1st Baron Greene 1941, Master of the Rolls 1937–49 (335/8).

²¹⁹ Harold Joseph Laski (1893–1950), Professor of Political Science at the London School of Economics from 1926 (67/2).

²²⁰ Major-General Sir Ernest (Dunlop) Swinton, Chichele Professor of Military History and Fellow of All Souls 1925–39 (321/2).

²²¹ Richard Henry Tawney (1880–1962), Professor of Economic History, London, 1931–49 (321/3).

²²² Presumably Sir (William) David Ross (1877–1971), philosopher, Provost of Oriel College 1929–47; President, British Academy, 1936–40; Visiting Professor, Columbia University, 1938–9; Vice Chancellor, Oxford, 1941–4.

²²³ Wendell Lewis Willkie (1892–1944), Republican presidential nominee 1940, candidate for renomination 1944; against the New Deal, but liberal, in favour of civil rights, and internationalist (333/2).

²²⁴ Sir John Allsebrook Simon (1873–1954), barrister and Liberal politician, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1937–40, 1st Viscount Simon of Stackpole Elidor 1940 (261/3).

Halifax,²²⁵ Chamberlain²²⁶ is no longer much spoken of. But It is regarded as a definite weakness in our Cabinet to have retained the inspirers of the old policy however genuine their repentance. Republican & Democratic Congressmen I have met, not very many, about half a dozen, although most cautious in their comments, hint that the dropping of these our two eminent colleagues would be popular over here. These are the anti-isolationists of course. The isolationists I haven't met. Opie,²²⁷ who is economic attaché, sees a certain number of his old pupils & Harvard contemporaries who are now New Deal civil servants, all that is a good thing. But I do hope Childs will initiate a more dynamic policy of stating our case – it is badly needed. & the people are so thoroughly frightened now that there is fertile ground. The French, e.g. have done far better. Even the Belgians have. The Communists have lost face with the Russo-German pact & Finland, but still do quite a lot of damage, which the small body of Socialists, with their honester tactics do not. Laski & Tawney are needed if only to counteract that. The recent talks & rumours of a closer Anglo-American co-operation in not met with any hostility here, even by isolationists. There is no overt anti-allied propaganda, as opposed to keep-out-of-war movements, except by communists. The Nazis are very skilful manipulators of various small pacifist religious & racial groups, the K[u] K[lux] Klan, even Jews & Jehovah's Witnesses. The new daily newspaper, "P.M.",²²⁸ does valiant service in unmasking them. It is far the most violent

²²⁵ Edward Frederick Lindley Wood (1881–1959), 1st Earl of Halifax, 3rd Viscount Halifax, 1st Baron Irwin, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1938–40, British Ambassador, Washington, 1941–6 (302/3).

²²⁶ (Arthur) Neville Chamberlain (1869–1940), originally Liberal, later Conservative politician; Prime Minister 1937–40 (249/2).

²²⁷ Redvers Opie (1900–84), Fellow and economics Tutor, Magdalen, 1931–45, Counsellor and economic adviser to the British Embassy in Washington 1939–46, became a US citizen 1948 (351/9).

²²⁸ Outspoken New York newspaper (1940–8), independent of party allegiance (and initially of advertising), but anti-Fascist and pro-FDR (446/1).

pro-allied paper here: and “Time”²²⁹ does its best. The new film “The Ramparts we Watch”²³⁰ which is very good, ought to tell too. Churchill²³¹ is tremendously popular: and Eden²³² is well liked. The Duke of Windsor’s²³³ arrival is treated as a joke. If we hold out until the autumn the tempo of feeling & of material aid will, I am sure, rise tremendously: what Americans really admire is pluck and success: what they still fear is appeasement. I have had most illuminating talks with Secretary Ickes,²³⁴ & officials of the State Department. And the U.S. Ambassador to Moscow²³⁵ encouraged me to go there very much. Please give my love to Mrs Adams & to Billy,²³⁶ I may be back before this arrives. All your friends here are full of affection & hope & anxiety.

yours

Isaiah Berlin

²²⁹ The weekly American news magazine, first published in 1923.

²³⁰ A blend of documentary and drama, this cautionary film is set in the years immediately before American involvement in the First World War, and uses clips from Nazi propaganda films to emphasise the parallels between the complacency of the earlier era and the potentially disastrous isolationism widespread in the USA in 1940.

²³¹ Rt Hon. Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill (1874–1965), soldier, journalist, author and politician (of variable allegiance); Chancellor of the Exchequer 1924–9, First Lord of the Admiralty 1939–40, Prime Minister 1940–5, Leader of the Opposition 1945–51 (30/6).

²³² (Robert) Anthony Eden, 1st Earl of Avon (1897–1977), Conservative MP (1923–57), Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1935–8, 1940–45 (431/1).

²³³ The former King Edward VIII (1894–1972) had just arrived in the Bahamas, of which he had been appointed Governor.

²³⁴ Harold LeClair Ickes (1874–1952), journalist, lawyer, author and politician; Secretary of the Interior 1933–46; unwavering liberal and vigorous New Dealer famous for his invective, strong supporter of action to save the Jews of Europe (439/3).

²³⁵ Laurence Adolph Steinhardt (1892–1950), US Ambassador to the USSR 1939–41, to Turkey 1942–5, to Czechoslovakia 1945–8, then (1948–50) to Canada (killed in a plane crash) (321/5).

²³⁶ Presumably the Adams’s only child.

MORE FLOURISHING

TO PEGGY JAY

[early January 1941]

Royal Bath Hotel, Bournemouth

Dearest Peggy,

I am very very sorry not to have seen you even, during my two entirely blissful months in England. I doubt if I've ever been happier in my life. Not to be in America. To be back in the womb at Oxford. To be relieved from reading things in newspapers which made one's flesh creep & induced guilt & shame of the most acute order, while one's own status was obscure. As soon as I returned I began to be harried by the M. of Information which wanted to know why I had returned. When was I going back. The Embassy was cabling imperiously demanding not necessarily me but someone to do what I had, so it was said, engaged myself to do. I didn't know what to do. On the one hand it was in the highest degree undesirable to leave England at this moment, a mistake I now think to have gone in July. On the other I have a certain civic sense of which you may not suspect me, & a great desire to obey orders & do what I am told & hatred of responsibility. I don't mind bureaucracy & don't mind being ordered about. Finally I was ordered to go back or say why not. Occasionally Christopher [Cox] inquired what I was still doing in Oxford. I was in fact enjoying myself. So I made up reasons each of which was demolished by the Heads of the American division in the M.O.I & F.O. It was pointed out to me with violence that either I must say yes or no forever. I had, I was told, valuable contacts in America – none in England. Or words to that effect. I could do this {this} & that. Above all I could keep obstreperous Jews in order. I knew all the chief ones & was regarded as *bien pensant*. Alternatively I must turn down their offer flat – if the money wasn't sufficient they would add – turn it down flat like that with no reason. I made attempts to get into Herbert's thing²³⁷ to have a good excuse for getting out of M.O.I. clutches, feeble fangs but not too feeble for me. So now I return

²³⁷ MI5.

with status, salary, letters of recommendation from the Adamses²³⁸ (who naturally think highly of the whole thing, & are really touchingly full of good will & niceness. I wish I could suppress the true view & take them at the value they so honestly take themselves at), from officials, from Swinton,²³⁹ from heaven knows who, in absolute black misery, unhappier than ever I recollect being before, more so even than when I hear of disagreeable things said about me, which normally reduces me to appalling states. Give my very qualified wishes to Douglas – his All Souls bet,²⁴⁰ although alas undeniably funny, wounded me a very great deal, & I couldn't therefore bring myself to visit Beaconsfield with this great skeleton rattling in my cupboard, knowing (a) that it was too trivial to make a real fuss about (b) my own indubitably lacerated feelings. *Please* write to me: you don't know how much letters help one to preserve human semblance: solitude I hate more than anything & I am likely to have little else. My address is c/o British Press Service, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York. The Embassy would forward in fact.

Even in the bleakest hours I cannot forbear to gossip. Rosamond Lehmann called on me, in pieces, saying that Goronwy's wife (it sounds grotesque) had a passion for jazz & tap dancing.

²³⁸ Presumably (William) George Stewart (1874–1966), Gladstone Professor of Political Theory and Institutions, Oxford, 1912–33, Fellow (1910–33) and Warden (1933–45) of All Souls. Married Muriel Lane 1908. IB remembered him as 'a thoroughly nice man [...] who was like an old farmer, he was by nature kindly and courteous' (MI Tape 20); according to Harry Hodson he was 'eclectic in outlook and never ready to take a difference of opinion as opposition' (autobiography, chapter 3, bit.ly/harry-hodson, accessed 14 November 2022).

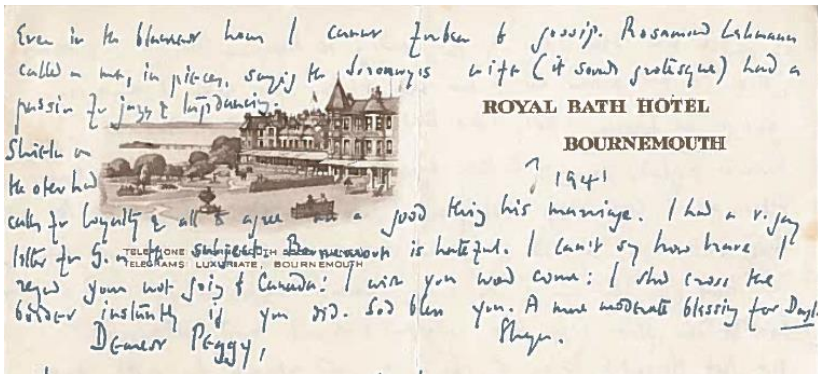
²³⁹ Major-General Sir Ernest (Dunlop) Swinton, Chichele Professor of Military History and Fellow of All Souls 1925–39.

²⁴⁰ Douglas Jay, Peggy's husband, had made a bet in the All Souls betting book about the number of different words used by (a) the average man per day – 50; (b) the average Oxford don per day – 1,000; (c) IB after Hall in All Souls per evening – 10,000. Thanks to Peter Jay for remembering this: 'hardly "lacerating"', as he comments, 'more a tribute to the breadth of his vocabulary and his spectacular volubility – in several languages' (email to Henry Hardy, 20 September 2021).

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Shiela on the other hand calls for loyalty & all to agree what a good thing his marriage [is]. I had a v. gay letter from G. on the subject. Bournemouth is hateful. I can't say how hard[?] I regard your not going to Canada: I wish you would come: I shd cross the border instantly if you did. God bless you. A more moderate blessing for Doug.

Shaya.



TO JOHN MARTIN

12 September 1943

British Embassy, Washington

Mr J Martin

I enclose the tabulation of all more or less representative newspapers available before and on 12 September which have commented favourably and unfavourably on the Prime Minister's Harvard speech, as requested by the Minister of Information.

I enclose also (a) a supplement to the anthology of quotations on this topic which you will have received in Washington (bringing it up to date to 12 September) and (b) the regular BIS survey of press and radio reactions to the speech.

In addition to the points noted in my minute attached to the original anthology there is perhaps this to be added:

(1) Boston and New England generally were obviously taken by storm. In spite of the solid core of Irish (and French Canadian) Roman Catholic anti-British sentiment in that part of the world, comment was overwhelmingly favourable, against all precedent. And according to Felix Frankfurter and others, the Harvard faculty, which is in general Anglophile but apt to be suspicious of eloquence, was conspicuously bowled over. Harvard, as you know, enjoys a general political influence greater than that of any other of the powerful academic institutions of the USA.

(2) The Hearst and Patterson–McCormick papers, which, with their scattered allies, reach almost 9,000,000 weekday readers, have, of course, seized this opportunity with both hands. Mr Hearst seems to have started a definite campaign against the proposals in the Prime Minister's speech, concentrating particularly on the suggestion of joint Anglo-American citizenship, which is the most obvious target. The *San Francisco Examiner*, for example, and the *New York Journal-American*, have started a simultaneous 'pincer movement' from coast to coast by collecting lists of Californians, Midwesterners, New Yorkers etc. to attack Mr Churchill's thesis. So far only an isolationist Representative in New York, a Senator (Elbert Thomas) from Utah, a Roman priest from the University of Notre Dame, and an obscure collection of American Legionaries and Daughters of the American Revolution have come forth, but it looks like the beginning of a long-term nationwide offensive by Mr Hearst, Col. McCormick, Capt. Patterson and their allies. The possible effects of this should not be underestimated.

(3) On the other hand, as you will see from the Table of the pros and cons, the favourable response has been surprisingly large, although against an undercurrent of anxiety at the apparent exclusion of other United Nations. Naturally, one week's results, culled from the regular pabulum consumed by the BIS and the more industrious consulates, is a very inadequate basis for generalisation. As more material becomes available it will be surveyed and reported to London (MOI will be requested to supply you with copies), but to hazard a purely subjective guess, my impression is that the debate is only beginning, that we ought to

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expect a great deal of miscellaneous criticism from many quarters, isolationist, anti-imperialist, supporters of the international arrangement of various kinds etc. I cannot believe that the opposition will stay idle with such an opportunity at hand. Doubtless our friends will gird their loins too. Time alone will show, but I should prepare for a lively one.

[Isaiah Berlin]

The Chartwell Trust/Churchill Papers

TO MARIE AND MENDEL BERLIN

30 October 1943 [*postcard*]

From Isaiah Berlin, New Orleans

I enclose a somewhat crudely executed snapshot of me by a very bad street photographer outside the St. Louis Cathedral of New Orleans (which I leave to-morrow).²⁴¹ It will, I am afraid, convey none of the blooming health which I am enjoying, nor the high spirits which this town cannot fail to induce in anyone. It is the only genuine Latin city in the Northern half of the Western Hemisphere (Quebec is bogus). The cafés are cafés, the faces & the intonation French, the old bistro types lounge about in complete unself-consciousness side by side with vigorous Anglo-Saxons from the North who are stimulating the shipbuilding & trade with Latin America – the Vieux Carré is gentle, provincial, full of gossip old ladies in café gardens, old Frenchmen with beards & bréloques²⁴² etc. etc. I return to Wash on 2^d.

Shaya

²⁴¹ The photo appears on the next page. IB was touring the western and southern States of the US before returning to the Embassy in Washington.

²⁴² Trinkets attached to a watch-chain.



IB stands on the corner of Chartres St (in the sun) and Pirate's Alley (in the shade) with the Cabildo state museum behind him

On 12 January 1944 William Hayter, then a British diplomat in Washington, wrote to the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office in these terms:

We enclose a copy of a minute by Berlin about an alleged secret report by someone in the American War Department dealing with Saudi Arabia. [...] Though there are undoubtedly people in the American Administration who have ideas of this kind, perhaps more particularly in the War Department and OSS, this document should not be regarded as expressing the view of the United States Government as whole. We do not, for instance, believe that the State Department has worked things out quite so

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far as this. But there is no question that the Near Eastern Division are taking a considerable interest in Saudi Arabia, and that they are not being entirely frank with us on the subject of their intentions in that area. Several members of the Division are also prone to absurd suspicions of Russia, which would be in line with some of the views indicated by the supposed War Department memorandum.

A copy of this letter (from which the above transcription was made) was sent to R. T. Peel at the India Office. The minute enclosed by Hayter follows.

TO WILLIAM HAYTER AND MICHAEL WRIGHT

5 January 1944 [*dated 1943 in error; carbon minute*]

Secret

During my recent visit to New York I was shown what purported to be an extract from a secret report written by a highly-placed member of the US War Department and accepted by the War Department as in line with its policy. It dealt with American plans in Saudi Arabia, and stated that there were three principal reasons for American interest in that country:

1. Its untapped and allegedly vast oil resources.
2. Its strategic importance in the event of a future war with the USSR. It was the only part of the world susceptible of American penetration which possessed facilities for a large number of military airfields as well as having [the] advantages of a natural supply of fuel, storage and the possibility of aircraft construction from light metals and plastics which might be manufactured in East Africa.
3. The Persian Gulf would provide convenient places for the American Pacific fleet, whose duty it would be to implement American demands vis-à-vis the USSR, and more remotely the British Empire, should that ever be required.

It followed from this that no effort should be spared to develop close relations with King Ibn Saud, and in the event of disagreement on his part with anyone else, the USG should unhesitatingly align itself on his side.

The document I saw was bluntly expressed and did not mince matters in the slightest. My informant is an earnest anti-imperialist, concerned with the economic aspect of American relations in the Middle East, and appears genuinely shocked by the contents of the memorandum, which, however, he maintained represented the settled policy of not only the War Department but the Near Eastern Division of the State Department, which look[s] on the Arabs as its only genuinely reliable allies against the USSR.

This might perhaps interest the Foreign Office, if only as an indication of a trend.

I.B.

*India Office, IOR/L/PS/12/2124, fos 35–6*²⁴³

TO JOHN MARTIN

15 November 1944

British Embassy, Washington

Dear John,

I enclose two items from the *New Yorker* of 28 October, which gave widespread pleasure here and is part of the brief but brilliant campaign which that remarkable periodical conducted against the Republican candidate. Perhaps you have all seen it already; if not, it may give your master a moment's enjoyment. I hope you are well,

²⁴³ For a discussion of these documents see Louis Allday, **'Tsaiah Berlin of the FO'**, LRB blog, 27 July 2017. As Allday observes, 'One British official [F. A. K. Harrison] said that "This alleged secret report [...] is a curious production!"; another remarked that to see "Arabs as 'genuinely reliable allies' strikes me as naïf". In February 1945, King Ibn Saud and President Roosevelt met on board the *USS Murphy* [in fact the *USS Quincy*] to cement their countries' increasingly close ties. Seventy years later, Donald Trump made Riyadh his first port of call on his first overseas trip as President of the United States.'

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and to see you when at last I return to England and Oxford for my final rest, in February or early March of next year. If you see him give my love to our poor friend Dr W who must be in an awful state just now. This is what he had anticipated with such dread when I was in London (and could not see any way out of) at the time.

Yours,

Isaiah

PS The following item appeared in the same journal of 4 November:

From the *San Francisco Chronicle*: 'For lunch, the Deweys retired to the Hutt's five-room, white-framed cottage where the parents have lived for 30 years. It was a quiet, family reunion, with Oklahoma State troopers and New York detectives standing in the front yard.' This is headlined 'Family Life in America'.

The Chartwell Trust/Churchill Papers

In a letter to his colleague Donald Hall written from the British Embassy in Washington in December 1944, Berlin used a particularly striking image. His biographer Michael Ignatieff suggests that this reflected a growing realisation that he had 'an intellectual's, rather than a bureaucrat's, cast of mind' (MI 130). IB had written earlier in the letter that, since his diplomatic work was drawing to a close, it was time to 'return to my lawful wedded wife', i.e. Oxford, 'without complaint', and in a postscript he reflected on this decision:

SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS 1928–1946

TO DONALD HALL

11 December 1944 [*carbon*]

British Embassy, Washington, DC

My dear Donald,

[...] I do long to be home again and not be tormented by the sense (probably quite illusory) that I see a pattern on the carpet,²⁴⁴ that this pattern is most frightfully important, and that there is no one to say it to. I wish I were in the entertainment world and could see the President like Sinatra, or Mr Churchill like my namesake. As it is, Oxford for me. I am probably suffering from exaggeration of my own penetrating insight into the Arcana [...]. Goodness, what telegrams and despatches you would be sending to London if you were here. Perhaps it is a good thing, from the point of view of your expectation of life, that you are not. Dear me, am I panic-mongering? I hope so.

[IB]

UNDATED LETTERS NOT ASSIGNED TO A YEAR

TO CHRISTOPHER COX

n.d.

All Souls

Dear Xtopher:

My nice friends the Hiltons – admirable couple – very silent very clean – want to visit the Metaxa island. Is there any objection? if they pay? I am sure the Countess would approve of them. If you think it unobjectionable to send then what steps ought I to take? I

²⁴⁴ IB may be alluding, consciously, or unconsciously, to Henry James's novella *The Figure in the Carpet* (London, 1896), a work much discussed in its day. In his preface to *A Choice of Kipling's Verse* (London, 1920), 15, T. S. Eliot observed: 'We look, in a poet as well as in a novelist, for what Henry James called the Figure in the Carpet'.

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only vaguely remember the Countess's address: Gort by Ganiv²⁴⁵ is it? anyhow could you, in case of need send an introductory postcard or ought I to do it? I am sure the Countess would be pleased about visitors of this sort: I had a worried telephone call from John Hilton about this when I returned: he is generally worried about whether to try & succeed McIver in B'gham or apply for a Hill-Buckler job in Cyprus from the Colonial office, being an architect – but that is neither here nor there. A postcard from b.j. says she is rather sorry for herself, haughty & foolish b.j.

How are you? how is Oxford looking? how is everybody?

I must stop being silly. The point is: could you let me know in very brief whether you think Metaxaland is visitable, & if so its address + whether you could write the Contessa about the Hiltons simultaneously with whatever else you communicate about. I've just written Shiela my last note for weeks, months, or years. I find that in order to recover I have to practise swallowing my pride every 4 hrs or so: I expect it will become a practically painless process by the 9[?], & 14 I shall do it without noticing & in my sleep.

love

Shaya

TO CHRISTOPHER COX

n.d.

Brighton

Dear Xtopher

Thank you for your letter & enclosure. I wish to point out at the risk of seeming ungracious – this sentence itself is in some danger of so seeming – that I don't think I [have?] my full quota, i.e. actuated by Narcissism of my own – of which what doubt was there ever – I should like the picture of our baggages with myself in a silly posture – I may have been given it & lost it– could you

²⁴⁵ Gort na Ganiv, Glann Road, near Oughterard, Co. Galway, Eire.

verify this at your leisure – don't do anything if you are as busy as when not? I glimpsed the Countess M. from a distance but she was surrounded & I thought I'd approach her later, but she was gone. But my mother espied her, guessing her to be her from the photograph – for which again thank you – horrible [nib?] – espied her, I say, in the dining room & told me she had pointed me out to her company, but was gone again by the time I summoned enough courage to turn round. I hope to meet her yet. Your views on Ross's masterpiece? Guy Chilver ws v. pleased. I don't think this town as horrible as I always think I do. I must be acquiring humanity. The crowded parade is genuinely gay and fresh. But if the Palestina Spas turn out to be like that Foster's delight will be immeasurable but I shall die of embarrassment. I hope you've had no trouble from Bowen – crudely expressed I fear but he is a sociable fellow – I've just received a fine Tate postcard of a tigress from Shiela.

Yrs

Shaya

TO CHRISTOPHER COX

n.d. [*postcard*]

France

I hope you are well and taking sufficient exercise. I am. Otherwise I refer you to the obverse, with a quod licet Fox clause attached. Was said, and about whom, & when, & why, 'I thought he had more spirit.' I shall double the value of the contemplated wedding present to you (i.e. 4 x Blakeway) if you guess right unprompted. I should like to go on a long sea-voyage with the Principal of Newnham. My love to [Cassia?].

Shaya.

MORE FLOURISHING

TO MAIRE LYND

n.d.

All Souls

Dear B J

The Crossthwaites choose to come this week end to stay with Mrs Beazley or someone. Can you get 2 more tickets for the Opera? it doesn't much matter I take whether they're strictly adjacent to ours. If you can, Maurice will include them in his dinner party. As in that case I must write to the Xthwaites as soon as may be, could you act swiftly? & reply?

Acc to Maurice Russell produced this last night. Asked about the philosophy of Fascism he said, 'Fascism has no philosophy – it has only a psychoanalysis' in his best manner this is. The Warden would enjoy it.

Yrs

Shaya

1. The rapidest course you cd pursue – forgive me for rushing you – is to call or phone upon completion of ticket operations.
2. But I complained of your Aristotle collection to Miss Poole. Did this not come up? I admit I said you'd been ill then.

TO MAIRE LYND

Thursday

New College

Dear B. J.*

Will you come to lunch with me (1.15) to-morrow? please. Your sister informs me that you are at least as shy as I am, but that I must be a man & take the first step. I am looking forward to a very cosy meal indeed: the ice is unfortunately already more or less broken, otherwise it would be interesting to see which of us broke it first. If you cannot come to-morrow, please let me know when

you will be able to: this is the bold Duschinsky method from which there is no possible escape. I am,

your

Mr Berlin

* is B. J. the name you really like to be known by? the other names under which you are worshipped are, I believe, Moira (A von Trott & others), Myra (E. Duschinsky. quite alone), ‘the celebrated Miss Lynd’ (M Bowra and possibly the other Mods examiners) finally Marraleend (Kaliz. very impressive; & always with deep feeling.)

I hope I have committed no indiscretion.

I.B.

TO JENIFER WILLIAMS

n.d.

All Souls

Dear Miss F.-W.²⁴⁶

If it became necessary – I am myself surprised to realise that Professor Price is the cause – to put off lunch to Sat. the 15th – would you be able to come? this hypothetical question is very, very like Mr Turner’s shy, tentative enquiries. If you cannot come on the 15th, then the 8th holds. Any excuse would be sufficient to preserve the status quo. Douglas is here & is pestering on the subject of whether one tastes what one smells? Chocolate he says, or onions, or cheese?

Yours sincerely

I.B.

Jenifer Hart

²⁴⁶ Jenifer Williams’s father was John Fischer Williams, not hyphenated. But it was often thought that ‘Fischer’ was part of the family’s surname; hence Jenifer was at times called ‘Miss Fischer-Williams’.